

Media Contact: Brock Cooper  
(630) 252-5565  
bcooper@anl.gov

## Students get grilled on how to build the better burger at the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Rube Goldberg Machine Contest

ARGONNE, Ill. (Feb. 13, 2008) — The food will be anything but fast as local high school students compete to build a hamburger using at least 20 steps during Argonne National Laboratory's 13th annual Rube Goldberg Machine Contest on Friday, Feb. 22.

The burgers must have a pre-cooked meat patty, two vegetables and two condiments sandwiched between two bun halves and must be constructed by a machine hand-built by the students.

The machines will be put to the test in the contest, which kicks off at 10:30 a.m. at Chicago Children's Museum at Navy Pier.

Up to 12 teams can compete. Schools registered for this year's contest are:

- Plano High School, Plano (two teams)
- William Fremd H.S., Palatine
- Gardner South Wilmington H.S., Wilmington
- Maine Township South, Park Ridge (two teams)
- Illinois Math & Science Academy, Aurora (two teams)
- Alan B. Shepard H.S., Palos Heights
- Wilmington H.S., Wilmington

The winning team will receive a traveling trophy to display until the 2008 contest and a tour of Argonne, which will include a visit to the Advanced Photon Source, and lunch with Argonne scientists. The first-place team also will have the opportunity to demonstrate its winning machine at Argonne on the day of the tour. In addition, each team member and the team's faculty advisor will receive an Argonne National Laboratory Rube Goldberg Machine laptop backpack and an Argonne Rube Goldberg Machine Contest T-shirt.

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Rube Goldberg – add one

Second-place team members and their faculty advisor will receive Argonne National Laboratory Rube Goldberg Machine laptop backpacks and Argonne Rube Goldberg Machine Contest T-shirts.

Third-place team members and their faculty advisor will receive Argonne National Laboratory Rube Goldberg Machine Contest T-shirts.

A trophy will be awarded to the team that wins the People's Choice Award, to be chosen by popular vote by people attending the Chicago Children's Museum during the contest.

The top three teams will have the opportunity to compete in the 2008 Illinois State Championship Rube Goldberg Machine Contest to be held Saturday, March 22, at the Chicago Children's Museum. They will compete against the top three teams from the Friday, March 7, high school Rube Goldberg Machine Contest at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign's Engineering Open House.

Rube Goldberg machine contests are inspired by Reuben Lucius Goldberg, whose cartoons combined simple household items into complex devices to perform trivial tasks. The machines combine the principles of physics and engineering, using common objects such as marbles, mousetraps, stuffed animals, electric mixers, vacuum cleaners, rubber tubes, bicycle parts and anything else that happens to be on hand.

But the ultimate goal of the Argonne-sponsored contest is give students hands-on engineering experience and to encourage them to make science and engineering part of their future academic and professional careers.

“Designing and building a Rube Goldberg machine has a lot in common with modern research and development,” says David Baurac, one of the founders of the Argonne competition. “Specifically, it's creative problem solving, and it's a team activity. The teachers I talk to tell me that the contest is not about winning, it's about the experience of participating.”

Information about the Argonne Rube Goldberg Machine Contest for High Schools is available online at [www.anl.gov/Careers/Education/rube/rubeteams.html](http://www.anl.gov/Careers/Education/rube/rubeteams.html).

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Rube Goldberg – add two

Argonne’s Division of Educational Programs and Communications and Public Affairs Division sponsor the February event in collaboration with Chicago Children’s Museum and the National Rube Goldberg Machine Contest, held annually at Purdue University. The event is licensed by Rube Goldberg, Inc.

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Chicago Children’s Museum’s mission is to create a community where play and learning connect. For more information about Chicago Children’s Museum, call (312) 527-1000 or visit [www.chichildrensmuseum.org](http://www.chichildrensmuseum.org).

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