



SHELLEY RIDENOUR PHOTO

Challis Elementary School students learned about science, technology, engineering, art and math programs during a Jan. 28 presentation by Steve and Nathan Dahl, owners of Computer Zen in Salmon. Steve Dahl laughs as he explains to students how Cade Bell's motions are being transferred to his body.



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Challis Elementary School student Ramey Rhoades works on his Bristlebot during the Jan. 28 STEAM session at the school.

STEAM/from 1

It's not all about getting every student to pursue a STEAM degree in college. While that's good in his opinion, the programs also teach youths how to apply what they learn to their real lives. Teaching students as young as kindergartners cutting-edge technology can reap rewards down the road, he said.

Dahl and the Computer Zen staff have worked closely with the Darby, Montana, school district for several years. He calls that small school the "gem" for Computer Zen's STEAM work. Dahl has also presented STEAM projects in Stanley, Leadore, Pocatello and Idaho Falls. The timing of his Challis trip in part was related to the upcoming school science fair. He wanted to help youths come up with ideas for their projects. He works with 5th Day Learning teams around the region and wants to make STEAM days common in those programs.

Dahl takes great joy in having parents tell him they buy STEAM toys and products for their children because their kids are curious and interested in science and they want the products.

Challis youths experience hands-on STEAM education

By **SHELLEY RIDENOUR**

Challis Messenger general manager

The fifth-graders fell eerily quiet as they focused on creating a Bristlebot as part of STEAM day at Challis Elementary School.

Steve Dahl, owner of Computer Zen in Salmon, his son Nathan Dahl, and employee Paul Zivkovic had passed out kits and instructions and shown a video of how to create the tiny robot-like device from pipe cleaners, a small battery, a toothbrush head and googly eyes. Then the kids got busy. The pipe cleaners worked like training wheels and the kids soon realized that twisting the pipe cleaners in various ways meant their robots could move in different ways.

Dahl and his staff spent Jan. 28 rotating Challis students in and out of the school gym, mixing up their lesson plans to suit the grade level in the room at the time. Fifth-graders had some pretty serious discussions.

3-D printers hummed away in the background cutting symbols and words into blocks of wood and creating small



SHELLEY RIDENOUR PHOTO

Student Teage Erickson talks to Paul Zivkovic from Computer Zen in Salmon about 3-D printing at a recent STEAM day session at Challis Elementary School.

rubber animals. Teage Erickson asked Zivkovic if a nearby soccer ball had been built on a 3-D printer.

"No," Zivkovic said, "but that would have been cool."

One part of the demonstration to fifth-graders involved hooking up sensors to Cade Bell and to Dahl to send am-

plified nerve signals from the youngster to Dahl. Bell would open his hand and Dahl's hand would follow, without Dahl making that action occur. Essentially, the electronic brain signal was captured to work someone else's limb, Dahl explained. Dahl even turned away so he couldn't see what

Bell was doing when some students suggested he was just mimicking their classmate.

Dahl offers his STEAM and STEM sessions to school districts free. If the school can cover the materials cost, that's a bonus, but not a requirement, he said. He wants kids to be excited about science and is hopeful some will pursue careers in the field, so he brings the project to schools.

"I taught school previously," Dahl said. "Science taught out of a textbook can be boring. I think it should be fun and exciting and spark curiosity." So, he takes science out of a book and turns it into a hands-on experience. Seeing kids get excited when they learn to build something never gets old for Dahl.

Even if they don't chose a STEAM field for a career, Dahl is happy to expose youths to science, technology, engineering, art and math. Studies show that students exposed to STEAM curriculum end up earning twice as much in their adult jobs as students who never get that exposure, Dahl said.

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Trails project advances with land conveyance

By **JERRY PAINTER**
 Post Register

The recent conveyance of 600 acres of public land to Challis and other parts of Custer County fits nicely into the city's plans to create more recreational trail systems, according to Mayor Mike Barrett.

The paperwork to transfer ownership of eight parcels of Bureau of Land Management land within Custer County to Challis and the county was recently completed. About 400 acres will go to Challis and another 202 acres to the county.

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Big Lost River flood control district proposed

By **TODD ADAMS**
 Challis Messenger staff writer

Lost River Highway District officials want to form an exploratory committee to determine if people want to create a flood control tax district along the Big Lost River.

Lost River Highway District Engineer Stephen Freiburger discussed the possible tax district with Custer County Commissioners Monday. There is no flood control district in Big Lost River Valley now, Freiburger said.

Because the Big Lost River floods and its channel regularly changes causing

damage to roads and property, highway district officials want to look into the matter. Freiburger suggested if a committee is created, it include representatives of the Custer and Butte county commissioners, Lost River Highway District, Big Lost River Irrigation District, Idaho Department of Water Resources, a property owner and a city of Moore official. An exploratory committee could present a plan to the director of Idaho Department of Water Resources.

If a flood control district were established, it could levy a tax of up to .06 a percent of the property value within its borders for flood control projects. Fifty percent of

residents in the affected area would have to sign a petition to put the question to a vote, Freiburger said.

Under state law, the proposal has to go through counties, Freiburger said. He suggested the commissioners work out a memorandum of agreement so that Army Corps of Engineers grants could be funneled through the counties. A flood control district would create opportunities to obtain grants from that entity, he said.

Commissioner Randy Corgatelli said people should take more responsibility about where they build and not construct in floodplains.

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IF YOU GO
STANLEY WINTERFEST
Friday, Feb. 15

5 p.m. — Hockey and ice skating
 7 p.m. — Pub crawl, The Redd Square
 9 p.m. — Beach party, Mountain Village Resort saloon

Saturday, Feb. 16

10 a.m. — Fat bike fondo, High Country Inn
 10 a.m.-2 p.m. — Ski plane fly-in
 11 a.m.-4 p.m. — Raft rides on snow
 11 a.m. — Kids' concert
 2 p.m. — Drag race
 3 p.m. — 3-legged race
 3:30 p.m. — Outhouse race

9 p.m. — Live music, Mountain Village Resort saloon and Casino Club

Sunday, Feb. 17

10:30 a.m. — Snowmobile skijoring, Mountain Village Resort
 Noon — K9 keg pull, Mountain Village Resort
 8 p.m. — Last call and wind down, Casino Club

