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For immediate release:

May 9th, 2007 - Portland Oregon -- The Portland Area Robotics Society (PARTS), together with Dorkbot PDX, and the Robotics and Automation Society (RAS) at Portland State University (PSU), announce Portland's 8th annual Robotic competition and exposition - PDXBOT.07. This year's event will be held at the Doubletree Executive Meeting Center by the Lloyd Center on Saturday, May 19th, from 10am to 5pm, and in the PSU South Park Blocks on Sunday, May 20th, starting at 11am. PDXBOT.07 is family-oriented, open to the public, and features autonomous robots competing in a variety of challenges as well as robot technology demonstrations and displays. PARTS, DorkBots and RAS offer robotics enthusiasts from all over the Northwest USA and Canada this yearly venue to meet, compete, and share their ideas and robots. Admission to the exposition, and participation in the competitions, is free and open to all.

"This year we have expanded into a new venue with twice the floor space – enough room for two competition stages and a large exhibit space," said Larry Geib, PDXBOT.07's Grand Poobot. Exhibits include a Mars Lander mock-up that the public will have a chance to control via a remote video feed, near-space robotic balloons for high-altitude research; demonstrations of the high-school FIRST and Vex robotics competitions; middle-school FIRST Lego League competition demos; and technology demos that showcase the guts and brains of robots and how they allow machines to interact with reality.

PDXBOT's two competition stages will feature robot sumo matches, line-following competitions, a walking-robot race, and new to PDXBOT this year, the SRS Line Maze Challenge. The robots in all of these contests operate autonomously, whether it's trying to find and push another robot out of a sumo ring, or figuring out how to escape a maze. The ever-popular sumo competitions, in which two robots battle head-to-head and aim to be the last one remaining in the ring, include size classes from the 500-gram mini-sumo class down to the impossibly small 1.25cm cube pico-sumo (think sugar cube with wheels) that was recently introduced to the world by PARTS member Zac Wheeler and featured on Slashdot a month ago.

The newly formed Portland chapter of Dorkbot, known worldwide for "doing strange things with electricity", is joining in the fun this year with a Robot Art competition. All robots with an artistic side are welcome in either the junior or adult class. Note: it's not the robot being judged here, but the art it makes.

On Sunday, May 20, PDXBOT moves to the South Park Blocks on the PSU campus to hold the SRS RoboMagellan contest. This competition, developed by the Seattle Robotics Society, is inspired by the DARPA Grand Challenge which pitted full-sized autonomous vehicles against miles of rough desert conditions. RoboMagellan scales this concept down to an event more accessible to amateur roboticists and easier on the pocketbook. Robots must weigh less than 50lbs and autonomously navigate an outdoor course marked by orange traffic cones over varied terrain. RoboMagellan robots often rely on GPS, electronic-compasses, computer vision, ultrasound and a lot of smarts to find their way to the goal.

This year's major sponsors include Tektronix Inc., Parallax Inc., Sunstone Circuits (PCB123), Atmel Inc., Servo Magazine, and Pololu.

For additional information about PDXBOT.07, see the event web site at www.pdxbot.org. You can compete with your own, custom built robot or with one of the variety of kits on the market. Preregistration for the events via the web page is strongly encouraged.

About the Portland Area Robotics Society:

The Portland Area Robotics Society was formed to help and inspire those interested in learning about and building robots. It includes professionals, amateurs, students, engineers, artists, hobbyists, and tinkerers. PARTS offers members an environment to explore all aspects of robotics, and expands communication between robot enthusiasts. Members share ideas, experience and enthusiasm for building robots. Club meetings are held the first

Saturday of each month. Potential sponsors, please contact President Roger Ray (president@portlandrobotics.org). The Portland Area Robotics Society is an Oregon nonprofit corporation. Club information and meeting location is available at www.portlandrobotics.org.

About Dorkbot PDX:

Dorkbot PDX is a freshly formed local chapter of Dorkbot, which promotes creative people doing strange things with electricity worldwide. Dorkbot strives to create an informal, friendly environment in which people can talk about the work they're doing and to foster discussion about that works; to help bring together people from different backgrounds who are interested in similar things; and to give everyone an opportunity to see the strange things our neighbors are doing with electricity. Dorkbot isn't really a forum for formal artist talks or lectures, but rather a chance for diverse people to have friendly conversations about interesting ideas. Dorkbot PDX meets every-other week. Club and meeting information can be found at www.dorkbotpdx.org

About the Robotics and Automation Society:

The Portland State University student chapter of the IEEE Robotics and Automation Society is dedicated to creating an atmosphere where students can put what they have learned to practical and sometimes impractical use. The group continues to support a variety of student projects emphasizing design techniques, research, or just fun.

About our major sponsors:

<Tektronix, Inc

Headquartered in Beaverton, Oregon, Tektronix is a leading manufacturer of test and measurement equipment. For over five years, Tektronix has issued PARTS a grant under their community sponsorship program, which helps defray the costs of running PDXBOT and helps keep the event admission-fee-free. www.tektronix.com

<Parallax, Inc.

Parallax is a popular vendor of robotics kits and parts with a strong focus on education. They are also a long time supporter of PDXBOT, providing prizes and funding. www.parallax.com

<Sunstone Circuits

Based in Mulino, Oregon, Sunstone Circuits pioneered on-line ordering of quick-turn printed circuit board (PCB) manufacturing. Sunstone Circuits is the parent company of PCB Express and PCB-123, which are popular sources of custom circuit boards amongst hobbyists. Sunstone has provided PARTS with free PCB fabrication and will have an exhibit at the show illustrating the steps in PCB fabrication. www.sunstone.com, www.pcb123.com, www.pcbexpress.com

< BC Laser Works

Based in Beavercreek, Oregon, BC Laser Works has generously donated time and materials to make this year's and previous year's laser-cut awards. www.bclaserworks.com