Engineering Newswire 15: Disney robots play catch with your kids

Today on Engineering Newswire, brought to you by PD&D TV, we're playing catch with Disney robots, colonizing mars with deep pocketed donors, and beaming aboard a Star Trek classroom. This episode features:

•Robotics experts at Disney's lab in Pittsburgh have created a humanoid robot that can play a game of catch. This eerie-faced robot not only tosses the ball to you, but he can find, register, and catch it.
•Billionaire Elon Musk is working on plans to colonize Mars with a red suburbia made up of 80 thousand people. Accompanying founders of the new Mars colony would be large amounts of equipment, including machines to produce fertilizer, methane, and oxygen from Mars' atmospheric nitrogen and carbon dioxide and the planet's subsurface water ice.
•Researchers at Durham University are designing and testing a classroom that boldly goes where no classroom has gone before in a project that has been dubbed SynergyNet.
•A team from the University of Pennsylvania has shown that nanoscale particles, or nanocrystals, of the semiconductor cadmium selenide can be printed or coated on flexible plastics to form high-performance electronics.
•Stanford University has developed an algorithm, known as ReFIT, that vastly improves the speed and accuracy of neural prosthetics that control computer cursors.

Do you have story ideas? Comment below or email pdd_web@advantagemedia.com [1] and we'll cover them in an upcoming episode.

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