Pirates Invade Caltech
Seniors Abandon Classes in Unprecedented Day of Ditching

BY: ANNA HISZPANSKI

Despite numerous setbacks, Dabney successfully hosted its annual Drop Day Party this past Saturday, May 20th. However, the planning and building for the party did not come without trouble. Originally slated to be held at St. Luke's Hospital the weekend after second term’s drop day, the Darbs had to reschedule the party to third term due to filming at the hospital which overlapped the party.

However, the double-booking was not realized until after planning for the party had already begun and DJs had been booked. “Some of the Drs were very unhappy about [the cancellation], most notably Nommo Ogo, a group of DJ’s who had spun at the Drop Day [parties]... for the last three or four years,” wrote Dabney House President, Jeff Kranski, in an email response. “As they had already made arrangements to come down all the way from Alaska to play here, they had to cancel their plans. They have not, to this date, returned any further attempts to get in touch with them...”

In addition to the problem with scheduling, Dabney had to completely overhaul its preparations when the house was informed that if the party was to be held at St. Luke’s Hospital, it would have to end by 10pm. “[One] requirement [was that] all the music end at 10pm and that the final bus... leave by 11pm,” wrote Kranski. “As most parties don’t even start until 10pm, this was clearly an impossible requirement to meet.”

With the date of the party only a month away, the Darbs looked for other viable locations. Steele House was a top choice, but the All-Sports Banquet was scheduled to be held there the day after the party, thus leaving inadequate time to remove the construction from the party.

Tom Mannion, Assistant VP of Campus Life, offered his backyard as the location of the All-Sports Banquet, thereby allowing Dabney to have their party at Steele House. However, due to miscommunications, Dabney did not receive confirmation that they could host their party at Steele until nearly two weeks before the party. “Had the location of the party been uncertain for even another day or two, Dabney would not have had a true Drop Day this year since we would not have had nearly enough time to do construction...,” wrote Kranski. “Our backup plan was to simply buy a bunch of liquor and beer and hold a big party, though not an inter-house level party. This was a very real possibility within Dabney and one that I worked very hard to avoid as I [felt] that it would be a disappointment to a good number of Techers...”

The Darbs’ determination to host a real Drop Day Party, however, overcame the difficulties. Many members of the house spent the majority of their days for the past week at Steele building. “We got a lot built in basically four or five days,” said Dabney sophomore and Social VP Zac Lizer. “I feel we [did] a spectacular job on the party, thanks to the hard work of many of our freshmen and upperclassmen, regardless of the fact that we put it together in only two weeks,” wrote Kranski.

With all the difficulties and postponements involved with the party this year, sophomore Aaron Hoffer summed the feelings of many in Dabney House: “I’m glad it finally happened.”

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Nate Lewis on Soul Mates
Page 6
Saturday the 13th, a few days back, I passed the Caltech track team (not including myself) concluded their season with a post-conference meet at Occidental. They represented the fleetest of the fleet, the junkiest of the junkies, and the most dashful of the those who dash. Jerry McLean and Helen Tai competed in the hurdles in hopes of fulfilling their wondrous athletic championship. Although nei ther of them met the qualifying mark, they both cleared the school record to 15.19 seconds. Helen broke this record repeat edly for the past few weeks, but I’m not sure this improvement this season has been a testament to her dedication over four years at Caltech, as well as a testament to, like, being really fast.

Both hurdlers ended their col legiate careers with the meet. Together, the administration seems Leibs later remarked that he can believe that the ramifications of changes imposed on the plan, as for the future — and is good art.

It was a high-quality meet, and behind the hurdles I spent a lot of time with Leibs, interested in the perfor mances of people much faster than myself. (Business, some thing like that.) This was why I wasn’t racing. I don’t get beaten by student athletes from main ationism dwindled (see how poetic that was? (Edit. not))

4000 team of Matt Kiez, Stuart Ward, Patrick Boyle, and Tim Tindell set out on a record run. This year, the team had run no fast record for “record-seventy years old.” (That is, “record that has been set in 70 years old.”) After the 800m, the team had set a record for “record-seventy years old.” and not “record for seventy years of age.” I’m sure this was a mishap, because the team was putting it all together,ing in their final collegiate race. Although nei ther of them met the qualifying mark, they both cleared the school record to 15.19 seconds. Kiez had broken points in the 800m competition, and Helen Tai had scored points in the 100m, which is twice as good. Entering the meet, the team had struggled to put together four top-notch performances in the same relay this year.

In 2000, the team ran 3:21. At the beginning of 2006, with all the relay runners returning, the record seemed sure to fall. Sadly, (for us runners anyway, you prob ably aren’t a sad student, read as that as “Ambiguously unemo tionally”) several of our sprinters endured injuries throughout the season, and as the championships approached, they all stepped up a notch. (Clock 3:23.) The next week, at Claremont, (during which time the board run held there — they didn’t go up to 3:23.) But I’m sure the board run would get run ning, as opposed to Kiesz, Boyle, Ward, and Tindell don’t need dentist appointments.

Kiesz, Boyle, Ward, and Tindell don’t need dentist appointments. which is not helpful during a relay race, and incidentally makes them difficult to get through airport security.) The record they sought to break was 3:19.0, set in 1996 by McLean, Smith, Snelling, and Creal. Jolly good fellows they were.

All four runners were in good form. Three of the team scored points in the 400m final at SCI AC Conference Championships, while Kiez had scored points in the 800m, which is twice as good. Entering the meet, the team had struggled to put together four top-notch performances in the same relay this year.

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BY: MICKEN EICHEN

If you’ve been reading the Tech for the past few weeks, you probably noticed a trend. Recently, the administration seems determined to get rid of the few things that make Caltech unique and tolerable. There’s a massive reorganization plan for the future — and is good art.

One of the frequent justifications given for these recent changes is “to make our students more competitive.” If anything, this is a testament to how weak this argument is.

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Announcements

2006 Noland Leadership Award

Ryan Farmer, Meng-Meng Fu, Rebecca Adler, and Matthew Wiiker were awarded the 2006 Robert L. Noland Leadership Award at a dinner presentation in the Athenaum Library on May 17th. The Robert L. Noland Leadership Award is for outstanding Caltech students who have demonstrated exceptional leadership abilities and have encouraged and supported others in realizing their own leadership capabilities.

Cunningham received cash and gifts to in exchange for influence in his decisions on a powerful subcommittee that approves spending for defense programs. He bought a mansion, yacht, Rolls-Royce and condominium near Washington with the money. The extension of George W. Bush’s anti-terror law, deemed by some as an attack on civil liberties, passed the Senate and is likely to be approved by Congress on Tuesday. The USA Patriot act would pass. The approval of the bill seems likely the bill will pass. The approval of the bill indicates that Bush still has strong support in Congress, despite some conservatives speaking out against the President as midterm elections approach. The renewed version of the bill includes three changes, allowing individuals to challenge a requirement to not tell anyone if they have been subpoenaed in a terrorist investigation, eliminates a requirement to tell the FBI about any lawyers consulted about National Security Records, and states that most libraries are not required to give up information about suspected terrorists.

Compiled from the BBC, CNN, MS-NBC and Yahoo News.

Dozens of Congregations Leave Episcopal Church Due to Ordination of Homosexual Bishop

Episcopal congregations have been leaving the Episcopal Church, the American branch of the Anglican Church of England, due to its acceptance of gay bishops.

The Episcopal Church, a Protestant sect that allows priests of both genders to marry, elevated Bishop Gene Robinson, who has a same-sex partner, to lead the diocese of New Hampshire. Two of the five candidates for Bishop of California are also openly homosexual.

Churches have been changing their allegiance to African and South American branches of the Anglican Church that condemn homosexuality as immoral and banned by the Bible. So far more than 36 churches have left, but the national Episcopal Church is not worried, comparing this exodus to the situation 30 years ago when the church decided to accept female priests.

Congressmen Sentenced to Over Eight Years in Federal Prison

Cunningham, a Dubai-based company in control of several American ports, as well as disapproval of the plan by most citizens has also hurt Bush’s numbers.

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Bush's Approval Ratings Drop Following Time Lows/Highs

Polls showed Bush had a 38 percent approval rating and a 60 percent disapproval rating this week. Nearly sixty percent of those polled thought Bush wasn’t managing the government effectively, and that he was not paying attention to what his administration was doing, and 73 percent believed big business had too large an influence on President Bush.

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Russia Refuses Russia’s Call to Recognize Israel

Hamas, the militant group that recently won control of the Palestinian parliament, sent a delegation to Moscow to meet with Russian leaders this week. Previous to this week, Hamas had not recognized Israel, which is considered a terrorist group by Israel, the European Union and the United States. Russian President Vladimir Putin did not meet with the Hamas leaders in order to limit protests by Israel. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and other Russian lawmakers, as well as Russian Orthodox Patriarch Alexy II will meet with the group. Hamas refused the Russian request that it recognize Israel as a sovereign nation. Many nations are concerned that Russia has stepped forward and recognized Hamas as a legitimate political organization, breaking the international frost against the group. On Thursday, South Africa also invited Hamas for talks, further weakening the international stance against Hamas.

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Scums in a tub, along with who knows what sorts of fruits and goop. This abomination of a tub was located by Millikan Library.

THE CALIFORNIA TECH

Ode to Tomorrow

BY: ANONYMOUS

Tomorrow comes so sweet and swift and sweet.
Reminding all that all in all is well.
The daylight breaks, behold! The sun to meet.
And lo! The rays of warmth, the clanging bell—
Such new surprises, games and puzzles here
Without impending doom behind your guard.
Yet still, sensations stirred by dreamlike fear
Alarm the one who finds his quest too hard.
Elaborate schemes, betrayal, love and war,
So many stories intertwined as one.
Oh how I long to stay, to play some more!
Alas, tempood, fleeting... still undone.
Thus here I sit, alone with work instead.
Ironic how I long to go to bed.

MAY 22, 2006
Drink o’ the Week

The Ditch Day

BY: BRIAN HANLEY

[Author’s note: I in no way condone the violation of the alcohol policies of the United States, the State of California, the City of Pasadena, and the California Institute of Technology. That being said, I don’t really care what you do or how you do it, so long as I don’t know about it.]

The Ditch Day is an important drink. It has a tremendous history and every year, it helps us deal with the horrible shit that makes up the average daily life here at Tech. Start the preparations by finding as much alcohol as you possibly can. Find vodka, bourbon, rum, tequila, Everclear, etc. Once you have all of these bottles, find a huge punch bowl. Get maybe a little bit of fruit or garnish and some ice or marshmallows (for cold and fun fog effects).

Now dump all of the alcohol you have gathered into the punch bowl. Stir thoroughly until the alcohol is evenly mixed. Once the alcohol is well mixed, drop in the ice and/or dry ice and mix until the alcohol is so cold that you need to wear a jacket. Drop in the garnish and serve the resulting beverage into red cups so no one knows if you are drinking beverages or Beverages.

Really, no one will know that that clear liquid in that cup is not water, but the craziest most drunkenly drink you could ever imbibe.

I suggest drinking no less than two or three cups because otherwise you will still be able to understand what is going on around you, and the point of this drink is to either get you to pass out or to make you so confused that you start making out with the poorly rendered drawings of women that plaster the walls of our houses. I must warn that over consumption can lead to hospitalization or death and I recommend neither as either is as fun as it sounds.

So make the Ditch Day, drink as much as you can, and don’t die. But really, Ditch Day is Tomorrow, so make sure you pre-party.

Congratulations!

The Intel Foundation Congratulates
Bonnie Sheriff and Andrew Beyer
2006-07 Intel Foundation Ph.D. Fellowship Award Recipients

Bonnie Sheriff and Andrew Beyer were awarded Ph.D. fellowship grants from the Intel Foundation for the 2006-07 academic year. Sheriff’s fellowship research will focus on Nanotechnology in Semiconductor Technology and Manufacturing. Beyer’s fellowship research will focus on Nanotechnology in Semiconductor Technology and Manufacturing.

This year, the Intel Foundation Ph.D. Fellowship Program awarded 40 fellowships to more than 50% minority or under-represented Ph.D. candidates pursuing leading-edge research at 18 U.S. universities. Bonnie Sheriff and Andrew Beyer were selected from more than 210 applicants.

To learn more about Intel’s commitment to higher education, visit: www.intel.com/education/highered
If you're like me, you love spending time online to avoid work. Even if it's a few minutes here or there, you just can't function without a good distraction to keep you from working at max potential.

Anyway, I'm here to add to your list of websites. Check one every five minutes—you know: Facebook, Gmail, CNN, MySpace, Slashdot... and now, I bring you Channel101.com. My best friend, Lara Pickle who goes to USCSD, showed me this site a while back and I've been hooked ever since.

Channel 101 features short (about 3-minute) web movies with plots, characters, structure, sound, and much more. They are all "homemade" to some extent, but more like "homemade professional." Lots of them feature recognizable celebrities, like Sara Chalkie (from Scrubs) doing "The Butler and Jack Black (from every annoying and obnoxious noise you've heard in your life) doing "The Computer Man."

For every show, a new episode is supposed to come out every month or so, and then viewers give a thumbs up or thumbs down. Depending on the number of votes, the show can be cancelled or live for another month to come. In addition to showing the top rated shows, the website also features "Top Freelance Pilots," which is kind of like a "has, your movie stinks a lot, let's show everybody!" type of deal.

Anyway, this website is the one that brought you "The Bong Boys," which was about a Cosby fan that invented a way to make a bunch of Bill Cosby by use of a Cosby hair. To keep track of his Cosbys, they all have 18 languages, a defining characteristic, e.g. Bubh Cosby. It's really funny in its own way, but I think the guy who made it is a genius because he got this by Bill Cosby. Anyway, by that point, it was already not that funny. I think of shows kind of end up like that. My favorite show on Chan­nel 101 is "Yacht Rock," which is modeled after VH1-type music specials, like "Behind the Mu­sic." Yacht Rock tries to go back in time, to the legends of Doobie Brothers and their smooth rock sound with inspired real stories that inspired the music.

Not only is it really entertaining, the cause behind it is really cool—I feel like I'm watching old show footage from the 1970s. The people behind "The Bong Boys" is a pretty popular show, the longest running in the history of Chan­nel 101 (which may or may not be saying much).

To be sure, check it out and see what joy three minutes can bring to your otherwise routine search for mild entertainment.

Feel free to send in your own website review! Let us know where you go to seek the latest news, buy your stuff, or take a break between problems sets. Email tech@caltech.edu.

By: Cindy Ko

Non-Profit Develops Software to Help Developing Countries

By: Hamilton Falk

Unlike many of those that graduate from Caltech, alum Parth Venkat is avoiding pure science after graduating, but still using what he's learned in other areas. He is trying to build a business as well as help the people whom access to technology can be a life-changing option.

Parth runs the non-profit organization Growing the World, which attempts to create financially sustainable software that will benefit less developed por­tions of the world.

The company's first project, eKheti.com is an online forum that connects developing na­tions to the people behind Growing the World. Parth Venkat took over the project and founded the Growing the World nonprofit organization, which he believes will not only be a successful NPO, but will help him enter the world of business.

The idea of Growing the World is to take advantage of the ben­efits of software and technology to create a business that can help eKheti.com, a social networking site that is present in India.

The project uses open source software to streamline their mar­kets and help deliver information where it is needed.

The people behind Growing the World believe that software is un­derdeveloped by large businesses because there are too many entry barriers to prevent competition, but can be utilized effectively by a small number of volunteers to create targeted content for people with few resources.

The company likens itself to American websites like gap.com, eBay or orbitz, which have used relatively simple software to boost commerce by making ac­cess to information easy and ef­ficient.

The company believes that reve­nues from advertising are essen­tially unlimited, while the costs of creating effective software is very low.

The company's first project is eKheti.com, which is aimed at rural Indian communities, and future projects are planned that will be made possible by a working proj­ect for El Salvador, a web portal for Rican high schools and a global environmental awareness site.

The eKheti program is a combina­tion of a message board and business website. It supplies use­ful items like maps, information on agricultural methods, class­ifieds and online access to the internet can supply for rural farmers.

The site relies on information from academics and American non-profit organizations, as well as user-generated content, which are cheap and useful for the tar­geted audience.

The project is aimed at people without technical skills, low bandwidth and it must deal with how this information can help poor farmers is the case of BT Cotton, a strain of cotton that has been engineered to include a pro­gram that kills mosquitoes but is harmless to humans. This crop is no more expensive than regular crops and has a greater potential cotton yield, but due to lack of knowledge about it very few farmers use it.

Another problem that will arise is India is a lack of local diversity in production. In some cases, there are no crops in the same area all producing the same thing, which means that one has to buy crops from abroad and that the local soil becomes completely stripped of the nutrients required to grow crops.

A great success story of a farm­er using IT is the so-called "Bu­reau" that is based on the Internet the advan­tages of selling eggs, and thus changes his business from rais­ing chickens to raising eggs. The new product sells well and the man becomes one of the wealthiest peo­ple in town, simply by fol­lowing some advice he found on the Internet.

A program like eKheti.com could diversify local markets and stream­line commerce between local markets, helping enrich people who would otherwise lack the information required to participate in different markets.

We hope to recruit Caltech students and alumni to work on various portions of the project, including things like financial work, product management and web design. We hope people will get in touch with us at growingtheworld.org and possi­bly contact him about joining the project.

Ask-a-Prof: Finding True Love at Tech

By: Dr. Nate Lewis

In the second installment of this column, a short and sweet re­view is submitted as a question submitted by a Caltech student. Keep emailing your ques­tions and suggestions to prof at tech@caltech.edu.

Q: I am a lonely undergrad in­ search of my Soul Mate. How do I find her? And when do I: A: You're asking me, a former Tech Lecturer, how to find a good Tech Lecturer! To go to grad school, at MIT (of all places) to even have a chance! P.S. I found mine where a good Tech Lecter would, in the grad chem­istry department.

Nathan S. Lewis is the George 1. Argyres Professor of Chemistry. He graduated from Caltech in 1977 with a B.S. and is known for his Chla class.

Parth Venkat is a Caltech alum starting a non­profit organization that will develop software.

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IHC update on the South House Renovations and Budget Cuts

BY: RICHARD JONES

Renovation of the South House was not taken lightly since the houses are a huge part of an integral role in creating and maintaining the most unique social and academic atmosphere in the country. The administration and student leadership have, for the most part, worked together over the past few years to plan and carry out the renovations. Other than the groundbreaking of the North Houses, the renovation and occupation of the Mods has modified student culture more than any previous event in Caltech history. Members of Blacker, Fleming, Dabney, and Rickets are currently separating not only from their homes, but from the North Houses and campus.

But the temporary separation was necessary—sections of the South Houses were literally falling apart. If renovations had not been made, 5 million dollars would have been condemned by the City of Pasadena. The damage accumulated over the years on the South Houses also made poor impressions on visitors. Unfortunately, these steps toward a more effective, partially because they lacked original blueprints of the South Houses, and the costs to ascertain the extent of the repairs needed were not provided with an accurate timeline. The decision to approach students late in life, IHC carried the responsibility of the general contractor’s budget. Last Friday, May 19th, the IHC learned from the Architecture and Engineering Services Department that the remaining $765,000 in cuts, which were not approved by the IHC, were taken out of the general contractor’s budget. These projects included rebath, replacement of the South House and the purchase of new furniture for the houses. Thankfully, Student Affairs has purchased new furniture or rehabilitated existing house furnishings. However, the removal of projects not approved by the IHC disapproved of were not made, which may partially explain why the cuts did not reach the $1.6 million goal.

*IHC Analysis of the Cuts*

Cuts made to the renovation of the South House are carried out according to plan. Unfortunately these steps have not been entirely effective. Partly because the South was not the only house that needed to be removed and replaced. Unfortunately, the main kitchen remained intact, making the cuts difficult to complete. Most of the items being cut will have significant impact on student life.

The most notable final cuts are the elevator for the main kitchen, the lighting in the kitchens itself, Blacker, landscaping in courtyard, headhorns lift from all the entrances to allow student with handicap access, some new house and courtyard lighting fixtures, student life in carpeting in the IHC tested cheaper, more stain-resistant carpet.

Also, a majority of the cuts that the IHC disapproved of were not carried out: tile will not be cut from the bathrooms, room sink materials will not be downsized. Hot water pipes will be retained and insulated, and wireless access will not be substituted for recent, telephone, and cable TV wiring.

The IHC didn’t receive the list of items to cut from the South House project until March 27, two days before the deadline. The IHC was told the cost of the cuts on the list was about $1 million, so there was no way to reach that goal.

The IHC didn’t even know what most of the items on the list. As a result, the cuts made to those items with their values. The IHC therefore found it difficult to maintain the integrity of the cuts would have on student life, and how helpful the college would be. Thus, the council was not prepared to give answers by March 29th to Campus Planning. The IHC met early in the morning on March 30th at Tom Mannion’s house to generate a list of acceptable cuts.

Some Questions Remain

There are still unresolved questions about the renovation. The IHC doesn’t know what cuts could have made that might have been less detrimental to the project. Because they were not informed about the cuts in the works for a true “Welcome Home” reception will remain due to the unexpected loss of hot water, and faulty detectors locks may replace card swipes as an alternative.

Neighborhoods are not going to be cared for, and administration should be intensified especially during the building stage so that students can ensure that construction plans are carried out according to plan in the face of unexpected events, like asbestos.

Student input into planning the new North Houses has already been undertaken, and should continue. The IHC has been informed that after reconstruction, the old names of Page, Lloyd, and Bur­dock will be hypthesized by their new donors, not removed. Furthermore, a fourth North House will likely appear. In the end, the IHC wants to make sure that the Skurves, Moles, Ferns, and Durbis were separated from their homes for good reason, and that renovation was worth it. Then, enrollment will grow, and funding so that it will not have to occur again for a very, very long time.

If it’s any consolation, plans are in the works for a true “Welcome Back” for the new students, and housing will allow some students back into the houses and finish troubles to the renovations.

The South Houses will reappear on campus (in mostly) the fall glory thanks to increasingly frequent, though still last-minute, attempts to integrate student input. But students still need to move back in and convince themselves that renovation was worth it.

Note: An IHC-sponsored Open House, organized with the help of the MOSH, will occur on May 24 in the Page Courtyard from 4 pm to 5:30 pm. There will be snacks and drinks, and the Housing office and Project development for the South Houses to answer any questions in an informal one-on-one manner.