VEX, Technology, and a Farm Boy

There is one similarity between my current home in Bellevue, Washington and my former one in Grandville, Michigan. In both places, you will find no shortage of blackberries. But the BlackBerry’s in Renton are usually of the plastic, inedible variety and come off factory assembly lines while the blackberries in Grandville are quite delightful to eat and grow on trees.

My first few weeks after moving to Washington were simply overwhelming. I was bewildered with the gadgets and gizmos in the hands, ears, and homes of my new friends, most of which I found pointless and distracting.

I took my chances and made the decision to join Wasabi Robotics, a local VEX team that one of friends participated in. My friend asked me to join, because Wasabi Robotics needed new members for their second VEX team. And thus, my VEX career began.

Working with the hex keys and hacksaws brought back pleasant memories of repairing old farm vehicles back in the day. My enthusiasm for building the VEX robots to accomplish simple, practical tasks like picking up trash and pushing obstacles out of the way led me to explore some of the more technical aspects of the club, like programming and website design. Nowadays, I am a programmer for Wasabi Robotics.

VEX taught me how to appreciate the potential of technology through its straightforward, but highly versatile robots. Who knows; maybe I will get myself one of those BlackBerry’s.