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Pi Enthusiasts Gather to Benefit Education

Over one hundred Pi enthusiasts gathered to celebrate this millennium's Super Pi Day at the Common Ground Saturday (3.1415). The event, sponsored by the Arlington Education Foundation (AEF), helped to raise awareness of AEF's Technology Initiative which is a fundraising effort to jumpstart technology in the Arlington Public Schools.

While enjoying a slice of pie or a signature pie martini, attendees got a taste of new and potential technology programs in the Arlington Public Schools. Ottoson Middle School and Arlington High School computer science curriculum leaders Terry Dash and Dan Sheldon gave attendees a chance to play with the computer games their students have created – Artbotics, Scratch programming and Guitar Hero. Thanks to funding from the AEF Technology Initiative, all 6th graders have a full year of computer science and High School computer science was brought back in 2013 after a four year hiatus.

Arlington High School science teachers Jayce G and John Macuk were showing a new online, interactive physics "textbook" that enables students to read, listen, watch simulations, and do problems sets.   They also demonstrated instrumentation that measured changes in force of a weight on a string using sensor kits that measure centrifugal force among other things. AEF is raising money to enhance the science curriculum with High School mobile science workstations which will allow students to do scientific data modeling analysis.

The Ottoson Math Club provided numerous hands-on Pi activities such as using Pi to figure out the size of a hat by measuring it and estimating Pi by tossing toothpicks onto lined paper and counting how many cross lines. Students from the new Ottoson Science Fair Club – funded by a recent AEF Innovations in Education grant – discussed their various experiments including figuring out what triggers a yawn and studying the relationship of the exercise music someone listens to with the kind of workout they get.

The AEF Technology Initiative's goal is to accelerate the use of technology in the district and prepare students for careers in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Mathematics). AEF is working in partnership with the school administration to fulfill the district's technology goals sooner than is possible within current budget constraints. As part of the third and final year of the Technology Initiative, AEF is raising money for a digital arts studio at the High School, additional engineering and

computer science labs at the Middle School and portable science workstations at the High
School. Funding these initiatives will cost approximately $130,000. AEF is funded almost entirely by
donations from individuals in the community.   Pies for the event were generously donated by Stop and
Shop, Trader Joe's, Quebrada, Chilly Cow, Angelina's Bakery and Something Sweet Without Wheat.
www.arlingtoneducationfoundationma.org.

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