On ROVs

JOHN McCORD, UNC Coastal Studies Institute Education Programs coordinator, spoke to First Flight High School Fundamentals of Technology students about the role of underwater remote operated vehicles (ROVs) in current research at CSI and in marine science around the world. The class, advised by teacher Tom Komsi, is constructing a version of an ROV for competition. McCord also addressed current activities at CSI. Students at Manteo High and Cape Hatteras Secondary School of Coastal Studies are working on their own ROVs and plan to join the FFHS team in the second annual Mid-Atlantic ROV Regional Competition at Langley Air Force Base this spring. (G. Meads photo, DCS)

Underwater remote operated vehicles turning heads

They are definitely cool, and Tom Komsi's Fundamentals of Technology class is all set to build one, but what are the practical applications of ROVs?

John McCord, education program coordinator for the UNC Coastal Studies Institute, visited Komsi's students at First Flight High School to answer that question with regard to underwater remote operated vehicles (ROVs) on March 9.

"John McCord brought an ROV that he built to show the class how we could build one. He went over steps in the process that it would take," described Komsi.

"The class will be building one for an upcoming competition in Virginia and it was beneficial for the class to see John's version. Ours will feature an underwater camera and a reaching device that will retrieve objects from a pool."

McCord also talked about and showed pictures to acquaint Komsi's students with UNC's Coastal Studies Institute and CSI's role on the Outer Banks. McCord explained that their current research relates to the ocean — how temperature changes the density of salt water and how that relates to sea creatures before and after a hurricane. He explained how ROV they use at CSI works.

"My presentation focused not only on ROV design and the upcoming competition, but also how ROV's are used in real world science," McCord said.

"From the polar expeditions to deployment during major storms such as hurricanes, ROV's are invaluable tools that scientists use to better understand our world's ocean."