Annual Pumpkin Toss Combines Fall, Physics and Fun | College of Engineering

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Quick Read

• Time: 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 28
• Location: Elk Ridge Park – 1060 East 2500 North in North Logan
• Cost: Free for all patrons and participants

Engineering students from across Utah will compete Saturday, Oct. 28 to see who can hurl their ripening jack-o’-lanterns the farthest.

This year’s seventh-annual North Logan Pumpkin Toss is scheduled to take place Oct. 28 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Elk Ridge Park in North Logan. The event is organized by the Utah State University student chapter of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, or ASME.

Each year, teams construct a medieval device called a trebuchet (treb-you-shay) that launches pumpkins in a tournament of distance, accuracy and mechanical design. The trebuchet was used as a weapon of war hundreds of years ago, and today the device is a great example of how the principles of engineering and physics can be used to build a powerful machine.

"It’s an amazing opportunity for all the students that participate," said Spencer Tanner, one of this year’s student organizers. “We spend so much time in class learning about the physics of this that when we finally get to apply it, it’s a very rewarding experience. We look forward to having another great event this year and hope to see many come out for it.”
Awards will be given to teams whose pumpkins travel the farthest and most accurately and to groups with the best or most innovative trebuchet designs. The event is open to college and high school science and physics students and teams from the general public.

Tanner said the event is a good way to showcase what mechanical engineering is all about.

“The popularity for this event has grown so much over the years that before we even started advertising for it, we had a lot of people asking us about how to get involved,” said student organizer Thory Van Dyke.

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Media Contact: Spencer Tanner – Utah State University, College of Engineering | sbtanner04@gmail.com | cell: 801-888-0167 | engineering.usu.edu | @engineeringUSU