Well, Virginia TSA, it’s that time of year again: Technosphere is just a few short days away! As you’re adding the finishing touches to your projects (and definitely not just starting...), keep in mind that a few thousand kids across the state are just as nervous and excited as you are. In this edition of the Scene, we focused on some of the most vital parts of Technosphere preparation. You can read about our upcoming Relay For Life and St. Jude’s fundraisers, including but not limited to a Saturday night carnival and soda can tab collections. You can also preview plans for the parliamentary guidebook for voting delegates, social meet-ups at the conference, and check out a list of crucial Technosphere tips compiled by your Executive Council. Remember you can always feel free to contact your regional president or a state officer with questions about the state conference and associated events; we’re here to help! Also remember to review the rules and regulations for your competitions, including the new LEAP guidelines for high school students, before you come to states. Above all, make sure your competitions are the best that they can be, and that you bring your A-game to Technosphere! I can’t wait to see you all there!

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica Strait
Virginia TSA President
Many of your Virginia TSA State Officers have provided some insight on Technosphere and how to get around problems; some may speak from personal experience.

Evan—State Reporter:

- Make extra copies of everything in your portfolio, you never know what will happen!
- Contact your advisor about any problems you or your team has; they may have an idea of how to fix them.
- Attend the general sessions and business meeting! It may not be exciting, but it’ll provide some great information!
- Come visit the Enterprising Booth (TSA Store)! There will be a lot of things going on there rather than just selling awesome TSA merch!

Valerie—South Central Region President:

- Make sure you have a copy of your room key before you leave your room!
- Always keep a charger or a battery pack with you... a dead phone won’t do anything for you!

Eunice—Northern Region President:

- Don’t be freaked out if something DOES go wrong - it happens to everyone! Keep your calm and work through the situation with a level head. You’re doing fine.
- This is simple and cliché, but HAVE FUN. TSA is about enjoying tech and exploring it, not just competitions. If you only get stressed, all that money and time is really not worth it. So go on, take a breath. Get something to drink with your friends and go enjoy your time!

Tyler—State Secretary:

- Schedule conflicts will ruin your time at Technosphere. Talk to your advisor as soon as you notice the conflict so that a solution can be made. Judges are usually understanding with problematic times and will work with you in order to fix the issue.
- Don’t be shy! Technosphere is a great place to meet new people with similar interests. One conversation starter could be asking how someone else’s competitions are going.
- Be sure to get enough sleep! Competitions are stressful, but taking care of yourself is more important. I speak from experience of not sleeping at all, so don’t make the same mistake!

Jessica—State President:

- Always keep your name tag with you! You’ll need it not only for your competitions, but also to get into general sessions and other conference events.
- Set multiple alarms in the morning for you and your roommates; you might think you won’t sleep through just one, but it happens every year!
- Talk to your state officers! In addition to answering general questions, there might be an exciting fundraiser, committee sign-up opportunity, or other activity going on that they can share with you.

Jenna—Valley Region President:

- Be sure you have your advisor’s phone number and the phone number of all your teammates - if you get lost or have a problem, at least you know how to get in contact with your group!
- Always be ready earlier than you think you need to be. That way, if something goes wrong, you will have a little time to fix it!
Tips for Technosphere!

A majority of your State Officers have provided some insight on Technosphere and how to get around problems; some speak from personal experience.

Devan—State Treasurer:

- Try to familiarize yourself with the locations of your competition rooms before you have to go there. It will ultimately help you be on time.
- Try to plan out your money usage. Trust me, having no money on the second day of Technosphere is not good for anyone.
- Before going for an interview, look in the mirror and do a superman pose or say, “I can do this!” To yourself. Trust me, not only does it boost confidence, but it should also make those butterflies go away.

Aala—National Reporter:

- Do not forget to complete your LEAP resume as you finalize your challenges!
- Branch out and meet new people! We’re all friends here! Maybe you could leave this conference with a new best friend, as many close bonds have been #MadeInTSA

Erin—National Secretary:

- Step out of your comfort zone. Say hello to someone you’ve never met before. I promise you won’t regret it!
- Don’t forget to eat! Always pack a granola bar or some pop tarts. You probably won’t have time to sit down and eat every single meal, and these snacks are perfect for on-the-go!

Unmesha—Blue Ridge Region President:

- Always double check before you leave your hotel room - it’s a pain to realize you’ve forgotten something super important halfway on the way to your competition and not have enough time to go back and get it!
- At the end of the day, Technosphere isn’t about the trophies, it’s about your experience there. Try your best to attend general sessions, meet new people, go to the mixer, and do other events that you may not have thought about before - make your experience the best that it can be!

Gavin—Southwestern Region President:

- Get out there and make some new friends, don’t be afraid to put yourself out there and be yourself you’d be surprised how many people you can meet if you just talk.
- Triple read your rubric do not miss anything even if you think your project is weaker than the others you may win due to deductions so always know your rules!

Mr. Stephenson—Virginia TSA State Advisor:

- Not only DO NOT FORGET TO COMPLETE AND TURN IN YOUR LEAP RESUME, But look at and make sure you have ALL the components listed in the Go/No Go box at the top of the scoring rubric for your event. If ANY Item is missing, your entry WILL NOT BE EVALUATED!
The first time I heard about TSA, I had just entered the 6th grade. I remember being curious, nervous, and a bit confused all at the same time; I didn’t know what to expect, all I knew is that I loved working with technology, so it seemed an apt fit. The first meeting was filled with chatter about the newest advances, competitions, and the future of us as leaders in the technological industry. I was captivated, and thus began the next seven years of my journey with TSA. In middle school, I spent a lot of time working on videogame design -- something I continued into high school -- but I later also moved into desktop publishing. Competitions have been and continue to be a significant focus for me, a way of testing my skills against others with similar interests. What I learned from this would prove incredibly beneficial. In my junior year, the experience I had accumulated from videogame design would allow me to create a game called “Shadows.” Unbeknownst to me at the time, Shadows would become incredibly popular, to the point where I decided to publish it. In the course of the year after the game’s initial development, I focused refining the game to prepare for releasing it on Steam. After several months of effort, I not only managed to get several YouTubers to do Let’s Plays of the game, but to get it through Greenlight and onto Steam in Early Access. While videogame design has always been a hobby of mine, the skills I learned from doing desktop publishing proved beneficial in a different way: It gave me the design skills to create newsletters, flyers, and publication documents that would all play a part in the leadership roles I entered into as a part of my TSA chapter. I didn’t take an active role in leadership until getting to my high school chapter. As a freshman, I served as the treasurer; as sophomore, I took on the role of planning all social events for the chapter; as a junior, I became the president of the chapter, overseeing all necessary functions and guiding people in their competitive efforts; and this year, I again took on the role as treasurer and as an advisor to the president. Last year was unequivocally my busiest, given that I had to manage more than 30 members in our chapter. I gained a lot from that experience: It was the first time I had been president of any club and tasked with the responsibility of organizing and carrying out the decisions we made as a chapter. It was also an incredibly fulfilling experience: I got to know the people I worked with as close friends, to a point where we would even go out to dinner together just to talk about all of the new, exciting ideas we had planned for TSA. It was also the first year I got to program an artificial intelligence into a robot -- which, without a doubt, is one of the most interesting activities I’ve ever done. TSA, to me, is valuable not only for what it will teach you about working with the world, but also for the relationships you’ll make with your fellow TSA members. I have been honored and humbled by the people I’ve met during my time with TSA, and I wouldn’t change it for the world. If I had to give one piece of advice to anyone out there looking to become a part of the greater TSA community, it would be this: Just begin. Apply to be part of your regional officer team, start volunteer drives for your local chapter, or teach others about the importance of technical education. It’s been a great year so far, and I look forward to what is yet to come at Technosphere this May.

Respectfully Submitted,

Logan Apple

The Virginia Scene
The Virginia Scene

Regional Spring Fairs

On March 4th, all six regions of Virginia TSA held their Spring Regional Fairs to narrow down the competition and get everyone into the competitive mood.

Blue Ridge Regional Fair

The Blue Ridge Regional was held at William Byrd High School, on March 4th. There were a total of about 110 students from across the region. The guest speaker was Neha Hudait, who talked about her experience as a state officer and encouraged members to run for regional and state offices. No fundraising was done – however, the annual Virginia TSA mixer was advertised and students made cards for children with cancer. A total of 4 officers were elected at regional fair, and there are 4 offices open for special election at the state level.

Respectfully Submitted,

Unmesha Vullikanti

Blue Ridge Regional President

Northern Regional Fair

Northern Virginia TSA's Regional Fair was held at Briar Woods High School on March 4th, 2017 from 8:30AM to 5PM. We had a huge variety of activities going on from an arcade room where students could play video games set up by the school's TSA and just a game room, where we had simple solution projects like marshmallow towers. We also had an array of panels set up regarding scholarship information as well as tips on how to lead your chapter. About 800 members attended the fair this year, excluding teachers and parent volunteers.

Respectfully Submitted

Eunice Cho

Northern Regional President
On March 4th, all six regions of Virginia TSA held their Spring Regional Fairs to narrow down the competition and get everyone into the competitive mood.

South Central Regional Fair

The South Central Region held their Spring Fair on March 4th, 2017, at Deep Run High School. Opening session started at 9:35 PM, where the officers introduced multiple fundraising activities for the day, including a mock jail, a game room, and a raffle with exciting items! Throughout the day, we raised a total of $520 for the American Cancer Society - our closing session started at 5 PM, and the officer who raised the most money (Trey Ward) came onstage in a spectacular costume. Our members cannot wait to see everyone at Technosphere!

Respectfully Submitted,

Valerie Young
South Central Regional President

Southwestern Regional Fair

Our Spring Fair consisted of normal competition and three Relay for Life fundraisers. The first is our annual Halo tournament with the winner being from Virginia High and he was awarded a free movie voucher. The second was our board game room. The last was a raffle for various gift cards. The high school held a breakfast fundraiser and the middle school sold lunch. We also gave the STAR test.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gavin Lester
Southwestern Regional President
On March 4th, all six regions of Virginia TSA held their Spring Regional Fairs to narrow down the competition and get everyone into the competitive mood.

**Tidewater Regional Fair**

The Tidewater Region Spring Fair was held on March 4th at Benjamin Syms Middle School. There were movie and game rooms as fundraisers for Relay for Life, and there was a 50/50 raffle with half going to Relay for Life and half going back to the chapter. The Spring Fair was catered by Chick-Fil-A.

Respectfully Submitted,
Chloe Hodges
Tidewater Regional President

**Valley Regional Fair**

The Valley Region Spring Fair of the Virginia Technology Student Association (TSA) was held on March 4, 2017. Over 200 middle and high school students, from 19 different schools, came to Stuarts Draft High School for a full day of competing in various STEM-related events, including Digital Video Production, Video Game Design, and Flight Endurance. Between competitions, students were given the option to screen-print their own t-shirt and attend a workshop led by Jason Bauer, a technology education teacher at East Rockingham High School, where observers could take turns flying a drone. They could also choose to take the Valley Star test and demonstrate their knowledge of TSA and its history. TSA members also participated in multiple fundraisers for the American Cancer Society (ACS), raising a total of $229, which will be presented to Virginia TSA in May at the state conference, Technosphere. The fundraisers included the annual Silent Auction, Hideous Hat, and the new state soda tab fundraiser to benefit St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital through the Ronald McDonald House. Brought back by popular demand, the Hideous Hat is a Valley TSA exclusive. Students and advisors pay $1 to place the hat on someone of their choosing, who either has to pay $1 to get it off or purchase immunity for $5. After lunch was served, courtesy of Rack’em Smack’em Restaurant, and competitions finished, all participants gathered in the gymnasium for a group photograph taken by a drone. Then the award ceremony commenced, where the much anticipated trophies were awarded. The 2016-2017 regional officers and advisory council were recognized and the 2017-2018 officer team was installed. Four Valley Star winners (Evan Harrison of Wilson Memorial High School and Arianna Figueroa, Lattinia Flesher, and Paige Baucom of Wilson Middle School) were recognized and presented with a silver star pin.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jenna Benzing
Valley Regional President
Throughout the conference, there will be scheduled meet-ups to embrace video games and nerdiness; the Carnival is new this year, with games and auctions!

Do you enjoy the usual downtime at Technosphere with nothing to do? Of course not! This year, there will be scheduled activities throughout the day where you can join fellow Virginia TSA members for free fan-based fun. So be sure to pack your Nintendo 3DS (Pokémon Sun/Moon, Mario Kart 7, and Super Smash Bros. 4), card games (Magic: The Gathering, Pokémon TCG, and Yu-Gi-Oh!), and your fandom merchandise to showoff (Anime/Manga, Sci-Fi/Fantasy franchises, Marvel/D.C., and SuperWhoLock). What if you don’t identify with any of these fandoms? No worries! There will also be more traditional board and card games offered all-day, also free of charge. These events will take place next to the grand staircase and on the terrace on the second floor of the Hampton Roads Convention Center. The fandom schedule will be posted on the Virginia TSA Officer Blog and at the Enterprising Booth during Technosphere.

As for the annual social event held on the Saturday night of Technosphere, the Technosphere Recommendations Committee will be hosting Virginia TSA’s first-ever Carnival! It will run on a ticket exchange system in which tickets must be purchased (or redeemed if you bring 25 aluminum soda can tabs to the ticket booth to contribute to the State Service Project) upon entry to the Carnival and more tickets can be won (or lost) depending on individual performance in the games surrounding the Exhibit Hall. Make sure that you bring at least $3 to the Carnival to buy the first 10 tickets. If you lose all your tickets, more can be bought at $2 for 5 tickets. At the end of the Carnival, there will be a TSA merchandise auction in which everything will be sold using the tickets from the games. We hope to see you all there!

Respectfully Submitted,

Tyler Stein

Technosphere Recommendations Committee Co-Chair
Various officers have come together to create the Parliamentary Guidebook, which explains and simplifies parliamentary procedure, primarily for voting delegates.

A number of the Virginia TSA State Officers have created the “Virginia TSA Parliamentary Guidebook”, which is a PDF designed to explain some of the basic motions and rules regarding the acting parliamentary authority of TSA, Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised. It goes over motions related to changing and questioning the business at hand, such as with “Amend” and “Point of Information”, and goes over motions related to debating such as “Previous Question” and “Limit or Extend Limits of Debate”. It also provides a step-by-step procedure on how to make a motion, and various characteristics about each motion. Finally, it explains proper debate etiquette and procedure and what not to do during a debate.

A physical trifold brochure will be available for all voting delegates at the opening general session on Friday, May 5th. For a more detailed explanation, make sure to take a look at the PDF online on the Virginia TSA website under “Resources”: http://virginiatsa.org/resources/

Respectfully Submitted,

Evan Sooklal

Virginia TSA Reporter
Managing Money

Treasurer Devan Patel has experience managing money, and he is sharing tips about things to do around Hampton and the TSA occasions to bring money for.

Hello, Virginia TSA:

It's Devan Patel, Virginia TSA Treasurer, and it's only days till Technosphere! I hope it's safe to say that Virginia's 8000+ members are ready to compete at the annual state conference. This year, Technosphere 2017 will be held at the Hampton Roads Convention Center in Hampton, Virginia. Because of Technosphere’s new location, I would like to share with you some [really helpful] tips and tricks to help you conserve your money:

I have been to Technosphere for 5 years now, so I have had plenty of time to perfect the list of what items and how much money to bring with me to Technosphere. Let's begin with what I recommend:

1.) Official TSA attire (I would roll up your official shirt and pants to decrease the likelihood of creasing)
2.) a Blazer (though it may not be required, it, quite honestly, is fun to wear and handy to have for competitions and LEAP interviews)
3.) Dress shoes and socks (great for official attire)
4.) Undergarments (necessities, lol)
5.) Regular Clothing and shoes (in case you and your chapter go out together)
6.) Your TSA Regalia (to show others how awesome you are)
7.) Toiletries: toothbrush, cologne/perfume, comb, and anything else (make for great first impressions)
8.) Snacks (so you can save money and be prepared for those pre-interview butterflies and post-semi-finalist relief)
9.) Your smiles, laughter, excitement, positivity, and competitive spirit (honestly, that's why I love Virginia TSA so much)
10.) Money, Money, and did I mention, Money (really, super important)

Next, let's delve deeper into how much money to bring, exactly. Speaking personally, I bring around $150-$200 with me each year. Why the high amount? You never know what unexpected surprises might come up, so it is better to overcompensate than be sorry if you, unfortunately, run out of money (it's happened to me before and neither is it fun nor recommended). Now that we have established how much money to bring, let me provide you with a rough list of attractions:

1.) Nearby restaurants (be sure to ask your advisor and be accompanied by a chaperone when going to an ex-convention center dining facility)
   A.) Golden Corral ($$)
   B.) McDonald’s ($)  
   C.) Olive Garden ($$-$$$)
   D.) Chilis ($$)
   E.) Panda Express ($) 
   F.) Cyprus Grille ($$$; located inside Embassy Suites)

2.) TSA merchandise and events
   A.) The TSA Store 
   B.) The Carnival ($3.00 for 10 Tickets, then 2$ for 5 tickets)
   C.) American Cancer Society Basket Raffle 
   D.) American Cancer Society Officer Fundraisers

3.) Room Service or Vending Machine use

Now, I feel happy that Virginia TSA is well prepared for states! For those of you who procrastinate (myself included), I urge you to prepare for your competitions and for the best Technosphere till date: Technosphere 2017! I look forward to meeting all of you there!

Respectfully Submitted,
Devan Patel
Virginia TSA Treasurer

The Virginia Scene
Solve this edition’s Technosphere-themed crossword to find out what things you might see around this year's state conference! Answers on page 15.
Hello Virginia TSA,

My name is Shreyas Bhalle and I am serving as your State Historian and am also the chair of the State Community Service Project Committee. In preparation for Technosphere 2017 the committee, the council, and I are proud to announce some of the events that will be taking place at States on May 5th – May 7th in Hampton, Virginia.

The first will be a fundraiser for the American Cancer Society in which the state officer who raises the most money will get to put make-up on the state officer who raises the least money.

The second fundraiser is a silent auction during the Carnival in which there will be several gift baskets which contain many different types of items.

The other fundraiser is one that has been ongoing in which soda tabs are being collected in order to help a family through troubling times.

The last fundraiser is a pony tail drive with the Pantene Beautiful Lengths program. The program created wigs that are donate directly to the banks from the ACS. The minimum donation length in only 8 inches. Mrs. Tolley from Deep Run High School will be adding 1 on to her donation length up to 16 inches for every 2 pony tails donated by students. We hope you can contribute to helping these causes and furthermore, we hope to see you at Technosphere in Hampton, Virginia!

Respectfully Submitted,

Shreyas Bhalle

Virginia TSA State Historian/State Community Service Project Committee Chair
This year, Virginia TSA is trying something new! In addition to having paper booklets available for all competing students, we are now sponsoring the usage of an app called, "EventsXD". This app is available for free on both the Apple App Store and Google Play Store. Not only is the conference schedule available on the app, but you can view competition listings, maps of the conference center, and even meet-up schedules for the brand new Virginia TSA Social Meet-ups. Additionally, you can customize the app to your own preferences and set notifications for your own competition times and events. Follow these easy, simple steps to help save the trees one piece of paper at a time:

1.) Download the app, EventsXD from your respective app store
2.) Open the app and create an account (it's free!)
3.) In the top right corner, you should see a magnifying glass icon. Click it!
4.) In the opened search window, type in, "Virginia TSA," into the search bar
5.) In the opened listings window, click on the bar which is labeled by, "Virginia Technosphere 2017," and has a location of, "Hampton, Virginia," in the corner.
6.) Voila! You have now joined the event! Use the app to view your schedule, sessions, and even the floor-plan.

Virginia TSA would like to thank you for your cooperation. We look forward to seeing you in less than a week at Technosphere 2017!

Respectfully Submitted,

Devan Patel
Virginia TSA Treasurer

State Treasurer Devan Patel talks about an app we are using to compile a lot of useful information in, including the conference schedule and a map of the conference center.
Senior and State Sergeant-at-Arms Logan Smith shares his feelings and recounts his story as he goes through his final Technosphere.

I have been to six Technospheres during my time in TSA. This year’s will be my seventh and sadly, my last as a member. Ever since my first Technosphere back in sixth grade, I’ve looked forward to it each year. Technosphere has been the biggest part of my TSA experience. Through Technosphere, I was introduced to leadership, which led me to run for state office. Technosphere, and TSA in general, have given me the opportunity to heavily improve my leadership skills.

TSA has always been where I feel that I fit in. In middle school, I was nervous to make new friends. When I joined TSA, I became comfortable with the people around me, I felt at home. It's sad to think that my membership is coming to an end for me soon. However, I will continue to be involved in TSA. I plan to offer my help as an alumni and keep in touch with my chapter and friends from all over the state.

TSA has created my interest in engineering, helped me make great friends, and improved my leadership and public speaking skills.

Respectfully Submitted,
Logan Smith
Virginia TSA Sergeant-at-Arms
In the next edition:
- State Advisor Farewell
- See you at Nationals!
- Favorite Memories
- What happened at Technosphere?

--- Important Websites ---

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