The first time most Caltech students hear about Caltech's Drug & Alcohol Abuse Prevention Program is at Frosh Camp, during Challenges and Choices. Remember the pencil demonstration? The Drug & Alcohol Abuse Prevention Program offers a variety of services to students, besides pencils and statistics about alcohol use on campus. Services include individual counseling, consultation, educational programs, and trainings for student organizations.

Students come to talk to me for many reasons. In certain instances, they may want to explore how drugs work for them, and identify what they get out of their drug use. Some students may be seeking ways to help a friend, other students may want help moderating their drinking. And still others are dealing with low family alcoholism is currently impacting them.

Consultation is also available to students. For example, some students may want help planning responsible parties and social events. Sometimes students want specific information about alcohol and other drugs, and they may be offered literature, brochures, internet sites, and video use to consult.

I also enjoy to happy provide programs for student houses and organizations. I can obtain educational programs on a wide range of topics such as stress management, substance abuse, adjusting to college, and helping a friend who abuses alcohol or other drugs.

Some students may be reluctant to come in to talk to me because they equate talking about their substance use with being a drug addict or alcoholic. The way I think about "use" is that it occurs along a continuum. At one end of the continuum are those people who do not drink or use any drugs. We have a large number of Caltech students in this category. At the other end of the continuum are those who are physiologically and/or psychologically dependent on drugs. Between these two extremes are many possible

Y2K Problem: Solved?

U.S. gearing up to face end of Millenium hype

by Lexi Bagger

On Wednesday, November 19, Bob Neary gave the latest lecture in the ongoing Watson Lecture series. Neary is the Chief Administrative Information Officer for Caltech, and has been an information technology consultant for more than 17 years. His lecture focused on how ready the world is to deal with the Y2K problem.

The "Y2K bug" is the possibility that some computers may not correctly read the date on January 1, 2000 (and beyond) because they store only the last two digits of the year and assume the century is 1900. It is a practice of only storing two digit years dates back to when memory was very expensive and saving that extra byte was necessary to keep the programs smaller. In today's world, where a megabyte of RAM costs two dollars, such space-saving measures are unnecessary.

The reason that the Y2K bug is so serious, according to Neary, is that the problem is difficult to solve, but is in the sheer scope of fixing every potentially afflicted computer and every software program. Because our computers are so interconnected, if one computer is not fixed, it may affect others.

The Y2K bug has the potential to affect everyone. The obvious impacts are on the banking industry (to calculate interest, if your credit card has expired yet?), and on the government (social security checks). Some effects of the century change are even not computer related; companies that manufacture tombstones won't be able to use tombstones that have been pre-engraved with '19-' that people have predicted more dire consequences; they suggest everything with embedded computer chips might be affected. Predictions ranging from toasters combusting to elevators crashing to nuclear missiles firing can be found somewhere on the internet. Common sense helps when considering some of these predictions. Your toaster's computer chip does not care what date it is.

On January 1, 2000, your toaster will not spontaneously combust in a puff of illogic because it thinks the date is 1900 and it hasn't been invented yet. An elevator that thinks it needs to be serviced will proceed at normal pace to the ground floor. Nuclear missiles are not launched based on what date it is. (And, in any case, manual intervention is required to launch missiles. No software glitch could cause global thermonuclear war.)

Neary says that a likely set of problems is the following: ATM's and banks might suffer delays; there might be food and water shortages; electricity and phone services might be temporarily interrupted; and personal information, like birth certificates, might be temporarily unavailable. Emergency 911 services would not be directly affected by any computer problems (operators could circumvent the computer-aided dispatching system to manually answer calls).

Neary recommends that people prepare for the turn of the millennium as they might normally prepare for a rough winter. Stockpile enough food and water to get through a few weeks. The reason that the Y2K bug is the greatest study tool: sleep. Recent studies on sleep show that young adults need more

Revel takes on Nature

SUNY-Albany a close third

by Tim Raub

Last August, US News and World Report issued its annual college rankings and for the first time placed Caltech at the top of the list. Revelations were far-fetched. Television crews flooded the campus for a day. The Bookstore stocked the rankings issue. Jason Meltzer wrote a bitter article for the Tech.

Still, the reaction from the other ocean came as a surprise when, in its August 26 issue, the British Journal Nature cited Caltech's ranking in its editorial "A cautionary guide to university rankings" (Opinion, Nature 400, 801, 1999). Two months later, Nature published a response written by Dean Revel that attacked the negative stereotypes which were offered as truth in the original editorial.

The Nature editorial predicted that "there will no doubt be dancing in the streets of Pasadena this week, following the news that the California Institute of Technology has leapfrogged above the usual Ivy League contenders to top the [USN&WR] rankings. Such a party is due not because of the significance of the event itself - which is slight - but because everyone at Caltech seems to need a break." The editorial then picked specific parts of the the feature US News and World Report article and generalized them to cast a dim light on Caltech: "...classes at the science and engineering school can often last until 2 a.m. ...One inmate

Sleep studies show lack

Too few hours of sleep equals badness

by Dana Sadava

Have you ever wondered why those blocks of naptime in kindergarten were phased out of the curriculum? With courseeloads that challenge the most efficient workers, students at Caltech have trouble scheduling what may be their greatest study tool: sleep.

Recent studies on sleep show that young adults need more

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PLEASE SEE SLEEP ON PAGE 4

PLEASE SEE ABUSE ON PAGE 4

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PLEASE SEE NATURE ON PAGE 4
The Great House Barrier

Caltech's House system is unique. Unlike many other colleges and universities, the House is a center of social and academic life, not just a place to live. House spirit and activities provide an excellent opportunity to bond with other students, and family-style dinner forces interaction between otherwise too-busy-to-socialize Tocohers.

The House system is a double-edged sword, however. Since one spends most of one's time with others of one's House, little time is left for others of other Houses. As our connections with our Housemates strengthen and we spend more and more time with our House, we edge further away from other Houses. A great barrier is erected between Houses - not caused by distance or rivalry, but by closeness. Each House is a world unto itself. Members eat together, work together, flock together, spend time together and even sleep together (though usually not in the literal sense). It is mostly effortless to participate actively in one's own House; to participate actively in another House is nearly impossible. Breaking through the great House barrier is much more difficult than walking across the Olive Walk - it requires breaking into tight cliques of friends and neighbors that spend all of their time together and very little with others.

In addition, time changes scale between intra- and inter-House interactions. The closeness of House members allows for more frequent and hence greatly accelerated interaction. This too is double-edged - inter-personal relationships progress much quicker than those with members of other Houses. The ups and downs of friendship and relationships are more pronounced. Bonds between people grow stronger faster.

The net result is a faster progression from a semi-unified class into a cluster of tightly bound Houses. As a consequence of House closeness, individuals tend to develop xenophobic instincts. (a) They may be a member of Booty House, and I'm a member of Yum House. Since I spend almost all of my time with and around Yum Housemates, and know very little of Booty Housemates, I may begin to stereotype them. It's difficult for me to overcome my House stereotypes, since Bobby, the other Booty Housemates and I don't spend much quality time together. It's easy to make fun of others in another House when (a) they're not gay, Bobby is anything about it, and (b) you don't have to live with them day and night.

The House system has its multitude of pros and cons. It is unique among colleges for its closeness and communalism. We must remember, however, that though the walls of our Houses keep us safe and comfortable among friends, we shouldn't fear leaving the walls to spend time with others. It's hard and it takes a lot of effort. We are not selfish if not lazy here at Caltech. I can't solve that problem. But I can say that individual effort - even small effort - will go a long way to breaking down the great House barrier.

Dave Guskin
Editor, California Tech
Seeing what isn’t there. Then creating it. That’s what we do. It’s that simple.

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Y2K

Is the trouble worth the hype?

with no outside help; keep some cash on hand; and have the usual assortment of emergency supplies on hand. For more information on preparing, see the Red Cross’s web page at http://www.redcross.org/disaster/safety/y2k.html.

The media hype over Y2K has blown the problem to tremendous proportions. Some hype was necessary to convince people that the problem actually exists; and has no defined solution.

The President’s Committee report indicates that our major trading partners are well-prepared for Y2K, and predicts no major interruption in oil imports. It says that countries with fragile infrastructures, such as Russia and China, are at risk for more serious problems because they will be less able to quickly respond to the problems as they crop up. The Senate 100-Day Report is less optimistic; it indicates that some major trading partners are behind in their preparations. The Senate predicts a flood of humanitarian requests from less developed countries after the new year, and a possible economic downturn due to reduced trade.

But how prepared is the U.S.? Nealy says the U.S. is pretty well prepared. The government claims that all FAA systems are compliant; the utilities, telecommunications, and financial sectors are ready to go; but the health care industry is lagging behind a bit. The State of California claims to be nearly prepared. These reports are all self-serving, according to Software Publishing Corporation. Neary’s conclusion was that people should not panic over Y2K-related threats. It will cost the world billions to fix, billions more to pay the bills for the downtime.

Abuse

kinds of drug use, such as experiential use, recreational use, habituation, and abuse. Sometimes people who abuse alcohol or other drugs also have problems with gambling, shopping, and other compulsive behaviors, and I’m willing to talk to them about those issues as well. I will also talk to students who are experiencing problems with addictive behaviors like shoplifting or gambling who don’t use alcohol or other drugs. I take an individualized approach with students who visit my office. I want to know the reasons they are coming in, and how they see their situation. Then together we can develop a plan to meet their needs. Follow-up appointments may be scheduled, and frequently students will walk away from our conversations, but I continue to follow up with them. If they have trouble staying awake, I ask them to bring me the relevant literature and I’ll be able to answer their questions.

Abuse Prevention Program is part of the Student Counseling Center and follows the same guidelines regarding confidentiality. Student information will be kept in strict confidence, even if it is legal. Thus, a student can feel free to talk to me about his or her illegal use of drugs and related behaviors without fear of consequences.

I welcome visitors! Please come by and see my new office in room room 64 of the Student Activities Center. My drop-in hours are on Wednesdays from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., and on Thursdays from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Appointments are available at other times. I can be reached via phone at 626-379-2961.
The Outside World

by Cheryl Forest

College Station, Texas: The traditional bonfire preparations at Texas A&M University, held for the past ninety years prior to the football game with the University of Texas, went horribly wrong early Thursday morning. The forty-foot structure collapsed in on itself, killing at least nine students, and injuring many others. At least two students are still missing and are presumed dead underneath the pile.

Washington, DC: The US government almost has a budget.... The House voted Thursday to pass the current fiscal year's budget, only seven weeks after the year actually began. The House then appropriated enough money to keep the government from shutting down the next two weeks, giving the Senate enough time to start the debates anew. In this year's fiscal package, the Republicans are able to claim victory in allotting more money for the Pentagon and "politically popular health research and education." Conversely, the Democrats are able to claim victory in gaining more money for more cops and elementary-level teachers and for finally being able to start paying some of the back dues owed to the UN. Negotiations for this fiscal bill have taken seven months so far.

Somewhere between Cairo, Egypt and Nantucket Island, US: Last week, the flight data recorder for Egyptair Flight 900 was plucked out of the murky Atlantic waters, and was followed this weekend by the cockpit flight recorder. Physically, investigators know what happened to the plane, but have yet to explain exactly why the engines either cut out or were manually shut off as the plane started its first descent. The cockpit flight recorder has proved even more definitive in decoding analysis by Arab officials as well as experts familiar with the typical sounds in the cockpit that is ongoing. Diplomatically, Egyptian officials are growing more angry by the (American) assumptions that a common religious phrase uttered by a co-pilot seconds before the descent started indicated that the man was suicidal and was thus responsible for the crash. Although the investigation was slated to be handed off to the FBI, making it a criminal investigation, that move has been put on hold due to Egyptian concerns.

Caltech Y News (11/1999)

This is going to be the last Caltech Y News blurb for about 2 weeks as "The Tech" is not published on institute holidays such as Thanksgiving. So, I'll take this opportunity to say "Happy Thanksgiving" from the Caltech Y.

The Y would like to get more volunteers to tutor middle/high school students. Remember, if you are if you are not on Federal Work Study, you will be compensated at $12/hour for your services. For more information, please contact the Y at ext. 6163. While you're calling, you can ask about other service activities which we sponsor.

For those who are planning on going camping in the coming holidays, keep in mind that the Y reserves out various forms of camping equipment. Contact the Y for more information.

This Week:

As usual, Project Angel Food will be occurring today. The purpose of this program is to deliver food to housebound people living with HIV/AIDS. This project takes but one hour time on Friday and takes place roughly at 12:00 PM. For more information, please e-mail Ying Tian at ying@ccs.caltech.edu.

Today, the Caltech Y is pleased to premier its Social Activism Speaker Series. Our first speaker for the series, Dolores Huerta, will be speaking on the topic "Political Organizing: Key to a Non-Violent Movement." Huerta is renowned for her role in co-founding the University Farm Workers of America (UFW) union with Cesar Chavez, who called her "a physically, both mentally and physically." Her many accomplishments include collective bargaining for farm workers, the banning of dangerous pesticides, and an increase in the Federal Minimum Wage. At current, Huerta holds the position of Secretary-Treasurer of the United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO.

Huerta's keynote presentation tonight will take place in the Bechman Institute Auditorium beginning at 7:30 PM. This presentation is free and open to the public.

Next Week:

Pumela Sexton, U.S. Coordinator of the largest U.N.-accredited vote observer project for East Timor's historic August referendum, will speak on the Caltech campus on the recent victory of the East Timorese independence movement, the continuing refugee crisis, and the prospects for the world's newest country. Sexton will just be returning from the refugee camps in Indonesian West Timor, where a quarter of the East Timorese people are currently held. Sexton's nation-wide tour is being organized by Grassroots International, which provides humanitarian relief to the East Timorese people.

Sexton's talk is entitled "East Timor: Victory of a Lost Cause." Her presentation will be held at 12:00 PM on Tuesday, November 29th on the first floor Winnest Student Center Lounge. For more information, please contact Byron Philhour at (626) 395-2023 or hpfl@astro.caltech.edu.

Decompression: Finals week is fast approaching and that indicates that Decompression is also fast approaching. Decompression is an event sponsored by the Caltech Y in the weekend immediately before Finals Week. It takes place on Saturday (12/04) and Sunday (12/05). Free food is served to all undergraduates and graduate students who attend.

Beginning next week, volunteer sign-ups for Decompression stations will be posted throughout the Houses. Various stations are available to select from: grill, bagels, fruits, condiments, chili, and drinks (sorry, no alcohol). Volunteers should realize that not everyone can get on the early Saturday shift. All volunteers will get a free T-Shirt.

This Decompression, there will be a live band performing on both nights. On one night, the band Dr. Evil will perform various swing music. In conjunction with the band, the Caltech Ballroom Dance Club will give free East Coast Swing Lessons to all who keep on the lookout for flyers to provide more information as plans are still being finalized as of this writing of the Y News.

General Info:

The Caltech Y holds weekly meetings on Mondays at 12:15 PM in the Y Lounge which is behind Steele House. We welcome anyone who is interested in learning about what the Y does or who wants to get involved. Bring your ideas, your friends, and your lunch.

If you would like to get e-mails about Y-events, Y-sound events, or Y-community service events, please e-mail Elisa Chiang at polaris@cco.caltech.edu with the e-mail mailing list you would like to place on. If you have any other questions concerning any of the activities mentioned above, feel free to e-mail me at dogbert@cco.caltech.edu.

A" If you are a political animal? Doesn't matter. You gotta get this. X-Drive, the world's first free Internet hard drive on the desktop. You'll get the kind of power you can always use. Anywhere, anytime access from any Web-ready computer. Let's say you've got a private enterprise (like a term paper, essay, or resume) and you don't want anybody laying off your intellectual property. But, if the files are password protected. Even if you're moshing off your roommate's computer. Or, let's say you're doing a group project and feel like sharing. Think how much easier it'll be if everyone on the team has access to the same files, ideas, and timelines. No matter where they are on any computer on the planet.

More good news. X-Drive gives you 15 megs of space-free (that's about the same as the size of an average floppy disk) for free. More to speed up wherever you want to speed up anywhere). Which brings up another nifty feature. X-Drive has this cool. Ship the Download™ technology. It lets you pub MP3, video, and groovy kids from the Web in seconds while you keep surfing.

So join the party at www.xdrive.com. X-Drive. It's the best found on the planet.
ASCIT
Upperclass Director at Large

“The Upperclassmen Director at Large is responsible for the management, finances, operation and maintenance of the ASCIT van and copier. The Directors at Large shall in addition perform other duties as specified by the Board of Directors.”

-- ASCIT Bylaws

Let me clear up a few things. One, I am not a man with a major chip on my shoulder and an agenda. Two, I don’t consider the position a stepping-stone to further ASCIT offices and/or total world domination. And three, I am not now, nor have I ever been, Derek Shannon.

The UD@L is only really responsible for two things: the ASCIT copier and other random work that the BoD assigns (alas the ASCIT van no longer exists). Since I’m not a physics major, I’m quite sure that I’ll have enough spare time to handle both of these jobs for the ten weeks before the next elections. And unlike certain other UD@L’s of the past, I won’t run off to Britain.

As Gore Vidal once claimed, “Apparently, a democracy is a place where numerous elections are held at great cost without issues and with interchangeable candidates.” Today we have a second chance at electing a new Upperclass Director at Large to serve ASCIT until second term elections; again we have an election where it seems like any candidate could do a fine job. However, I know that I can do not just a fine job but a great job at being UDL. I have the time, dedication, and responsibility to serve ASCIT well. In an election without issues it may seem hard to differentiate between the candidates but I promise you that a vote for me is not going to be a wasted vote. Vote Tom Snyder for ASCIT Upperclass Director at Large.

Chris Elion

Tom Snyder
Marc Favata

Hello boys and girls. So here I am running for some stupid office that probably doesn't do a whole lot. Why you ask? Well, when you've been at Tech for over 3 years you learn something very important: despite all the "smart" people here, the place still seems to be run at times by a bunch of idiots. Some of these idiots are in the administration (naturally) while some are in the student body. In this upcoming election you have your chance to choose your idiot. Here's why you should choose this one.

What is the ASCIT BoD? It's a bunch of students who are given a butt-load of money (your 20 bucks a term) and whose job is to spend that money on stuff that benefits as many students as possible. Did you know that last year, ASCIT was audited by the IRS because they didn't spend their money on one movie (the student discount) and watch some movies. Let's assume that they each spend $10.00 per movie ($7.50 ticket plus a small popcorn). How many movies can they see together?

Answer: 4000/10 = 400 movies. Alternatively, if they spent all of their money on one movie, they could take 4000/10 = 400 of their friends with them (roughly one half of the undergraduates at Caltech).

I hope my point is clear. ASCIT has a lot of money that they could be spending in more sensible ways. Elect me and I'll use my vote and my big-nasty mouth to make sure that your money and mine isn't wasted on stupid schemes.

People tell me that this office involves taking care of the ASCIT copier and selling the van. I'll handle that crap too.

A Bientot (whatever that means)!

The thing that really got me peed about all this wasteful spending stuff is the ASCIT movies. Did you know that in previous years the ASCIT movies had a budget of $10,000 dollars a year (that's 10/4 dollars / yr). For what? For some old, crapy movie with poor picture quality (assuming the projector works). What's really insulting is that you have to PAY $2.00 to see this crapy movie.

Recently, ASCIT has cut the movie budget down to around $400. This is still a big waste of money. Here's a much more cost-effective solution: simply rent NEW movies from blockbuster and show them in 070 Moore at no charge. Let's do a little calculation for you folks who know some math:

If this sounds like your ideal job

- **Live and work in the San Francisco Bay Area**
- **Interviews**

Free PC, Inc. is a rapidly growing Internet company based in Pasadena, pioneering the model of delivering free personal computers, Internet access and software to a diverse group of consumers. In addition to our main office in Hollywood, we've expanded our activities on December 1. We'll staff up to meet with you. If you are not available or online done, please contact us directly for other arrangements.

**C++ Programmers**

We have several opportunities for C++ programmers with experience in Visual C++, MFC, and/or extended programming. Experience in Unix, design patterns and UML is considered a plus. You will develop application code and use our web browser to access the Internet.

**Perl Programmers**

We are looking for Perl programmers with a BS in Computer Science or equivalent experience. You will help create and maintain a large code base used for database and complex text analysis.

**Database Developer**

We have an immediate opportunity for a database developer. Experience with both databases and programming languages such as SQL, C++, and Perl preferred.

The position requires a strong background in database design and development. You will be part of a small, highly motivated team responsible for a large part of the company's success. You will be responsible for maintaining the database, writing new code to support the database, and writing new code and assuring database integrity. You will have a direct impact on the success of the company.

**Information Session**

Thursday, December 2nd at 4 pm

Student Activity Center, Room 13

Resumes will be accepted

**INTERVIEWS**

Friday, December 3rd - All Day

R. B. WEBBER & COMPANY

1737 Embarcadero Road, Suite 2000, Palo Alto, CA 94303

Recruiting Contact: Paul Graven

November 30: set the world free

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The California Tech

Comics

DILBERT® by Scott Adams

ALICE, YOUR NAME WAS ACCIDENTALLY OMITTED FROM THE REORGANIZATION PAPERWORK.

YOU'RE IN A PLACE KNOWN ONLY AS ORG-LIMBO.

I CAN CONTACT EMPLOYEES WHO ARE IN ORG-LIMBO.

HELLO-D-O? LARRY, DOESN'T RETURN MY CALLS?

COME TOWARD THE REVISED ORG CHART! IT'S SO BEAUTIFUL!

OF COURSE.

HELLO-D-O! LARRY, DOESN'T RETURN MY CALLS?

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THE COMPANY WILL NOT BUY PHDS FOR EMPLOYEES.

QUESTION: WILL YOU STILL PAY FOR BUSINESS TRIPS OF NO DISCERNIBLE VALUE?

OF COURSE.

I'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU THROUGH YOUR WEB CAM. I'M USING YOUR MAIL SERVER TO SPAM MY FRIENDS.

DID HE POST IT ON THE INTERNET? I'D LIKE TO READ IT.

I'M ALSO CURIOUS ABOUT MY OBJECTIVES FOR THIS YEAR. DO YOU HAVE THE GUY'S E-MAIL ADDRESS?

OK, I THINK I'VE GOT EVERYTHING I NEED FOR THANKSGIVING.

ON TOP OF IT ALL, I HAVE TO CLEAN THE WHOLE HOUSE FOR VIS. AND WE DON'T WANT THAT STUPID TURKEY IN THERE.

TURKEY, CLUFFING, ONIONS, SPAGHETTI, NAP DISHES, GREEN BEANS, NO TRIVET, NO BOTTOM, NOTHING TO DO NOW BUT WAIT FOR MY MOTHER TO ARRIVE.

ANTICIPATING ANOTHER I WISH I HAD SOMETHING!

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FoxTrot by Bill Amend

GRANDMA'S (01'111116
FOR THANKSGIVING...

WHERE DID ALICE GO?

SOMETIMES THE UNASSIGNED HAVE UNFINISHED BUSINESS. I CAN SEE THEM.

I CAN CONTACT EMPLOYEES WHO ARE IN ORG-LIMBO.

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ANTICIPATING ANOTHER I WISH I HAD SOMETHING!
Late last Friday night, roughly 70 warm Caltech affiliated bod­ies filed into the cold confines of the Pasadena Ice Rink in or­der to do battle against one an­other. Shortly thereafter, teams of seven people began rushing at each other armed with brooms and wearing various forms of protection such as hel­mets and housing towels duct­taped around their knees. And hence began the “Caltech Y Boffo Bonecrusher Broomball”

Could not be determined, as the final game could not be played due to time constraints. Broomball is a game very much like ice hockey and is played with similar rules. However, it is the numerous de­viations from ice hockey that makes broomball fun. For in­stance, how often does one en­counter a game in which the players run around an ice rink with brooms in order to hit a softball sized disc tape ball into the goal of the opposing team? Similar to ice hockey, the game can get rough and slippery at times, thus causing those who play without some form of knee padding to make sure that they have appropriate protection for the next game that they play. Despite the potential pain in­volved when playing the game, there exists a loyal following of people. For some, the game is a way to release frustration and stress caused by midterms in the prior weeks. Others such as alumni go for old times sake. From those people, one can hear tales such as “when I was an undergraduate, the Ruddock team was comprised of people who were all 6’4 feet in height - a most formidable team.” Then there are those who enjoy viewing the game from the engineering stand­point of “how to make a better broom.” Some players indicate a preference for heavy brooms, which are useful for blocking shots and thrusting shots, whereas, others prefer light brooms to allow for faster run­ning speeds.

All things considered, the pri­mary reason why people are in­volved is because it is fun. The game also allows for friendly competition between teams to allow one of them to show who is indeed the best team.
Various Things at LACMA

The star attraction at the L.A. County Museum of Art right now is *Pompeii: Life in a Roman Town*. Making its only U.S. appearance, this large exhibit showcases many artifacts unearthed from the Roman town destroyed by Mt. Vesuvius in 79 A.D., well-organized into sections illustrating Pompeian people, culture, technology, and science. Artifacts range from jewelry and bronze tools to colossal wall-sized frescoes. Their science and technology (even an ingenious odometer and a model of an incredible slave-powered crane) is quite remarkable, especially considering that much of Europe was still barbarian at the time. My only disappointment is that I would have liked to see more on the techniques used to uncover and preserve the items, which are surprisingly undamaged considering the circumstances of their burial.

LACMA is a big museum, and there are plenty of other things to see there, too. One of the more interesting is *Glass in the Shell: Photography and the Human Soul, 1850-2000*, a collection of portrait photography from the its beginnings to the present day. Much more than just a collection of faces, Glass includes a number of bizarre physiognomic studies from the 19th century, as well as contemporary postmodern experiments with the form to show how a photo reveals its subject’s inner being.

Less successful is *Around Impressionism: French Paintings from the National Gallery of Art*. I’m no fan of impressionism to begin with, but this isn’t particularly well-curated, a seemingly random hodge-podge of secondary paintings by major painters like Monet and Degas that certainly has some nice work in it, but is something like the visual equivalent of a rock group’s B-sides anthology. Geared toward children but still fun is *Music for the Eyes: The Fine Art of African Musical Instrument*, which includes several examples of drums, harps, and such sitting around for you to play. In the beautiful Japanese Pavilion, one of my favorite buildings in the city, you can soak up the nothingness/everythingness of The Art of Twentieth-Century Zen: Paintings and Calligraphy by Japanese Masters before coming back to the world with the permanent collection of whimsical netsuke carvings. The Impressionism exhibit runs through November 29, and most of the other temporary exhibits (including several I didn’t mention) close early in January 2000.

Don’t Stage Dive

Cult indie power-pop legends Guided by Voices, basically songwriter/vocalist Robert Pollard and an ever-changing band of sidemen/drinking buddies, brought their energetic show to the Roxy on the Sunset Strip last Friday in support of their Ric Ocasek-produced new album *Do the Collapse*. GbV pounded out perfect 2-minute rock songs as if there was no wall between the stage and the ever-appreciative audience, sharing beers and chatting with the crowd, even letting some sit up on the side of the stage. Unfortunately one guy got a little too excited and decided to stage-dive. There being no moshpit, he hit the floor head first, bringing an abrupt end to the show as paramedics were summoned and he was taken to the hospital (he was released later that night.) So don’t be a dork and ruin a great concert; even if you don’t hurt yourself you’ll piss a lot of people off by kicking them in the head.
But you can call me.... Dean

Dean's Corner

Failure

by Jean-Paul Revel

I recently read of a study in which the researchers analyzed factors that affect the performance of students at college (C. Steele, "Thin Ice," The Atlantic Monthly (Aug 1999) pp 44-54). It turns out that given equal brain power, the attitude of learners has a major influence on how well they do. Particularly important are a student's self image and surprisingly, his/her expectations on how they are perceived by others. Let's look at us, numero uno that we are (how come the radio always and only mentions USC's selection as School of the Year by Time magazine? Could it have something to do with the fact that it is their radio station?). Anyway, we at Caltech don't need that kind of advertisement to enroll an entering class of absolutely superior people, students who can run rings around almost anyone — with the exception of course, of their professors. Actually, I believe (but dare not express too loudly) that many of our students can run rings even around their professors. Not all profess of course. After all, some of them used to be Caltech undergraduates themselves! OK, so everyone here is tops. Yet over the course of the first couple of years, something very strange occurs. Some students, in spite of the promise held out by their high school scores and the evaluations of their mentors, somehow, somehow find themselves left behind, struggling to keep up. Now why should that happen to anyone admitted here?

One class of explanations holds that, in a fair number of cases, students find the distractions of college life so enticing that they cannot resist the lure. Instead of doing their homework they immerse themselves in a 1001 non-academic activities, something that does no good to their transcripts. Some of these time killers are frivolous, others important to the welfare of fellow undergraduates and the Institute. Although satisfying, these activities unfortunately contribute little to what the student originally came to Caltech for. These activities are often entered into without a clear understanding that they can become a black hole of a time sink. By the time the student realizes there is a problem, it may require a major effort to repair the damage. It is a bit like an addiction, which is hard to reverse by the time one realizes that one is hooked.

There are other, perhaps more insidious, assaults on scholastic achievement. Besides getting involved over their heads, another reason for poor performance is that the students believe, against all contrary evidence, that they may not be up to snuff. This manifests itself as strong feelings of self doubt, or, more notoriously, in the belief that the prejudices of their mentors will prevent them from being judged fairly. It turns out that everyone can fall prey to a "stereotype threat," the fear that one will be judged not by performance, but by what we term the Black hole of a time sink. By the time one realizes that this is happening, it may require a major effort to repair the damage. Thus either self doubts, or fears of not being judged fairly leads to self sabotage! What a situation to find oneself in!

One way to deal with the problem is to learn to believe that you are as good as the next person. If you should think, don't take that as confirmation of your darkest fears. Take advantage of every little chance to show competence, and you will be seen as confirmation of your darkest fears. Take advantage of every little chance to show yourself in your best light. If things go wrong, even with even less time to spend on studies or able to enter the grades on the grade sheet. A bientot.

lead•er (le•der) n. 1. One that leads or guides. 2. Fidelity Investments® Congratulates California Institute of Technology on being rated the #1 University in the Country by U.S. News & World Report (August 1999) 3. As a leading provider of financial services since 1946, Fidelity® is honored to be included as a 403(b) investment services provider to one of the academic leaders of today.
Nov. 29, 1999. Current Sophomores and Juniors will be eligible to apply for either the 1999/2000 or the 2000/01 competition. Interested applicants should have a 3.3 or better G.P.A. R.V.I.P. to respond to the competition. Application forms are available in the Financial Aid Office.

Andover Teaching Fellowships. Se­

lections are now being made for the next year. Would you like to choose a place in a different part of the country? Phillips Academy, Andover has ten to twelve fellowships for graduating seniors who would like to teach at Andover for the 2000-01 aca­
demic year. They also have a special summer teaching assistant program which is available in Fellowship Advising & Study Abroad. Feb. 16 application reception deadline. Note that Andover is in Mas­
sachusetts.

The Jewish Free Loan Association is offering interest-free student loans to qualified individuals for tuition, books and supplies, and living expenses. Ap­
pliers must have completed a mini­ 

mum of 200 hours of volunteer work and have a 2.5 G.P.A. or above. For fur­
ther information, please contact the J­
ewish Free Loan Association at (213) 761­ 
8830 or (888) 464-7331.

The John Gyles Education Fund is offering scholarships awards up to $5,000 for the 1999-2000 academic year. Ap­
plicants must be U.S. Citizens, have a 2.5 G.P.A. or above, and dem­
strate financial need. Criteria other­
wise specified by the donor. For for­
mation, contact the John Gyles Education Fund.

The Hellenic American University is offering a few-day stay in the New York City. For more information, please contact Winnett Office at 413-587-2172.

Glamour Magazine’s 2000 top ten campus winners will be chosen. This competition recognizes the excep­
tional achievements and academic excel­
ence of female college juniors from across the country. It’s an ideal opportu­
nity for talented students to be rewarded for their leadership roles on campus and in the greater community. Winners re­
cive $10,000, coverage in the October is­
ue, and the opportunity to meet top profes­sional in their field, usually dur­ing a few day-stay in the New York. The competition is open to all female juniors regardless of major or GPA. All entries must be postmarked by Jan 31, 2000. Contact the Dean of Student Office.

The Eisler Foundation for Hu­
mor and Humor is offering the top ten winners in this category in the competition. Previous winners in any one category are not eligible for the competition in that year. For more information, contact Professor Israel. For fur­
ner information you may contact: Rick Carney, MSC scholarships Chairperson, NSC 156, (818) 849-5000, or Twin Cities Office.

The Eisler Foundation for Hu­
mor and Humor announces the Eisler Prize in Ethics Essay Contest 2000, a contest designed to challenge college students to analyze ethical issues facing them in today’s complex world. Juniors and seniors are encouraged to compete for a total of $1,500 in cash prizes. Prizes are available in the Educational Foundation’s Office at 913-367-5877.

To submit an event for the Mints, contact mints@tech.caltech.edu or call 1-888-45-80 Ar 45-80. Mints submissions should be brief and concise. Email is preferred. The editors reserve the right to reject any or all event submissions on editorial. Deadline is noon Wednesday. Unless specified, all mints will run for two weeks.