Fewer freshmen accept Caltech

by Jon Foster

There is good news from admissions for those people who wish to get good roommates on campus next year. After two years of abnormally large classes (235 and 260), the IHC was informed that as of Friday last week the number of freshmen who had accepted was 177. The decision was made to go to the waiting list in an attempt to fill up the class. According to Sue Friedman, acting Director of Residence Life, the number of confirmed acceptances is now up to 184. The IHC is preparing for 215 total freshmen and transfers, which they will break up as follows.

The unusually small class is a reflection of the vastly different number of Freshmen by house.

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<th>Number of Fresh by house</th>
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<td>Backer</td>
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<td>Dabney</td>
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<td>Ricketts</td>
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<td>Ruddock</td>
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total number of students applying to college jumped nearly 20% this year, and Caltech was ranked number one by U.S. News and World Report. This caused the huge increase of applications (a total of 4240 as opposed to approximately 3000 last year), but Admissions stuck with its desire to keep a fairly small class. The acceptance of only 435 applicants this year puts the acceptance rate at 10.3%, well below last year’s 18%.

Admissions will now turn to the waiting list for the first time in five years. Five years ago, a murdered campus during prefresh weekend naturally caused an abnormally small number of prefresh to attend, and Admissions turned to the waiting list. They will do this again this year (albeit under much less dramatic circumstances).

A member of the admissions committee explained that the waiting list this year is of substantially different compositions than the one five years ago. As the number of high quality applicants has gone up, admissions has been forced to waitlist students who in past years would generally have been accepted.

Witten speaks for SEDS

by Leman Hoffman

Fields Medal winner Michael Francis Atiyah summed up Edward Witten’s role in physics and mathematics this way: “Although he is definitely a physicist (as his list of publications shows) his command of mathematics is rivalled by few mathematicians, and his ability to interpret physical ideas in mathematical form is quite unique. Time and again he has surprised the mathematical community by his bright application of physical insight to new and deep mathematical theorems.”

Witten’s “brilliant application of physical insight” led him to win the Fields Medal, the analogue in mathematics of the Nobel Prize in physics, in 1990, for a series of major contributions beginning with his simpler proof of the positive mass conjecture. Witten has spent the bulk of his academic career at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, and is now a visiting professor here at Caltech.

This past Tuesday evening, he spent about two hours in front of an evenly mixed audience of Caltech undergrads, grad students, faculty, and members of the general public. As Caltech, lectures from world leaders in various scientific fields are by no means hard to come by, but what made this lecture by Witten uncommon was its intended audience. Professor Witten agreed to speak on Tuesday evening solely at the request of a group of undergraduate students, and largely for the purpose of exposing undergraduates to the elegance of his work. And indeed, there was general agreement among the many students present about the accessible level at which the material was presented and the generally engaging manner of Witten’s speech.

A friendly question and answer period followed Witten’s talk.

Varshavsky wins award

by Jesse Oh

Dr. Alexander Varshavsky, the Howard and Gwen Laurie Smits Professor of Cell Biology at Caltech, was awarded the Alfred P. Sloan, Jr. Prize by the General Motors Cancer Research Foundation. The $250,000 prize, which recognizes the most outstanding fundamental scientific contributions to cancer research, was shared by Dr. Varshavsky and Dr. Avram Hershko of the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology.

Dr. Varshavsky and Dr. Hershko were cited for their discovery of the ubiquitin system for protein degradation and the crucial functions of this system in cellular regulation. Dr. Hershko discovered the role of ubiquitin in the process of protein degradation in the cell, while Dr. Varshavsky discovered the first physiological roles of this process and the relationship between the ubiquitin system and malignancy in cancer cells.

“I am honored to receive this award, and grateful for the recognition it bestows on the entire community of ubiquitin researchers,” said Dr. Varshavsky. “Back in 1990, ubiquitin studies were still a rather esoteric field. A decade later, thousands of biologists all over the world are studying the ubiquitin system and problems connected to it. It is gratifying to know that our findings have been appreciated.”

The installation of SIFT is resulting in other movements also. Towards the end of the year 2000, the displaced Finance Department Offices will be moved to a new building on Chester Ave.

Additionally, a new satellite Cashier’s Office is expected to be operational within the next two weeks. It will be located in the same garage structure as Disbursement Audit. The Satellite Cashier’s Mail Code will be F-7 and the telephone number will be (626) 395-2480.

Bursar’s Office relocates to Hill House

Students wishing to visit the Bursar’s Office, rejoice! You no longer must make your way through the treacherous hot sun to Keith Spalding. As of Monday, May 8, the Bursar’s office has moved to Hill House (located at 363 South Hill) where they now reside on the first floor.

Their new Mail Code is 3-7, while their telephone and fax numbers remain the same (x2988 and 304-0883 respectively).

According to Juana Turcios of the Bursar’s office, the move was a result of the upcoming installation of SIFT (Space Infrared Telescope Facility) in what used to be the Finance Department Offices. The location in Hill House is only a temporary solution, however. As Turcios explained, “the Bursar’s Office is expected to be moved again to a new Student Services Center after the Holliston Ave. structure has been completed.”

The Disbursement Audit office, which had previously been housed in Hill House, is now in the garage structure in the back of Hill House. This “was expected to be a temporary solution,” although Turcios admits that “their future home has not been determined yet.”

The installation of SIFT is resulting in other movements also. Towards the end of the year 2000, the displaced Finance Department Offices will be moved to a new building on Chester Ave.

Please see Varshavsky on page 3
On Tues., May 9th, the ASCIT Board officially proposed four amendments to the corporation bylaws, two of which are directed to the Board of Directors (BoD). As per the bylaws, I have called a Corporation/undergraduate election on Wed., May 24. The bylaw amendments concerning the Board of Directors (BoD) (Article VII) will be open for voting by all undergraduates (I have enclosed a proposal below with it). The other two amendments are open to all ASCIT members. A 2/3 majority is required to approve the amendments. This and the following shall serve as the official notification and statement of the proposed amendments and election.

Proposed amendments

[1] Article IV, Section 10—Directors of Directors at Large: One of the Directors at Large shall be a freshman, continuing their election, and percolation at the time of election. The Freshman Director at Large is responsible for the publication of the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Handbook. The Upperclassman Director at Large is responsible for the management, finances, communication, and percolation of the ASCIT van and copy. The Directors at Large shall in addition perform other duties specified by the Board of Directors.

Proposed change: Strike everything following “at the time of election.”

Amended Section would read: Officers of Directors at Large: One of the Directors at Large shall be a freshman, continuing their election, and percolation at the time of election. The Directors at Large shall in addition perform other duties specified by the Board of Directors.

Amended Section would read: OFFICERS OF DIRECTORS AT LARGE: One of the Directors at Large shall be a freshman, continuing their election, and percolation at the time of election. The Directors at Large shall in addition perform other duties specified by the Board of Directors.

[2] Article XI, Section 4—Movies Chair Currently reads: The ASCIT Movies Chair shall be the chair of the ASCIT House Committee. The Movies Chair shall be appointed by the Board of Directors with the council of the Treasurer, and shall be responsible for the Board of Directors and the Board of Directors shall appoint additional members to the Movies Committee upon approval by the Board of Directors. The Movies Committee shall have the charge of operating and maintaining the ASCIT movies equipment, choosing the movie selection, and managing the business expenses. At the end of each fiscal year, the Committee shall submit a budget for approval by the Board of Directors for the upcoming year, and they shall be responsible for reporting to the Board of Directors on their status throughout the year.

Proposed change: Strike everything following “shall be appointed by the Board of Directors” and replace with “The Movies Committee shall be responsible for planning and conducting movie events, decide on the movie budget, work in conjunction with a managing corporation enterprise resources as specified by the Resolution of the Board of Directors.”

Amended Section would read: The Movies Committee shall be responsible for planning and conducting movie events, deciding on the movie budget, working in conjunction with the managing corporation enterprise resources as specified by the Resolution of the Board of Directors. The Chair shall report to the Board of Directors on the committee’s status throughout the year.

[3] Article VII, Section 3 (j) —Calling Back Past BoC Reps Currently reads: If made necessary by subsections (g), (h), or (i) in order to maintain the proper representation of the remaining voting members of the Board, the Chair shall reserve the right to ask any past members of the Board of Control to serve on a case, contingent on the approval of the Board of Directors. All members on the Board of the Chair shall appoint additional members to the Movies Committee upon approval by the Board of Directors. The Chair shall have the charge of operating and maintaining the ASCIT movies equipment, choosing the movie selection, and managing the business expenses. At the end of each fiscal year, the Committee shall submit a budget for approval by the Board of Directors for the upcoming year, and they shall be responsible for reporting to the Board of Directors on their status throughout the year.

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[4] Article VII, Section 3 —Dismissal of a Rep judged by his peers Currently reads: Notice of a rep being judged by his peers at the BoC.

Proposed change: Insert a new item (j): the current item (j) will be item (k) and so on. The new item (j) will be: Notice of a rep being judged by his peers before the BoC.

Amended Section would read: Notice of a rep being judged by his peers at the BoC.

Statement in favor of amendments [1] and [2]—Concerning the Directors of Directors at Large and the Movies Chair: These proposed amendments allow for two new amendments to be open to all ASCIT members. A 2/3 majority is required to approve the amendments. This and the following shall serve as the official notification and statement of the proposed amendments and election.

Statement in favor of amendments [3] and [4]—Concerning the Directors of Directors at Large and the Movies Chair: These proposed amendments allow for two new amendments to be open to all ASCIT members. A 2/3 majority is required to approve the amendments. This and the following shall serve as the official notification and statement of the proposed amendments and election.

The proposed amendments: The purpose of these two amendments is to clean up the bylaws and put detailed job descriptions where they are needed. The new amendments correct this status by being more specific in the bylaws. The bylaws are designed to serve as a framework for BoC operations and to be inclusive of every position. The proposed bylaws are intended to serve as a framework for BoC operations and be inclusive of every position.

The ASCIT excess room currently reads an interpretation on this issue which is much more detailed and ambiguous. The bylaws are designed to serve as a framework for BoC operations and to be inclusive of every position.

The problem is that full control of the movie by the BoC has to be in the bylaws. The new amendments allow for more specific language that is needed to be more inclusive of every position. The new amendments allow for more specific language that is needed to be more inclusive of every position.

The current wording is an attempt to end confusion within the confines of the existing articles, but this wording is not specific enough to be an inclusive framework.

The proposed amendments seek to provide a more specific framework for BoC operations and be more specific to every position. The new amendments allow for more specific language that is needed to be more inclusive of every position. The new amendments allow for more specific language that is needed to be more inclusive of every position.

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It's Appealing...
By Jason Melzer

Recent editions of The California Tech have brounded around arguments dealing with sexually explicit imagery and whether we should embrace such forms of "expression" at Caltech. While it is true that we have progressed much in recent years to accommodate such ideas, we should simply find no area of life that has remained untouched by this new political correctness: the bathroom.

I don't know about you, but I find it absolutely appalling that people, in our modern society, feel it is appropriate to go naked in a bathroom. And that at Caltech, a bastion of higher learning and enlightenment, we, too, bear naked (or mostly naked) bodies when entering the BSE. We must understand that a professor can work full-time on writing that up by May 24 and complete third term during the summer. They are having some problems getting the grade distribution data, but Eric assures them that we will find a way to get it. They are also working on rewriting the software for analyzing the data.

Eric suggests the following ARC Reps-at-Large for approval by the BSR:


The BSR will discuss the following resolutions: Jonassen - The BSR will choose a new Jammie head with recommendation from the card corner. The head will be appointed at the beginning of third term, along with the other ASIT-appointed officers.

Publications Director - The task of another's naked body stands just beyond a thin curtain in the bathroom. While this may have been acceptable in the past, we have not progressed far enough in the level of sophistication in our society to permit this. We have simply found an occupied portion of wasteland in which to do so.

At some point, the latrine became popular, but the level of sophistication of such ideas was rather primitive in the society of our forefathers. The great ancient civilizations had rudimentary plumbing, allowing for some form of water removal, at least. The Romans had the latrines, where many people would relieve themselves in the same space (without any barriers); they'd probably have a chat about their clothes. We have come a long way in our bathroom sophistication, yet some still feel it appropriate to bear their naked bodies in this space — especially in line with modern sensibilities for the protection of others' feelings.

When one enters a bathroom, one may find it uncomfortable, or even disgusting, that another's naked body stands just beyond a thin curtain in the bathroom. It is true that we have progressed in our bathroom design and use over the past millenium or so. With the development of civilization, people would simply find an occupied section of wasteland in which to do so.

The California Tech
Regardless of my verdict on "Gladiator," there will be a massive horde there anyway, so in case you find yourself at the movies with "sold out" splattered on the ticket window, here's a film you may or may not want to consider.

American Psycho (B) rated R: nudity, menage-a-trois, axes and chain saws

"American Psycho" aimed to be an insightful satire of '80s materialism and decadence, using a serial killer's propensity for committing homicides as the metaphor for Yuppie heartlessness. The title character is placed in an environment with contemporaries who share his professional ambitions, though without his murdering tendencies, and unlike other slashier films, the killer isn't a product of some quest for vengeance in retaliation of years of torment or some painful experience.

Quite the opposite, the Wall Street big potato is among those him. Complacency as they list the excesses and contempt for losing such a painful experience.

Bateman's monologues begin to descend into the surreal toward the end of the film so that the distinction between real or what is actually a portrayal of the storm raging inside his head becomes blurred. Though it allows Bateman to recite his most chilling remarks the ending is disorienting and awkward. The Nothing Bateman does ever surprises society, and civilization knows what Bateman will become, another anonymity in posh society where individuality is obliterated by mutual one-upmanship.

When Bateman wakes up each day to his morning cleansing ritual, there is little feeling as strong as hatred. Rather, it is not emotion which fuels him but possibly emptiness.

Bateman's monologues begin to descend into the surreal toward the end of the film so that the distinction between real or what is actually a portrayal of the storm raging inside his head becomes blurred. Though it allows Bateman to recite his most chilling remarks the ending is disorienting and awkward. The re-staging of the '80s drug-induced, go-go culture is a bit superficial, even as seen through the eyes of someone who can't remember anything from there.

The cinematography is a bit crisp and lacking in the vinyl feel which points to a movie which feels too recent. This fact may work in the film's favor since it can be construed not only as a satire of greed in the '80s, but greed and insipidity affect in any poignant or thoughtful writing. But for all its underlying positive message in the form of criticizing the empty, meaningless, something feels absent and it's not only the emotional emptiness which motivates the characters. Christian Bale is the quintessential anti-hero, so much so that even when investigating begins to turn against him, regarding the disappearances of people there's a feeling of empathy for him. It's not because the movie condones his actions but perhaps because a hope exists that his amoral conscience, founded on emptiness, will reach some redeeming conclusion.

Alas, there is none. In hindsight, the movie is filled with interesting complexities revolving around the angsty subcultural rage against society, but while in the theater it's too easy to be overcome by the violence and gratuitous exhibitions of hypermasculine sexuality. These elements do contribute to the exposure of Bateman as a psycho without humanity, but if the audience is to save its own it's action is only to turn away.

Genova, Switzerland - The US reported ongoing efforts to eliminate police brutality and abuse of prison inmates, in compliance with the United Nations Conventions Against Torture, which was signed in 1984. Amnesty International filed a counter-report documenting "numerous instances of torture or ill treatment," which are "fast becoming institutionalized across the country."

Shinza, Iran - Farzad Karshi, an Iranian Jew on trial for spying, denied the charges against him. Of the 13 defendants in the case, he is the first to reject the accusations. Since the trial began a month ago, 6 others have confessed, and 6 have not yet taken the stand.

Los Alamos, New Mexico - A pre-scribed burn set by the National Park Service in Bandelier National Monument last week has gone out of control. The town, and most of the National Laboratory have been evacuated.
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I'LL TELL PEOPLE TO KEEP A JOURNAL OF ALL THEIR THOUGHTS. THEN I'LL BILL THEM.

LOOK WHAT YOU BOYS DO TO THE NUTS, IT'S MINDY OUT.

I THINK WE'VE TREACHED THE LIMIT.

I NEVER KNEW THE CARE SO MUCH HAD SUCH AN IMAGE.

IT'D BE A SHAME IF SOMEONE MADE CRITICAL BITS OUT IN THE DATA.

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Dean's Corner

The butterfly that roared

by Jean-Paul Revel

against time, going at what seems to them break-neck speed by balloon, camel, elephant, ... as moving steam. The wager was that it would take them no more than 80 days to return, but they arrive back in London a day late, realizing only at the last minute that in fact they were on time having gained a day because they had traveled eastward. A novel idea for the time when travelers obviously had not yet heard of a choice of Rosemary Lasagna, Glazed Beef or Trout Amundine on the way to London. If you never have read the story of Phileas Fogg, the imper- turbable whisk player, you can remedy the situation online, at http://www.139.pair.com/read/ Jules_V erne/ Around_the_W orld_in_80_D ays/index.html.

So, a trip around the world was still a sensation even in the late 1800s. It sure seems to have taken a long time to sink into ev- eryday consciousness, this idea that the earth was a sphere, in spite of Magellan's exploits and even after poets acknowledged the fact when "At the round earth's imagined corners, blow your trumpets, angels." (John Donne) Pythagoras in the 6th century BC had already concluded that the world was round, by analogy with the sun and the moon. Three hundred years later, Eratosthenes, the head librarian of the Great Library in Alexandria, realized not just that the earth was round but also succeeded in measuring its size accurately. He became aware that at noon on June 21st sunlight went straight down a well near what is today Aswan in Egypt, whereas in Alexandria, at the mouth of the Nile, a stick planted vertically cast a shadow in the sand. He had someone pace the distance (800 miles) between these two places, and that allowed him to calculate the earth's circumference with what seems to be a surprisingly accurate result.

Well, let's get back to the Philip- pines where Magellan died and Mrs. Marcos kept all those shoes. Who did not feel the ef- fects of the "love bug" which spread from there around the globe? What happened is as amazing to me as the idea that a flutt­ ering butterfly would influ­ ence the track of storms else­ where around the world. Can you imagine that all the upheaval of the last few days could have been caused by the actions of a bank employee whose job it was to direct complaints to people who knew the answers? Can you believe that such a fel­ low could bring the whole world to its knees? I know it may be not him, but his girlfriend, or his girlfriend's sister, but that hardly changes my point. Can you imagine that he could have done this in spite of the fact that he had no computer in his apartment? Oh well, maybe he did throw the thing into the canal, a "miasmic" ditch, said by news bureaus to pass near his decreet apartment house. Of course, oth­ ers have suggested that the "love" fest or rather infestation originated instead with a student in Australia. As I write this no one really knows where it did come from, this ILOVEYOU virus. All we know is that it did create havoc all around the world, and that in less than 80 hours, not 80 days. The whole affair demonstrates the extent to which we are all knit together, willy nilly, by love, maybe, and by electricity, and digital signals.

Last week was also the anni­ versary of another global event. Unbelievably, nearly everyone, at least here, seems to have for­ gotten about May 8. Do you know what I am referring to? I was a kid, those many years ago, when this event took place. There was dancing in the streets, lots of hugging, kissing, tears of joy, a true love-in before its time. I have, on authority (from the net) that this seemingly forgotten event cost 52,199,262 lives around the world. It was VE day. Victory in Europe, victory of the Allies over the Axis. I guess all these casualties had not yet occurred on VE day. The number also includes the deaths that took place between VE and VJ day, what with fierce battles over tiny atolls, and atom bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. May the world never see such things again. So while one must de­ plore the unacceptable way of delivering the Filipino message, it is indeed a message that all nations should hear and heed. ILOVEYOU. Say it, repeat it and believe in it, and remember your mother on May 14th, she is the one who said it to you first. A bientôt.

Jean-Paul Revel

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The California Tech

Mints

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RELATIONSHIP: Effective Monday, May 8, 2000, The Bursar’s Office will relocate from the first floor of Keith Spalding Building (Business Services), Room 116, to 363 South Hill Street and occupy the first floor of the main Hill House. The new Mail Code for the Bursar’s Office will be 3-7. The telephone and fax numbers for The Bursar’s Office will remain the same. Please note that the Disbursement Audit Office has moved to the garage space between the lower Level 1 and the South Street. Additionally, a new Satellite Cashier’s Office will be operational for Personal Accounts on the first floor of So. Hill Street. The Satellite Cashier’s Mail Code will be 4-7 and the telephone number will be (626) 398-4717.

Local indie rock label looking for interns for sales/marketing/internet and promotions. Looking for motivated self starter who is resourceful and responsible. Computer skills a plus! Serious inquiries only please. Email: vtr@necom.net. URL: http://www.vanhatker.net. Telephone number: 583-4717

CIM Vision International, an E-Commerce company based in Long Beach, California, is seeking talented individuals with a passion for software development and experience in Windows 2000 COM+/Java/ASP. Immediate openings are available. Candidates must show attention to detail in their work and have good oral and written communication skills and demonstrate that they work well under pressure and communicate well as a fast paced team environment. Preference will be given to those candidates that have experience with C++, MFC, COM/DCOM/COM+, ATL, Java, SQL and UML. Please send resume and a cover letter to: Human Resources, CIM Vision International, 1500 Oceangate, Suite 1600, Long Beach, CA 90802.

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