

Election Update:
Alex Ihler is the new BoC Chair.



Free Swing Dance
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Avery House

THE CALIFORNIA TECH

VOLUME XCIX, NUMBER 6

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1997

SURF Seminar Day

BY ANDREA MCCOLL

During the summer, over 200 students worked on a wide range of research projects, through the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship program [SURF]. On Saturday, October 18, these students presented the results of their work during the nineteenth annual SURF Seminar Day.

The principle behind the SURF program is to provide opportunities to undergraduate students for research under the guidance of seasoned research sponsors.

"It's different from regular research," said Reuben W. Ogburn IV.

Projects spanned many fields of science, and included such topics as: "The Evolution of Ganymede and Callisto" [Amy Barr], "Surface Characterization of Quartz Microspheres Used for Quantum Optics" [Erik Streed], "Quantum Compu-

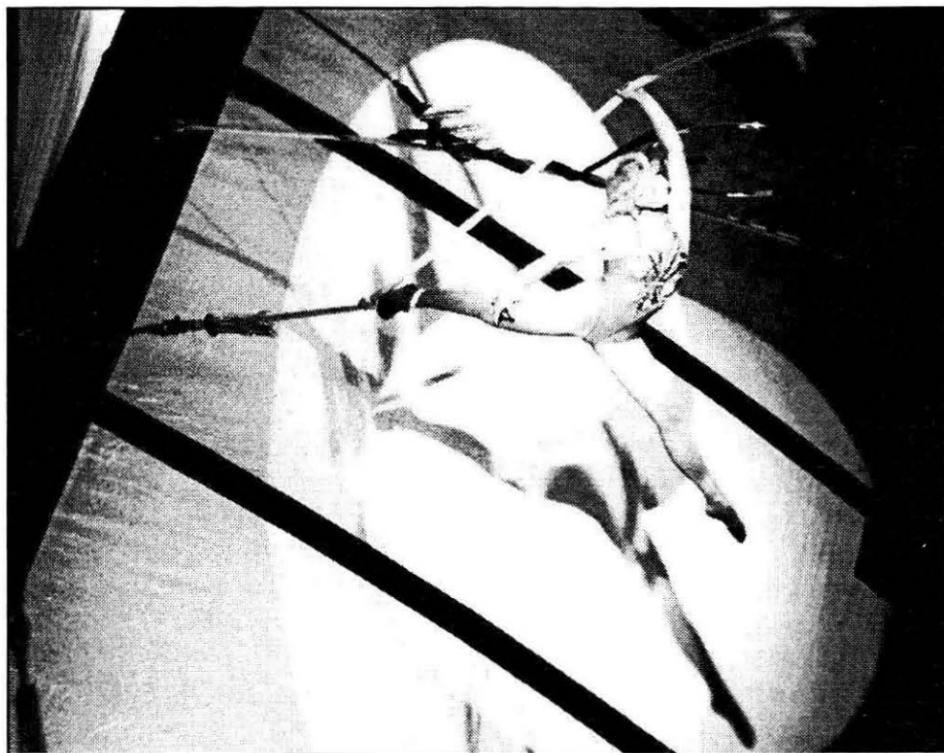
tation with Nonabelions" [Ogburn], and "Building a Robotic Cat" [Charles Atkin].

Additionally, not all SURFs occur on campus or the immediate vicinity; some students perform their research at other area colleges, and some travel abroad. Some students even come from other institutions, including Cambridge to research at Caltech.

"You don't have to do SURFs here; you can do them wherever you want," said Atkin, who spent his summer studying robotics in Edinburgh, Scotland.

The SURF Seminar Day provided the students with an opportunity to explain their research to interested members of the Caltech community.

Additionally, students identified as the best speakers on Seminar Day will advance to the semi-final round of the Doris S. Perpall Speaking Awards.



The LA Circus, a one ring European Style circus came to town and Albert Shih was there taking photographs. An aerialist is spun around a rope.

Caltech buys abandoned USDA building

Fire station to replace 3 student off-campus houses as part of deal

BY MOHANA KUMAR

Caltech recently acquired a building at 263 South Chester St., previously used for over a half-century by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) as a fruit and vegetable chemistry research station.

The property, which was originally part of Caltech's "master plan" for local land acquisition, was abandoned three years ago after 50 years of use when the USDA decided to consolidate its activities to Riverside. Caltech acquired the land in early September by applying for surplus federal property.

Though officially owned by Caltech, the land has not been zoned for educational, administrative or research purposes. The conditional use permit hearing for this is scheduled for November 5th. At this time, neighbors will be able to voice their opinions regarding this issue. However, the city's decision is expected to be in Caltech's favor.

Initially, both Caltech and the City of Pasadena wanted the site. In 1989, the city planned to use the land to build a permanent fire station, replacing the temporary



PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIK STREED

Housing Crunch? Tech's Solution.

fire station established on the south side of Del Mar Blvd. in between Wilson St. and Michigan St. The city's previous station had been declared seismically unstable.

Although the city's application for the site was submitted a year after Caltech's, Caltech agreed to lease out other institute land for city infrastructure use, to avoid the city's competition for the property. Negotiations are under way to allow Pasadena a 50 year lease on the Caltech land on the southeast corner of Del Mar Blvd. and Holliston Ave.

This "gentleman's agreement" is beneficial to both parties. The city needs to ensure a fire station in South Pasadena, and would rather build a new station than convert a laboratory building into a fire station. Caltech also gains from having a long-term fire station on campus.

The vacated building was a shelter for transients before its acquisition by Caltech.

"There certainly were indications that homeless people used the building:

SEE USDA ON PAGE 3

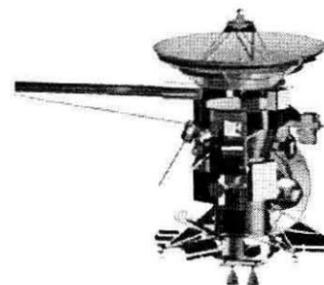
Destination: Saturn

BY DALE DEBAKCSY

On October 15, mankind took its first step towards its newest exploration of the ringed planet, Saturn, with the launching of the Cassini spacecraft at 1:43 a.m. PDT. This marks the first time that an expedition has been launched to Saturn since the Voyager probes were sent to examine the planet twenty years ago.

Cassini is scheduled to reach Saturn on July 1, 2004, when it will begin its first orbit of the planet. Following orbits (of which there will be approximately seventy-two) are to be spread out amongst the observational flights of Saturn's moons which Cassini is to undertake in the course of its four year task.

Cassini will also convey of the European Space Agency's



The Cassini Probe

Huygens probe to Titan, a moon of Saturn, where it is to be released on November 6, 2004, in order to carry out tests upon the Titanian atmosphere.

In order to boost Cassini's speed, it will, over the course of its mission, make several gravity-assist flybys. The first two, both around Venus, will take place on April 21, 1998,

SEE CASSINI ON PAGE 3

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Baltimore's greeting has disturbing overtones

Dear Editors:

Several rhetoric questions came to my mind after reading the front page of last week's Tech. "American is a language and a style that dominates the world"? Should the language be English?

I wonder, in what sense does the American style of life and English language dominate, say, in the neighboring Mexico, two hours drive from here, or in hundreds other countries across the world?

This may be a true statement when referring to the American pop culture, which does dominate the world's movies and TV shows, but, probably, it's not what matters at Caltech? And why, at all, the "dominating" part is so important for Caltech?

MAXIM LYUTIKOV
THEORETICAL ASTROPHYSICS

Why all the ads?

Dear Editors:

As the parent of a freshman at Caltech I subscribed to *The California Tech* newspaper hoping to keep informed about exactly what you folks at Caltech are up to. I have just received the first three issues of *The California Tech* and while I found issues number 1 and 2 chock-full of useful information for the new students and containing some interesting articles, particularly "Core Class Chaos" by John Hatfield, issue number 3 was a distinct letdown, filled with more advertisements than information.

I see that Ryan Cox, one of the previous editors, resigned just as issue number 3 was going to press and I only hope that his resignation does not presage a plethora of advertisements and a dearth of information in future issues. How many advertisements does it take for the paper to break even? Sure the newspaper is not run as a profit making industry at Caltech?

FREDERICK BLAKE
FRESHMAN PARENT

IHC: tell us what you think about Rotation

Dear Students,

The IHC would like to hear your input on the Rotation process in general. We are open to any comments about the rules, violations, and the way Rotation week is carried out. If you know of any problems you feel that we should address for next year, please let us know. We welcome your suggestions for improvements, as well as any other constructive criticism you might have.

If you have questions about whether an event was a violation — either a hypothetical situation or one which actually occurred during Rotation week, feel free to ask us and we'll address the issue. Your input on Rotation will help us make the necessary changes to facilitate the implementation of a smoother Rotation week for next year. Please send your input to ihc@ugcs.caltech.edu. Thank you very much.

LORI HSU
IHC CHAIR

Message from the Editors

Recently several parties (ASCIT, parents, etc.) have expressed concern over the amount of advertising in the Tech proportional to the number of articles. With the exception of our bookkeeper Patti Croke, the Tech is entirely student run. Unlike most schools which have either journalism majors or journalism departments, Tech has neither. Considering that Caltech is a small, technically oriented school, this is not surprising. However, one of the results is a student newspaper edited by folks majoring in Physics (Erik) and Computer Science (Autumn), with support by math, geology, physics, chemistry majors and frosh.

We draw our articles from the staff, students, and occasionally faculty of the institute. With these sources we can normally fill an eight to twelve page paper. However, since our size is small, the relative variation in articles is high. During Rotation, midterms, and various other times of the year the students who run and write the Tech have other things they need to be doing. Like Physics 98 and Math 108 sets. This does not prevent

our advertisers from wanting to run ads. We like ads. Our Business Manager likes ads, too. Ads allow us to provide you the Tech for cheap (that's free on campus). The result is the occasional Tech with either large space filling gimmicks (remember to fill out your Tech surveys) or fewer pages with more ads.

Consider for a moment the fate of *The Georgia Tech*. The poor paper of this institute was so starved for articles that its poor editors plastered the front page with an announcement which went something like this: There will be no paper this week, no one has written any articles. It could always be worse. Sometimes it has been.

THE EDITORS,
ERIK STREED
AUTUMN LOOIJEN

THE CALIFORNIA TECH

Caltech 40-58, Pasadena, CA 91125
editorial desk: (626) 395-6153
advertising desk: (626) 395-6154
editorial email: editors@tech.caltech.edu
advertising email: adv@tech.caltech.edu
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EDITORS
Autumn Looijen
Erik Streed

BUSINESS MANAGER
Mic Westcoat

COORDINATING EDITOR
Wren Montgomery

DELEGATION/OFFICE MANAGER
Yin Yuen

COPY EDITORS
Jacques Frechet
Andrew Hun

AD LAYOUT
Vanessa Sih

NEWS EDITOR
Erik Streed

DELEGATION STAFF
Anne Hanna
Rafi Rubin
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John Hatfield

STAFF WRITERS
Myfanwy Callahan
Neil Stevens
Dusan Misevic
Dale DeBaksey
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COMICS EDITOR
Kenneth Kuo

PHOTO EDITOR
Lisa Van Hooser

FEATURE WRITERS
Ron Dollete
Daisy James
Jean-Paul Revel
Adam Villaz

LAYOUT
Erik Dill
Shannon Stewman

EVENTS & NOTES
Andrea McColl

CONTRIBUTORS
Mike Astle
Karen Bletzer
Judy Green

STAFF ILLUSTRATOR
Kjerstin Easton

ACCOUNTS MANAGER
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Letters to the Editor: 5 p.m. Monday
Unsolicited Articles: noon Monday

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Letters and announcements are welcome. All contributions should include the author's name and phone number and the intended date of publication. Submit copy (preferably on Macintosh 3.5" disk) to the Tech mailbox outside SAC room 40, or e-mail editors@tech.caltech.edu. The editors reserve the right to edit and abridge all submissions for clarity, expediency, etc. All articles are the property of the authors. Authors and columnists retain all intellectual property rights. Articles received in **BONUS** format will be laughed at, but if Jacques is in a good mood, he'll translate them.

Advertising should be submitted as camera-ready art, but the Tech can also do simple typesetting and arrangement. All advertising inquiries should be directed to the business manager. For email, please use adv@tech.caltech.edu. Do not send ad inquiries to the editors.

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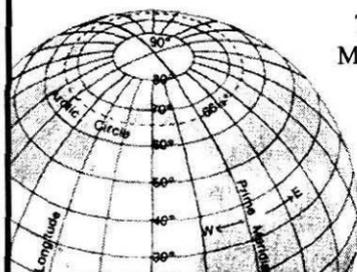
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After two-day delay, Cassini takes first step toward Saturn

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

take place on April 21, 1998, and June 22, 1999 — so mark your calendars. The third will occur on August 17, 1999, using the Earth's gravity for propulsion. Finally, on December 30, 2000, this wayward voyager will pass around Jupiter, thence on to its final objective.

These flybys were a major concern of those protesting Cassini's launch. Protesters claimed that the craft's plutonium fuel could kill millions if a miscalculation caused Cassini to collide with Earth. They attempted to get a court injunction to stop the launch,

but were turned down by a federal judge in Hawaii. NASA maintains that the craft is safe.

The performance of both the Cassini craft and Titan IV/B Centaur rocket during the launch far exceeded all expectations of its project chiefs at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

The energy transferred from the rockets to the craft was accurate within one part in five thousand, and the post-launch trajectory alteration, expected to be on the order of 26 meters per second, will only need to be of one meter per second. All systems aboard the craft are operating normally.

USDA: Greenhouse to be renovated for biology research

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

vents were taken off the crawl space; remnants of old clothing and food wrappers were scattered across the area; parts of the building were used as a restroom," explains William Irwin, Deputy Director of the Physical Plant Department, the division in charge of Caltech's property maintenance.

Irwin is quick to point out that the building was cleaned and sanitized once Caltech gained title to the property. Security personnel are also patrolling the area.

The site still contains laboratory facilities used by the USDA for chemical research, though they are outdated. Jerry Burke, Special Assistance to the Provost for Facilities, says, "We have not made up our mind as to whether the building will be used for office space or lab space."

However, it has already been decided that, of the 16 thousand square feet available, approximately two thousand will be allocated for the renovation of an existing greenhouse on the property. This greenhouse will be used by Professor Meyerowitz of the biology department.

The use of the remaining area will be determined by the Provost's Office according to institute needs. Specific departments are able to apply for use of the property, but, as Burke says, "We must decide what is best for the Institute."

Regardless of what the building's future use will be, it is in need of basic renovation. "The electricity, heating and ventilation are obsolete and outdated," claims Irwin. "If we indeed do have to convert it into a modern lab, it won't be inexpensive." However, this cost would be far less than the cost of building an entirely new facility.

Irwin remains undaunted by the work ahead. "Caltech is rapidly outgrowing its boundaries. We need new facilities and opportunities for new research. Any potential like this is exciting!"

The vacated building was a shelter for transients.

The Outside World

by Myfanwy Callahan

JERUSALEM, ISRAEL - Sheik Ahmed Yassin, founder of Hamas, gave his most militant speech since his return to Gaza three weeks ago. He proclaimed, "A nation that does not wage jihad cannot exist," and urged his followers to continue fighting Israel until "we regain our rights and our homeland."

NEW DELHI, INDIA - The Cabinet reversed its decision to have the federal government take control of Uttar Pradesh, India's largest state. Violence had broken out after the Hindu nationalist party won a confidence vote, but the situation was not deemed so chaotic as to warrant federal control.

VIENNA, AUSTRIA - In the last 16 months, 4220 tanks, jets, helicopters, and artillery pieces have been destroyed in the Balkans, according to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Yugoslavia, Croatia, and Herzegovina have all worked towards the limit on weapons specified in a 1996 treaty.

SANTO DOMINGO, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC - Riots broke out Monday in five districts where residents have borne the brunt of the power cuts lasting up to 20 hours every day. Demonstrators looted shops, threw stones, and burned tires in the

suburbs of Santo Domingo in protest.

TOKYO, JAPAN- Japan has agreed to sign the worldwide ban on antipersonnel land mines that was endorsed by nearly 100 other countries in Oslo last month. Thus, Japan broke from the United States, though they usually follow the American lead in such issues.

WASHINGTON, D.C. - A study of 50,000 patients in 35 countries found that a third of countries have tuberculosis that is resistant to all standard drugs. Areas of India, Russia, Latvia, Estonia, the Dominican Republic, Argentina, and the Ivory Coast have so much drug-resistant tuberculosis that it is overwhelming their current health system.



Beverly Sills to give Michelin Lecture



PHOTO COURTESY DAVID GOODSTEIN

Beverly Sills, one of the greatest coloratura sopranos of the twentieth century

VIA DAVID GOODSTEIN

The sixth annual James Michelin Distinguished Lecture will be Tuesday, November 4, at 8 p.m. Beverly Sills, one of the greatest coloratura sopranos of the twentieth century, will share a conversation with her audience in Beckman Auditorium.

Currently Chairman of the Board of Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Sills was born and grew up in Brooklyn. She began her career in radio commercials and soap operas, playing Elaine Raleigh on *Our Girl, Sunday*, from

which she retired at the precocious age of twelve. She went on to fame on the stages of the world's leading opera houses.

The Michelin Lecture series was established by a New York designer in memory of her uncle, James Michelin, a geologist, who always hoped to attend Caltech. It was designed to "foster a creative interaction between the arts and sciences."

Optional free tickets are available from the Caltech ticket office.

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Caltech students, staff participate in the Stroll to end Child Abuse



COURTESY THE CALTECH Y

BY KAREN BLETZER

This Sunday, October 19, a group of eleven students and staff participated as a team in the second annual Stroll to End Child Abuse, a mile walk around the Rose Bowl organized by the Foothill Family Service, a non-profit organization. The

Caltech stroll team, sponsored by the Caltech Y, helped the cause by paying the \$10 registration fee for each member of the team. Total Stroll participants numbered 850 and raised \$75,000. Corporate sponsors of the walk were diverse and included Huntington Hospital, the Pasadena Jaycees, and the main

sponsor of the event, Bristol Farms.

The walk was preceded by short speeches given by several people associated with the Foothill Family Service. They described how as little as \$25 in collected pledges and registration fees helps prevent child abuse by paying for an educa-

tional workshop for parents of pre-schoolers at risk for child abuse. \$50 pays for five weeks of tutoring for an abused child who is failing the third grade. \$200 pays for one month of intensive therapy for a child abuse victim. The money collected helps the 1 out of 4 girls and 1 out of 7 boys who are victims of child abuse in America. The Foothill Family Service has been helping families and children in the Pasadena community for over 71 years.

Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse were on hand during the introductory speeches. The Men's National Fitness Champion and the runner up in the National Aerobics Champion Mixed Pairs competitions led the warm up and stretching before the walk. Strollers, wearing bright green Stroll T-shirts and prompted by the two aerobics champions, marched in place and stretched with partners. The children present enjoyed the bustle and activity. Mickey and Minnie then led the

strollers to the start of the mile long Stroll Course, which wrapped around area H of the Rose Bowl. The leisurely walk lasted about 20 minutes. After the walk, strollers were treated to music by K-Earth 101 and food from refreshment sponsors.

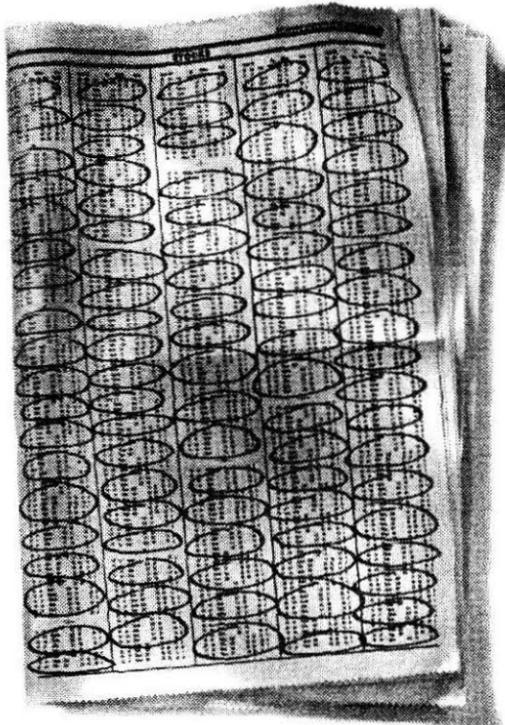
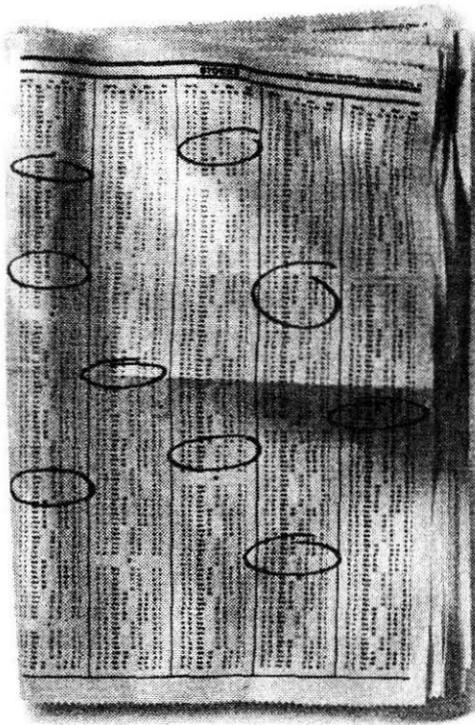
Heather Dean, who organized the Caltech Stroll team, felt that the event was likely to attract Caltech participants because of the proximity of the Rose Bowl, and the small time commitment that the event required. The beautiful sunny day and the carnival atmosphere of the various tents set up in the middle of the Stroll course made participation fun and took the edge off a very serious subject. Nevertheless, although it was fun, participants felt that they had helped make a difference in a child's life by raising both money and awareness.

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A.S.C.I.T. Minutes

20 OCTOBER 1997

Present (at some point): BoD (minus Lori, Alex, and John), Mic Westcoat, Erik Streed, Autumn Looijen, Puneet Newaskar (This week Old Dirty Bastard = Mike W. and Method Man = Mike A.)

Alex Ihler was appointed by the Excomm as temporary VP/BoC Chair.

Meeting opens at 22:10.

Dealing With Guests

Puneet — Just here to see what goes on. Big mistake.
Mic — Surprise, surprise - another compensation schedule proposal! The new scheme keeps the per flat payment to the editors the same but gives them a fixed percentage of the *Tech's* yearly surplus. The business manager's per issue payment disappears and his commission rate increases. Another percentage of the surplus is set aside in a bonus fund that can be awarded under recommendation of the business manager and the editors with the approval of the BoD.

Kohl would like to see a mechanism that gives a disincentive for the *Tech* to go beyond some fixed advertising to content ration. Autumn and Erik argue that rather than providing disincentive to get advertising, we should concentrate more on adding content. Because of the surplus of ads, the *Tech* has extra money and more leverage to solicit articles. Awards for submissions may become more substantial in order to attract a larger pool of submissions.

Either way, the BoD would like to see figures for the expected income of the editors and business managers under this new plan.

Officer Reports

Baldeep — Has rustled up a frosh to help set-up a web-based used book market for students.

Kiran — Tom Mannion has agreed to pay for the hardware for a card reader on the copier. Installation should take around four weeks.

Adrienne — The Red Door, GSC, and Caltech Y are putting together a campus-wide gathering on November 8, at the Red Door. There will be live jazz, wine, cheese, and other such stuff They are asking for \$270 of special event funds to help pay for the shin-dig. The ASCIT Halloween Party is on November 1, in the SAC courtyard. There will be beer November 1, in the SAC courtyard. [Adrienne turns to Method Man, says "My room or your room?" then starts hitting her head against the window frame and moaning. Whatever.]

Old Dirty Bastard — The ARC will be meeting soon to consider stuff like frosh on grades and what rhymes with orange.

Lori — Is not here but is a good person anyway.

John — Is also not here but that doesn't keep him from sending his opinion. The *little t* books are in and are being processed. It looks like we're on track for filing taxes on time. We really need a new computer if we are going to improve the accounting process for corporate finances. [Kohl - "I want a computer that will keep me warm at night."]

Method Man — Meeting with Lori and Rich Fagen (Director of ITS) early this week to ask about new computing solutions to our 21st century problems. The roster of all corporate officers will be complete after we have a new VP/BoC Chair. Speaking of that, there is an election on Tuesday. The office of VP/BoC Chair and a bylaw change are on the ballot.
Alex — Just wants to be friends.
Kohl — Turnout at Friday morning donuts has been pretty low. What's wrong with you people? Come and eat some damn donuts. If Kohl cries himself to sleep with his head nestled against my broad chest, his handsome face clasped between my strong hands, one more time than there's gonna be hell to pay. Donuts — Friday 08:00. Be there. Stop the madness. Warren "\$21 Billion" Buffet will be visiting soon and Kohl gets to eat with him. The BoD is meeting with President Baltimore on Nov. 5. Let us know if you'd like any issues raised. Each Director is to have a good start on a "how to do our job" manual in two weeks. Also, each Director should go through the sections of the bylaws immediately relevant to him and determine what changes need to be made. Kohl is in favor of proposing a dues increase. There hasn't been one in four years.

There was a letter to the editor in the last *Tech* about the BoD keeping the *Tech* on a short leash. Also, there is a problem with allocating time in the publications darkroom as promised by the *Big T*. These are just a few more in a long line of publications related issues that have come to the BoD's attention. Kohl suggests that maybe we should restructure the publications hierarchy so that there is one person (elected or appointed) overseeing all publications operations. The BoD will consider this idea in more detail next week.

Meeting closes at 23:22.

BoD votes 5-0-0 to give \$250 of special events funds to the jazz/wine/cheese thing.

BoD votes 5-0-0 to not approve the new *Tech* compensation schedule at this time.

Meeting adjourned at 23:30.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael P. Astle
 ASCIT Secretary

I.H.C. MINUTES

OCTOBER 16, 1997

Present: Steve (Lloyd), Shumway (Fleming), Geoff (Ricketts), Marty (Blacker), Geoff (Dabney), Brett (Page), Jeremy (Ruddock), Judy (Secretary), Lori (chair), Jim Krehl (ath man)

Brett and Jeremy get thier names on the board for being tardy, and Lori and Jim Krehl get

their parents called for playing hookey.

Judy holds the Disco card draw. Page has the trophy now, and the order drawn is Dabney, Ricketts, Blacker, Fleming, Ruddock, Lloyd. Disco challenges must include 1 major and 2 other events. Everyone warns Brett about Dabney's vicious threat. Brett says "You're assuming they're going to beat us" "Again," corrects Geoff as he recaps Dabney's crushing defeat of Page last year, the only time that Page fell.

Brett, unable to account for his house's lack of physical apti-

tude, responds by telling us he went to the Ath tonight. Out of respect for our absence, however, he did not order Berries Ath-enaum.

Meeting closes either for an unsuccessful attempt by us to track down spies, or for us to beat up Brett. I'm not going to say which, but you can decide.

Meeting reopens. IHC will be reviewing the rotation rules. If you have any suggestions or comments, please talk to any house president, or Lori lhsu@ugcs or Judy judyg@ugcs.

Respectfully Submitted,
Judy Green

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Wednesday, Nov. 5th

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Backgrounder

by Ron Dollete

"Chumbawhat?" You've probably already heard the hit single by Chumbawamba called "Tub thumping." The song really is catchy, and it's the first track off Chumbawamba's new CD, "Tubthumper." Incidentally, tubthumping refers to yelling out on a soapbox and ranting and so on. The name aptly fits this eclectic band. On the CD, there's a quirky mix of all sorts of media, like Beck meets Art of Noise. And political. There are many social overtones in songs like "Goodship Lifestyle" (a song arguably about the loneliness of being homosexual in an intolerant world. Maybe I'm just digging too deep...) and also "Outsider" and "Scapegoat". The song "One by One" is about union leaders who sold out their picketing employees just for a seat in the British House of Lords. So there's definitely a lot

of content to think about. Style-wise, "Tubthumping" and "Drip, Drip, Drip" are kind of catchy. People who don't like the female voice that interrupts will probably not like the rest of the CD where the female voices are more prevalent and is also disappointingly not as danceable. The next single off the album is going to be "Amnesia." This song is alright and is probably the next best song on the album. We definitely need a new song since Y107 manages to play "Tubthumping" a ridiculous three times in the span of an hour and a half. I recommend just getting the "Tubthumping" single if you're in that market. It comes with two other songs as well as two mixes. The EP will be more worth your money than this CD.

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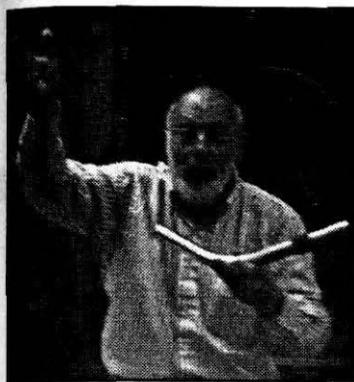


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Dean's Corner

Darwin and the CCCC

by Jean-Paul Revel

In the more than 100 years since Darwin propounded his views, it has become customary to allude to the "survival of the fittest" as a paradigm which explains many behavioral traits and personality characteristics.

It is fantastic to what extremes this idea can lead. It can be used to explain very paradoxical behavior, which obviously gives no advantage to the individual.

In the case of the male spider or mantis for whom the sex act is the supreme sacrifice, it is the nutritional advantage that he gives to his mate, and thus the headstart for his offspring, which may be key. The beneficiary, instead of being the individual is the gene pool to which the individual belongs.

It is amusing and sobering at the same time to see how such a paradigm applies to ourselves. Obviously, being here marks you as one of the fittest in at least some characteristics, such as intellectual achievement. As a result you have the opportunity to further develop your native abilities, presumably increasing your fitness, as long as we live in a society where brains and ability to do things, count.

We are one of the special places where intellectuals of the world unite; homework may stand in the way socializing with your peers, but as Adlai Stevenson (the egghead who lost the battle for the U.S. presidency to Ike, of course, who graduated from West Point not far from the bottom of the class, if I remember correctly), said, you have nothing to loose but your yolks. (Maybe I don't belong here, I am not sure I understand what I just wrot [sic]. I find it no consolation, however, to belittle problems by saying that you are merely losing your yolks.)

In any case, be grateful that you are not a male praying mantis.

If one thinks of it, however, fitness is not a single characteristic. The overall fitness of the individual is made up of sub accounts, each given a weight which depends on external factors, and which are then summed.

The terrible thing is that fitness in one area does not guarantee overall fitness. I recently saw a documentary which brought this home vividly. It was about people with William's syndrome, a set of chromosome defects which result in very peculiar personalities and odd physical characteristics.

People suffering from William's have unusual facial characteristics and many other traits related to the fact that elastin, a protein which is an important in controlling the elasticity of many tissues (skin, blood vessels etc.), is defective. William's patients also have mental defects of sufficient magnitude that it makes many of them incapable of living on their own, although some manage to learn how to.

Although retarded in many ways, these people turn out to unusually adept at social interactions, with no fear of others, an outgoing personality and a basically positive attitude. They see poorly, but they have very keen hearing, and are extremely musical.

In an environment where mu-

sical ability or social skills would determine survival they would be among the fittest. However, as I said earlier, fitness in some respects does not guarantee overall fitness.

Now, if one asks whether Techers are fit to survive, one has to hem and haw. It depends on where — in their houses? at Caltech? in the world at large?

Although our intellectual prowess is unquestionable overall, it is not clear that we always use the marbles we have. There are many instances when extraneous pressures affect our behavior so drastically, as to seriously influence our intrinsic fitness. We take risks which could threaten the integrity of our yolks, and could lead to the loss of our genes to the population at large, thus decreasing fitness to naught.

Risk taking, of course, is not reprehensible *per se*. What is sad is that the degree of risk taking is of-

ten not positively correlated with the benefit that would accrue if everything should turn out well.

So there are many sports heroes, boxers, but many others as well, who endanger their lives for the thrill of pushing beyond existing limits. This is also true of many researchers, epidemiologists researching things like Ebola virus, pioneers who test drugs on themselves or place themselves under very extreme conditions, explorers of the world and of space — all of whom took grave risks. As J.B.S. Haldane said, such people become their own rabbit.

Similar altruistic risk taking is found in the heroic behavior of soldiers in battle. The risk taken in many of these instances can be seen as species-preserving move.

Of course it is to be hoped that the person who do such unselfish acts, is not the one who has the germ of solving the world's problems. And even then, from a global stance, I guess it makes no real difference, because if it can be done by a single individual, most likely someone else will do it sooner or later.

On the other hand, from the point of view of the individual it makes a lot of difference.

So I'll aver that, yes, climbing K2 or Everest, driving a supersonic car, exposing oneself to dangerous diseases — taking risks along those lines is OK, acceptable, honorable, useful.

Beside the greater or lesser value to society there is also the personal importance of risk taking, the self-testing, followed by a feeling of self-assurance, the satisfaction of conquering one's own fears, and so on.

That's great. But in all these cases there are careful calculations about how dangerous it really is. Expertise, training, concentration all work in favor of success. Somewhere along the line there is a determination that this is something worth taking risks for, whatever the result from the point of view of survival of the fittest.

But I am truly disappointed when, in spite of our vaunted brains, we take wanton risks, risks that are taken casually, or under conditions that negate any forethought.

Or, say that other things interfere, and the collective judgment of the Caltech Climbing and Chowder Club (CCCC) (sorry if there is such a thing, the names and events are purely fictitious) becomes clouded by spending several days in the lo-

cal opium den in Katmandu before trudging up the Western Cwm. Under such circumstances they can't act as Techers: cool cucumbers who have it all figured out, truly have taken everything into account, and therefore know that it'll work out.

Acting this way means that the risks are not worth taking, the thrills not worth experiencing. The balance between gain promised and accomplishment fulfilled has become so tilted, that there can never be a positive outcome, at most a neutral one.

We should never place ourselves under potentially dangerous condition, when unable to judge of the dangers. Accidents happen; that's part of the risk. But to try things that are dangerous because one cannot judge the dangers, or for whatever other reason — that's dumb, not worthy of Caltechers. Risk is worth taking only when the achievement is worth writing home about.

We Techers, eggheads that we are, must really and truly avoid situations where thoughtlessness, or induced thoughtlessness, jeopardizes the survival of the fittest.

A bientôt... meaning that you have been using your marbles and will have survived yet another week...

Jean Paul Revel

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Crime and Incident Beat

by Anna Sims

Oct. 6, 1997

Theft — Bike

A dark blue, Performance bike, valued at \$450, was taken from the area between Lloyd and Page house. Victim left his bike unsecured between Lloyd and Page House at approx. 3:00

p.m. Upon returning to his bike at 3:30 p.m., discovered his bike missing.

Oct. 9, 1997

Theft — Bike

A white, Maroon bicycle, valued at \$600 was taken from Beckman Institute, near the courtyard. Victim last seen his bike at 12:00 midnight in the Beckman Inst. Courtyard. Upon returning to the location at 9:00, discovered the bike missing.

Theft — Bike

A dark green, Huffy bicycle valued at \$100, was taken from 1170 Del Mar. At approx. 6:00 PM, on 10/02/97, victim secured his bike at 1170 Del Mar. Upon returning he noticed the bike missing.

Vandalism

At approximately 9:25 a.m., victim parked her vehicle, a Honda Accord, in the Wilson Parking Structure. Upon returning at 12:15 p.m., she noticed that her radio's antenna was bent over the top of her vehicle.

Oct. 11, 1997

Chemical Spill

While on patrol, security no-

ticed a strong smell of chlorine by the track area. Campus Maintenance, the Fire Department, and Safety were notified. Nearby buildings were evacuated until the fumes dissipated.

Unauthorized entry

Security responded to a report of an unauthorized entry to the Braun Athletic Center. Staff discovered the south door of Brown Gym had been broken and forced open. Nothing appeared to be missing from the Gym.

Oct. 12, 1997

False Fire Alarm

Security responded to a fire alarm in the Blacker House Lounge. After investigating the alarm, it was determined that the smoke detectors was set off by students burning newspaper in the fireplace.

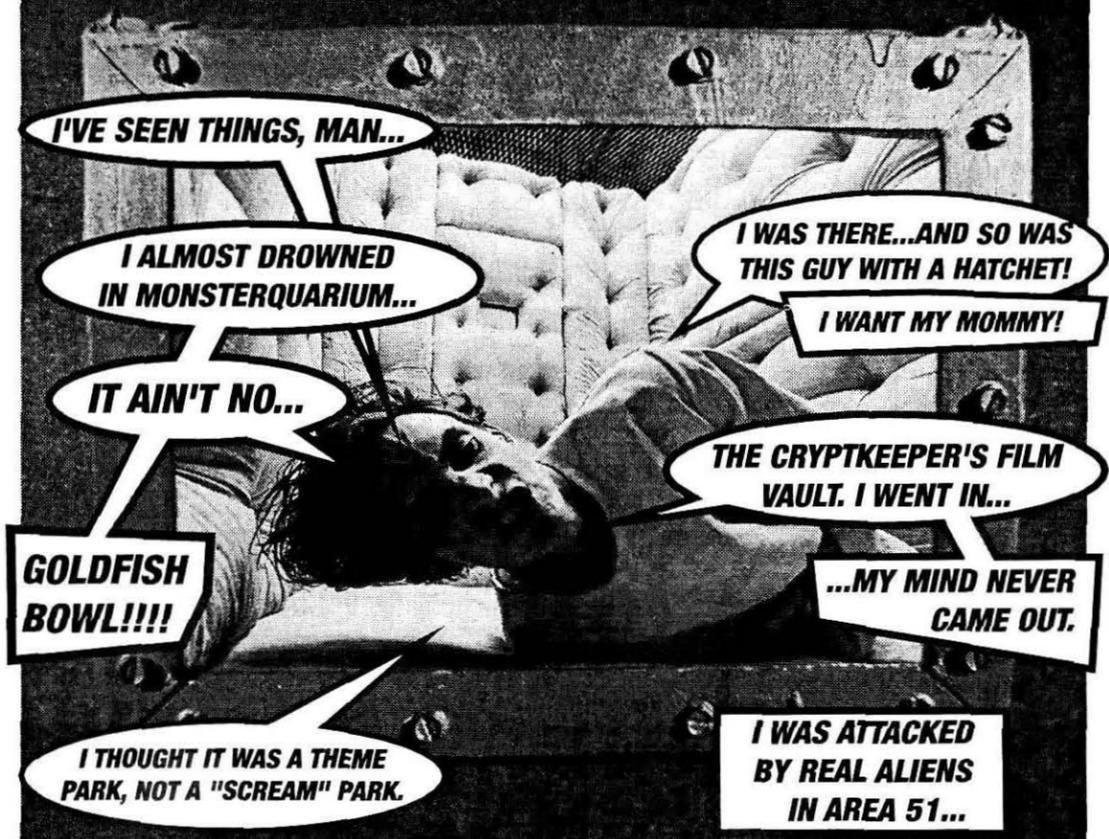
Oct. 13, 1997

Theft — Bike

A green Free-Spirit bicycle, valued at \$160, was taken from the north side of 1028 Catalina. At 1:00 p.m., victim noticed that his bike, which he had secured with a chain lock, was not in the area where he had left it parked.



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ASCIT Movies presents...

Monty Python's The Meaning of Life



by Joe Carroll

Just about everybody at Tech has heard of Monty Python; the British comedy troupe still has quite a following years after disbanding. Its members, Terry Gilliam, Graham Chapman, Eric Idle, John Cleese, Terry Jones, and Michael Palin, have produced some hilarious stuff, like *The Search for the Holy Grail* and *The Life of Brian*. In fact, I'll bet you know somebody who really loves a certain skit or song, and you'll have to be restrained from killing someone the next time you hear "The Lumberjack Song" or the difference between a European or African swallow. Well, you're pretty safe with this movie. *The Meaning of Life* was their third movie, and never became as well known as the first two.

That being said, *The Meaning of Life* has some advantages over the earlier Python films. The Pythons seemed to have re-

alized that they were much better at sketch comedy than at scripting an entire movie. As funny as *The Holy Grail* and *The Life of Brian* were, they dragged quite a bit near the end. So in this film, Monty Python went back to the style that brought it such success with the TV show, Monty Python's *Flying Circus*; it is arranged in a series of skits depicting the different stages of life. They range from the satirical (the Catholic musical number "Every Sperm Is Sacred") to the disgusting (an extremely obese man vomits all over a restaurant) to the completely random (a nice game of "Find the Fish," anyone?). They don't exactly come together to make a coherent whole, but they weren't really intended to. Besides, that doesn't stop you from laughing along the way — and finding out the meaning of life.

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FoxTrot by Bill Amend

1 I'M GOING INTO THE SPORTS MEMORABILIA BUSINESS.

2 I'VE HEARD THAT MOST AUTOGRAPHS ARE FORGERIES, SO MY INITIAL INVESTMENT WILL BE LOW.

3 CAN I INTEREST YOU IN A BASEBALL SIGNED BY MOSES? **4** WOW! THAT'S GOING TO BE WORTH SOMETHING.

5 SPORTS MEMORABILIA **6** THIS IS THE BEST PRICE I'VE SEEN FOR A BASEBALL AUTOGRAPHED BY BABE RUTH.

7 BUT I DON'T SEE WHERE THE AUTOGRAPH IS.

8 IT GETS AUTOGRAPHED LATER TONIGHT. **9** I'LL TAKE THIS AND THREE OF THE HONUS WAGNER CARDS.

10 YOU SAY THIS FOOTBALL WAS AUTOGRAPHED BY JESUS... **11** BUT I'M NO FOOL. THIS ISN'T A FOOTBALL. IT HAS NO STITCHES. **12** THEY HEALED.

13 WOW! **14** AND I THINK I HEARD IT OINK.

15 AUTOGRAPHS FOR SALE **16** WOW... A SOFTBALL SIGNED BY MARTIN LUTHER, LEADER OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION. **17** I'M IMPRESSED, BUT WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR IS SOMETHING SIGNED BY MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. **18** TOO BAD YOU DON'T HAVE ANYTHING FROM HIM. **19** CHECK BACK IN TEN MINUTES.

20 IF YOU WANT TO BE PROMOTED, YOU HAVE TO BE HIGHLY VISIBLE. **21** ASK QUESTIONS AT MEETINGS. BUT MAKE THEM EASY SO YOU DON'T EMBARRASS YOUR BOSS. **22** ...SO IF THERE'S AN ACCIDENT IN A COMPANY CAR, WHERE SHOULD WE BURY THE SURVIVORS? **23** I USUALLY PUT THEM IN THE TRUNK.

24 I'VE BEEN SEEING A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN. BUT SOMETHING CAME BETWEEN US. **25** HER CURTAINS? **26** VENETIAN BLINDS. TOTALLY UNFORGIVING. **27** MAYBE SHE GOT SPOOKED WHEN YOU PUT THE LAWN CHAIR IN HER YARD.

1 PAIGE, YOU GOT A BIG PACKET IN THE MAIL TODAY. **2** OOO-WHAT IS IT? **3** YOU TELL ME. IT'S OVER BY THE TOASTER. **4** HMM. I DON'T RECALL ORDERING ANYTHING.

5 IT'S FROM SOME COMPANY CALLED BLIZZERBUND SOFTWARE. **6** WHO THE HECK IS BLIZZERBUND SOFTWARE? **7** JASON, DON'T DIVE DOWN THE STAIRS LIKE THAT! **8** WAIT! ARE YOU SURE THAT'S NOT FOR ME???

9 WHAT ON EARTH WOULD YOU BE MAILING TO YOU?? **10** BEATS ME. YOU'VE ACTUALLY HEARD OF THIS COMPANY? **11** HEARD OF THEM?! PAIGE, THEY'RE ONLY THE PUBLISHERS OF THE GREATEST COMPUTER GAME IN THE HISTORY OF COMPUTER GAMES, IRON MYSTICUS! **12** I'VE PLAYED IT LIKE 1,000 TIMES! "RIVIABLO"? I'M LITERALLY COUNTING DOWN THE DAYS UNTIL THE SEQUEL COMES OUT! **13** UM, YEAH. HOW'D YOU KNOW? **14** THEY JUST SENT ME A COPY.

15 THEY SENT YOU A BETA VERSION OF RIVIABLO??? WHY??? HOW??? IT'S NOT FAIR! **16** I'M THE ONE WHO LOVES COMPUTER GAMES! I'M THE ONE WHO'S BEEN WAITING FOUR YEARS FOR THIS! I'M THE ONE WHO ENTERED THEIR ONLINE "BE A BETA TESTER FOR RIVIABLO" SWEEPSTAKES! **17** EGAD! I'LL BET I DID IT WHILE LOGGED ON AS YOU! **18** I MEAN, UM, WHILE ACCIDENTALLY LOGGED ON AS YOU. **19** A MINUTE AGO, I WAS READY TO GIVE YOU THIS. **20** OR MAYBE THE PROBLEM IS THAT YOU DO UNDERSTAND. **21** WELL PUT. **22** CLICK.

23 OOO-THIS GAME IS AMAZING! **24** OOO-THIS GAME IS INCREDIBLE! **25** OOO-THIS GAME IS 50000 GOOOD! **26** AT LEAST THE PACKAGING IS. READY TO OPEN IT? **27** OOO-THIS GAME IS UNBELIEVABLE! **28** PAIGE, THE ENVELOPE I'M SLIPPING UNDER THE DOOR CONTAINS MY LIFE'S SAVINGS.

29 IT'S A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT OF BLIZZERBUND SOFTWARE. **30** WHAT'S THAT? **31** NO WAY! WHAT'S IT SAY? WHAT'S IT SAY? **32** "DEAR MS. FOX, THANK YOU FOR YOUR EVALUATION OF OUR RIVIABLO CD-ROM BETA." **33** "PER YOUR SUGGESTIONS, THE FINAL VERSION OF THE GAME WILL HAVE LESS VIOLENCE, CUTER MONSTERS, AND SIGNIFICANTLY EASIER PUZZLES." **34** "P.S. THANKS ESPECIALLY FOR THE GREAT IDEA TO CHANGE THE GAME'S TITLE TO 'HAPPY TOWN.'" **35** I THOUGHT THEY SENT YOU A FORM LETTER. **36** OOPS, JASON, WILL YOU STOP BAWLING. I MUST'VE MISREAD TO TELL ME WHAT'S WRONG???

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Announcements

The **Alumni Association** has funding available for student organizations that encourage interaction between students and alumni. To be considered for funding, an application form must be completed and returned to the Association no later than October 30, 1997. To receive an application form, call Kerry at ext. 6582 or e-mail her at kerry@alumni.caltech.edu. The form can also be found on the Web at http://www.cco.caltech.edu/~alumi/sfar_funding.html. Decisions on funding will be made in November by the Student/Faculty/Alumni Relations Committee of the Alumni Association Board of Directors.

The **Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Discussion Group** meets on the first and third Tuesdays of each month from 7:30pm until 10pm in the Health Center lounge. This is a confidential meeting and does not imply anything about a person's sexual orientation—only that s/he is willing to be supportive in this setting. The group usually discusses a particular relevant topic and then moves on to the general discussion. Refreshments are served. If you would like more information, please call x8331.

Caltech Ballroom Dance Club will be offering free Beginner **Tango** classes in Winnett, taught by Derrick Bass every Wednesday this October. An instructor from Let's Dance LA will be teaching Beginner/Intermediate **West Coast Swing** classes every Thursday till November 6. Costs \$25 for the five weeks. Times are 7:30 pm to 9 pm with refreshments and open dance time following each session. For more information, see our posters and our web page: <http://www.caltech.edu/~ballroom/>

The **Coffeeshouse** is looking for waiters. We are open M-F from 9pm to 2am and Sat/Sun from 8pm to 2am. Work Study students preferred. Please contact Gina Armas by e-mail to apply, gina@cco.

Sparrowgrass Poetry Forum, Inc. is offering a grand prize of \$500 in its new **poetry contest**. The contest is free and open to everyone, one poem per poet. Deadline is November 30, 1997. Send entries to Sparrowgrass Poetry Forum, Dept. LM, 609 Main St., P.O. Box 193, Sistersville, WV, 26175. Poets may also submit poems electronically at <http://www.tinplace.com/sparrow> or by e-mail, Sistersv@aol.com.

Events

* "Earnest Watson and the Amazing Liquid Airshow" will be presented by Drs. David and Judith Goodstein on October 29th in Beckman Auditorium at 8:00pm. Admission is free. For more information, call ext. 4652.

Mints

* denotes a new announcement.

"**Jerusalem—Sacred and Profane**," a travel film to be presented by lecturer Rick Ray, will be shown in Beckman Auditorium on October 24, 1997 at 8:00 pm. For more information, call (626)395-4652.

* **Kate Michelman**, president of NARAL—a national pro-choice advocacy group—will speak on current pro-choice issues in Pasadena at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 29, at the Neighborhood Church, 301 N. Orange Grove Blvd.

Taj Mahal and **Queen Ida** will be performing in Beckman Auditorium on October 25, 1997 at 8:00 pm. Ticket prices: \$32.00 - 29.00 - 26.00, with student and senior rush tickets available 30 minutes before the performance for \$10. For more information, call (626)395-4652.

The Paco A. Lagerstrom chamber music series is featuring pianist **Peter Vinograde** on October 26, 1997 at 3:30 pm in Dabney Lounge. Admission is free. For more information, call (626)395-4652.

The **Distinguished Speaker Series** of Southern California is moving into its second season. The events will be held at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium on eight different dates at 8:00pm. On November 6th, Ann Richards, the 45th governor of Texas, will be the first speaker, followed by Tommy Lasorda on December 11th, Colin Powell on January 21st, 1998, Dominick Dunne on February 26th, Elizabeth Dole on March 12th, Jean-Michael Cousteau on April 8th, and Maya Angelou on May 13th and June 10th. For more information contact (800) 508-9301.

Knott's Scary Farm is celebrating "25 Years of Fears" on weekends, 7pm until 2am between October 3rd and November 1st, with rides, shows, mazes, and themed "scare zones." Advance ticket purchases are recommended, as evenings frequently sell out. For more information, call (714)220-5200 or visit their web page at <http://www.halloweenhaunt.com>

Shipwreck '97, the Queen Mary's annual Halloween extravaganza will take place from 7:00 p.m. to midnight on weekends from October 10th to November 1st. This event features a tour of the allegedly haunted ship, and dancing, deejayed by several LA-area radio personalities. On October 31st, there will also be a costume contest. Tickets are \$13 per person. For more information, contact (562)435-3511, or visit their web page, <http://www.queenmary.com>.

Fellowships and Scholarships

Chateaubriand Fellowship Program, 1998-9, for graduate students

in science and engineering, interested in working in French university. For more information, write to The Embassy of France, Office for Science and Technology, Chateaubriand Fellowship Program, 4101 Reservoir Road, NW, Washington, DC 20007-2176, or see their web page <http://www.chateaubriand.amb-wash.fr>.

Graduate fellowship for Women and Minorities in the Physical Sciences, the National Physical Sciences Consortium offers awards to graduating seniors who are female or a member of a minority group for Ph.D. level study in Astronomy, Chemistry, Computer Science, Geology, Material Science, Mathematical Sciences, Physics and subdisciplines of these fields. E-mail npsc@nmsu.edu or call (800) 952-4118 to request an application which is provided in diskette format.

The **Howard Hughes Predoctoral Fellowships** in Biological Sciences, for seniors and 1st year graduate students, have a November 12 application deadline. Complete applications and instructions can be found on the web at <http://fellowships.nas.edu>.

The Asian/Pacific American Association for Advancement, Inc. (4A) is accepting applications for their **4A San Francisco Bay Area Scholarship Program**. 4A will be selecting three scholarship recipients who will each receive a \$1,000 scholarship. Eligible students must be Asian/Pacific, U.S. Citizens or permanent residents, and must be enrolled full-time as undergraduate or graduate students. Applicants will be evaluated based on their scholastic discipline, personal achievement, and community involvement. AT&T, Lucent Technologies, and NCR employees and their children are ineligible to apply. Applications are due April 15, 1998.

The Sunkyong Group of Korea and LeaderShape Inc. are sponsoring the "**Global Leaders of Tomorrow**" essay contest. Entrants must be undergraduate or graduate students at the time their entries are submitted. Essays may be written from one of four perspectives: Business, Government/Law, Science, or Media/Communications. Three winners will be selected in each of these 4 categories. First prize (1 per category) is \$2,500 plus a one week trip to Korea. Second prize (1 per category) is \$500 plus one week at a LeaderShape training program. Third prize (1 per category) is \$500. The deadline for entries is April 15, 1998.

The **ACIL Scholarship Alliance** is offering scholarships for students majoring in the physical sciences: physics, chemistry, engineering, geology, biology, or environmental science. Awards are based on academic performance, career goals, leadership, and financial need, and are typically

\$1,000-\$2,000. To apply you must be a junior or senior in undergraduate study, or a graduate student. Applications and all supporting documents are due April 15, 1998.

The **American Women's Club in Sweden** will be awarding a travel grant for study and research in Sweden. To qualify you must be a woman, age 18 or over and an American citizen. You must also be accepted for a period of study or research at a Swedish educational institution or agency and show evidence of financial need. The completed application and all supporting documents must be received by April 15, 1998.

The Jewish Vocational Service is accepting applications for scholarships from the **Jewish Community Scholarship Fund**. The scholarships are designed to provide financial assistance to Jewish students who are legal residents of Los Angeles County, attending college on a full-time basis. Applicants must have a 2.5 minimum G.P.A., must be a sophomore or higher by September 1997, and must be able to document significant financial need. The deadline for submission of completed applications is April 15, 1998.

The **American Electroplaters and Surface Finishers Society** is offering scholarships to undergraduate juniors and seniors and graduate students who are interested in careers in the electroplating and surface finishing industry. Undergraduates must be full-time and must be majoring in metallurgy, metallurgical engineering, materials science or engineering, chemistry, chemical engineering, or environmental engineering. Applications must be submitted by April 15, 1997.

The **John Gyles Education Fund** is offering financial assistance to students who are Canadian or U.S. Citizens. A minimum G.P.A. of 2.7 is required for eligibility. Criteria other than academic ability and financial need are considered in the selection process. Selected students will receive up to \$3,000. To receive an application, send a stamped (U.S. \$.32), self-addressed, No. 10 envelope to: The John Gyles Education Fund, Attention: R. James Cogle, Administrator, P.O. Box 4808, 712 Riverside Drive, Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada E3B 5G4. The remaining filing date for mailing applications in 1997 is November 15.

The **Jewish Family and Children's Services** offers financial support for Jewish individuals and their families. Individuals may apply for up to \$5,000. Special scholarships are available for study in Israel. To be eligible, students must have financial need, have at least a 3.0 GPA, and be residents of San Francisco, the Pen-

insula, Marin or Sonoma counties, or the Bay Area. There are no deadlines—applications are accepted throughout the year and are available in the Financial Aid Office.

The **Josephine de Kármán Fellowship Trust** is pleased to announce the availability of ten fellowships in the amount of \$7,000 for 1998-99. All studies must be carried out within the United States and expended within the United States. Fellowships are open to students entering their senior undergraduate year and graduate students entering the terminal year of a Ph.D. program in Fall 1998. For application information write to: Fellowship Committee, Attention: Judy McLain, Secretary, Josephine de Kármán Fellowship Trust, P.O. Box 3389, San Dimas, CA 91773, or visit the Financial Aid Office. Applications must be postmarked no later than January 31, 1998.

The **American Society of Naval Engineers** is offering \$2,000 undergraduate scholarships and \$3,000 graduate scholarships for the academic year 1998-99 to students who are interested in naval engineering. Applicants must be U.S. Citizens, must demonstrate a genuine interest in a career in naval engineering, and must be applying for either their last year as an undergraduate or co op undergraduate program, or one year of graduate study leading to a designated degree at an accredited college or university. The deadline to submit applications is February 15, 1998.

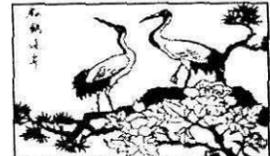
Graduating seniors with at least a 3.6 GPA should consider applying for the **Churchill Fellowships** which provide a year of graduate study at Churchill College, Cambridge University. Students are able to earn a degree, certificate or diploma during their tenure at Cambridge. Applicants can come from any area of engineering, mathematics, physical, or natural sciences. The award covers tuition, fees and a living allowance. A travel grant is also available to cover airfare to England. Applicants must submit a two to four page essay. For more information, contact the Fellowships Office.

NSF Graduate Fellowships. paper applications are available from the Fellowships Advising Office in Room 25 in the SAC. You can also access, complete, and submit applications through the Web. The NSF FastLane Graduate Fellowship Program's web page is located at <http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov>. Both the paper and FastLane system include the Women in Engineering and Computer and Information Science Awards. Note that U.S. citizenship or permanent residence status are required. The application deadline is November 6th 1997.

Note that on all the fellowships listed above you can get help with your essays or clarification of questions from the Fellowships Office. For info, please contact Lauren Stolper at lauren_stolper@starbase1.caltech.edu. To make an appointment, call x2150.

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