

# Tech News

## Mechatronics Demo at UCSC Wed 14 March

Tomorrow, Wednesday 14 March 2007, there will be a demo of robots built for the mechatronics class at UCSC. It will be at 6:30 p.m. in the Engineering Auditorium (the small building just north of the bus stop).

The Decinzo cartoon satirizes last year's competition. Abe and I have been to a couple of the demos, and they are a lot of fun. The professor who runs the class (Gabriel Elkaim) assures me that there will once again be ping pong balls all over.

## County Science Fair Saturday

The County Science Fair is Saturday March 17th at the Civic Auditorium. Spring Hill should have 8 entries (several from Tech Club members). The entrants need to deliver their projects 2–7 p.m. Friday afternoon and be present for judging 9:30–11 a.m. on Saturday. The fair is open to the public 6–9 p.m. on Saturday. It is worth going to see what sorts of projects are getting top honors around the county. Maybe it will spark an idea for next year's fair!

## Scratch real-life games

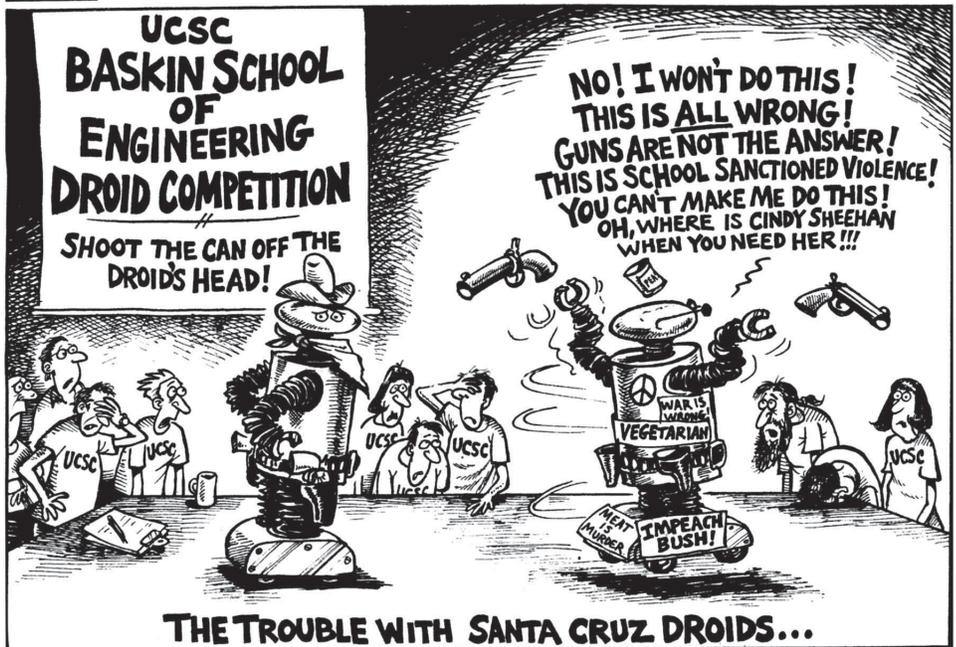
Today at Tech Club we'll have a bit of a party—we'll be playing two real-life scratch games, as well as indulging in a "high-tech" snack (chips and wafers).

One is a cooperative treasure hunt, where we hand out scratch scripts to each of the kids and have them simulate the actions of a single sprite, ending (hopefully) with the sprite finding a prize.

The other game is "Scratch Says", a variant of "Simon Says" in which each kid is a sprite and has to perform actions given as scratch commands, only obeying those that are legal commands. (This is a bit trickier than Simon Says, because the commands may include "when <message> received" or "wait until <condition>" commands.)

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DECINZO



## Diet Coke and Mentos

Today we'll play a bit with a popular, but messy, physical science demo: dropping Mentos candies into Diet Coke. There are a lot of cool videos on the web about this. Probably the most fun ones are the ones at <http://eepybird.com>

but the Mythbusters episode

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EWsv3IQ7HMI> gives more explanation for why it works.

