

Minneapolis-St. Paul Mini Maker Faire is June 3

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The "Greatest Show & Tell on Earth" returns to the State Fairgrounds this weekend. Submitted photo

The Windom neighborhood workshop Leonardo's Basement will again host the annual Maker Faire at the State Fairgrounds on Saturday, June 3.

"It's sort of a combination of science fair and county fair," said Matthew Beckler, who is showcasing robots at the Faire. "A lot of people are showing off what they're working on."

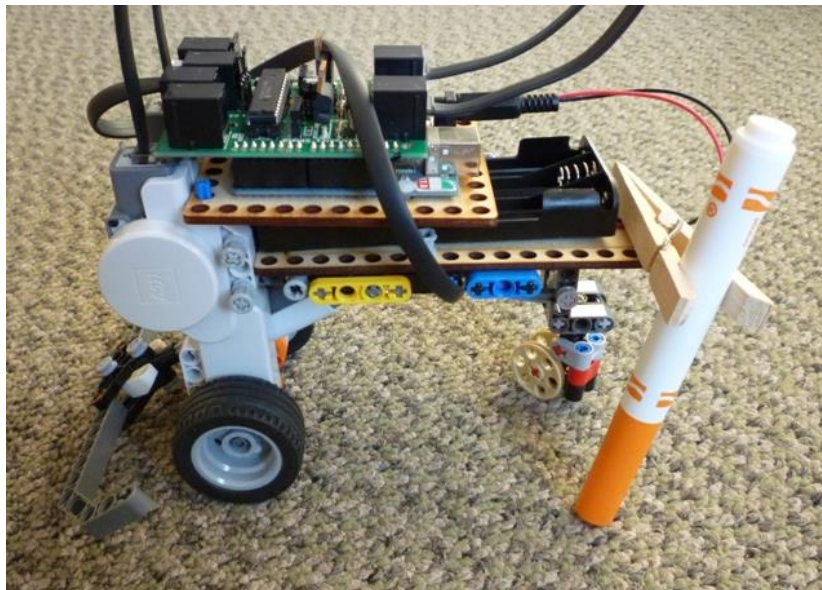
The Faire includes a few local contributors:



— [Sisyphus](#) will bring its popular kinetic art table, which raised nearly \$2 million on Kickstarter. The table showcases a steel ball slowly rolling through sand to create intricate designs. They're created by Bruce Shapiro, a former doctor who started a new career designing art robots. For the kinetic art table, he designed a two-motor robot with a magnet that pulls the ball along a set of paths, "much like a music player plays an mp3 file."

— The [Bakken Museum](#) will bring a Hackable Carnival with game challenges to "think creatively and cooperatively for an electrifying conclusion."

— [Wayne and Layne](#), the maker of DIY electronics kits, will feature a "drawbot" that can drive around while scribbling on paper.

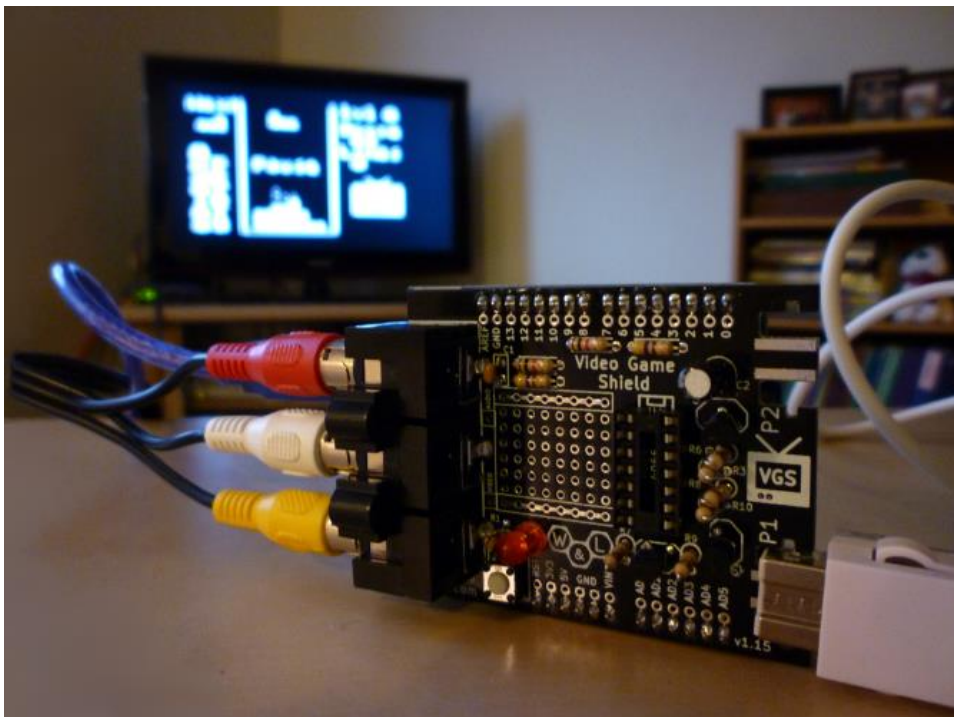


Founders Beckler and Adam Wolf use Legos and Arduino, allowing people to write simple programming code to interact in the real world.

"Lego is really great for playing around and building new ideas," Beckler said. "It's so simple and so easy to get started."

They sell “Blinky” projects that can display text and animations and require no special cables or programming knowledge. They also offer a video game shield to create black and white retro video games. And they have kits to create a Bluetooth keyboard that can connect to a computer, smartphone or tablet.

Beckler and Wolf have been friends since age 10, so they’ve spent many years working on electronics and computers together. Their business Wayne and Layne is named for their nearly identical middle names. The first kit they created was the Tap-Tempo Metronome, a musical metronome that’s tapped to set the beat.



Wayne and Layne’s “video game shield” allows users to make their own video games, including graphics, text, sound effects and music.

Beckler said the projects are ideal for middle school kids, although kids as young as six and seven have worked with kits as well.

Another part of Wayne and Layne’s business involves contract work for museums. They’ve created a farm combine simulator and an LED Ferris wheel controlled by kids. At the State Fair’s Eco building, they created an exhibit that demonstrates the difference in wind speeds in turbines low to the ground and high in the air for the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

The Maker Faire takes place at the State Fair grandstand on June 3 from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. For more information, visit msp.makerfaire.com.