Harvard Admissions Discontinues EA
Caltech Weighs Options

BY: HAROLD MARTIN

On Sept 12, Harvard University sent tremors throughout the higher education world by announcing that beginning in 2007 it would discontinue its early action program. Princeton quickly followed suit, announcing less than a week later that it was discontinuing its early decision program. However, Caltech has yet to give an official response to these changes or announce whether it will continue its own early action program.

“This affects us, whether we like it or not,” said Rick Bischoff Director of Undergraduate Admissions here at Caltech. He estimates that the amount of early applications Caltech receives could double next year, from 600 last admissions cycle to over 1200 next year. As the college application process grows increasingly competitive both admissions offices and students have attempted to profit from various types of early application programs. For students, such programs provide an potentially easy way to reduce stress by finishing the application process early. For admissions offices and students have at tempted to profit from various types of early application programs. For students, such programs provide an potentially easy way to reduce stress by finishing the application process early. For admissions offices, these programs increase the amount of accepted students who choose to attend, especially under early decision programs like Princeton’s, which require admitted students to enroll.

Harvard, one of the top three schools that students admitted to Caltech have historically chosen to attend, has stated that it made the decision in order to prevent students from feeling pressured to apply early, provide opportunities for extended public relations tours, and encourage minority and disadvantaged students to apply. However, those reasons do not necessarily all apply to Caltech. For instance, while Bischoff agreed that the early applicant pool is generally “whiter and richer” he also said that Caltech ranks as one of the top elite private universities for receiving undergraduate Pell grants, a common metric of financial neediness. He also said that since Caltech fills up only about a quarter of the class with early applicants
NEWS
OCTOBER 23, 2006

The Outside World
BY: RADHIKA MARATHI

US Joins 300 Million Club
As estimated by the U.S. Census Bureau, the U.S. population hit the 300 million mark on Tuesday this week. The U.S. thus joins China and India with populations greater than 300 million. The major reason for this is the high birth rate as compared to the death rate, with one birth every seven seconds and one death every 13 seconds. Another important reason is immigration of people entering the country every 31 seconds. The Census Bureau has further points about the population demographics. The general trend is the population is moving from the North East and Midwest to the West and the South. A steady growth in the population of the suburbs was also noted.

In spite of the larger population, the number of one-member households has increased from 18 percent to nearly 26 percent in the past 20 years. This trend has been attributed to young people choosing to remain single and delay marriage. The U.S. Census Bureau data showed older people not choosing to remarry. Other points noted by the Bureau include more women in the workforce and better-educated Americans.

North Korea May Be Preparing Second Nuclear Test
A report from the Associated Press on Wednesday states that an activity at a site in North Korea looks similar to that seen at the ninth October site just before the nuclear test. The official also spoke of reports from North Korean military officials stating the state’s intention to carry out multiple tests. The UN Security Council had passed a unanimous vote last Sunday penalizing North Korea for its claimed detonation of a nuclear weapon on October nine. The North Korean foreign ministry said in an official report that the test was not aimed at nuclear war, but also adding that the country wanted ‘peace but was not afraid of war’.

North Korean nuclear launch site. North Korea faces heavy sanctions after testing a nuclear warhead.

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American Census Bureau figures show that the U.S. population hit the 300 million mark on Tuesday this week, making the U.S. the third country in the world to join China and India with populations greater than 300 million. The major reason for this is the high birth rate as compared to the death rate, with one birth every seven seconds and one death every 13 seconds.

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Recent evidence suggests that eating fish twice a week cuts risk of heart attack 36% Scientists Create First Mammade Inert Gas
Researchers from Russia and the United States have succeeded in creating the first element with atomic number 118 that is the heaviest element produced so far and the first mammade inert gas, on family including helium, argon, and neon. The researchers said they bombarded Californium, a manmade element with Californium to make an atom with 118 protons in its nucleus that lasted a millisecond. The finding are published in the journal Physics Review.

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Tired of CDS lunches and dinners? $2.00 Burger, Fries, and Drink EVERYDAY for all Caltech students, staff, and faculty Enjoy The Greatest Happy Hours in the Area. All Well Drinks, Beer & wine, Monday to Friday 11am-7pm only $1.99

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4 THE CALIFORNIA TECH FEATURES OCTOBER 23, 2006

Donut Provides Useful Services For ASCIT Members

BY: RADHAKI MARATHE

ASCIT or the Associated Students of the California Institute of Technology has been the main undergraduate governing body since 1935. Donut is the official website of ASCIT that provides various features on both useful and interesting for Techers. These have been briefly introduced below for all the new members of the Caltech community who have quite ‘figured things out’ yet.

1. Home (Personal Accounts)

All undergraduates, graduates, faculty, and other members of the Caltech community may maintain a personal account which may be used for selling books online, updating directory information, and voting for the online elections on Donut. The website maintains an Event Calendar with details on social events on campus such as Interhouse sport schedules, dance classes, meetings, and other events as well as deadlines for scholarships.

Website Review Blogging With Humor

BY: HAMILTON FALK

I’m an internet junkie, and every day I am in a dilemma of what to see if there’s anything worth looking at to stave off work for another few minutes. My list includes ESPN’s site, and PhiladelphiaEagles.com (I’m a bit of an NFL fan), blogs, Penny Arcade (an online comic) and McSweeney’s.net. The dot net is important, since the .com version is something boring, but McSweeney’s delivers entertainment that ranks at the top of what the internet has to offer. The site describes itself as “Timothy McSweeney’s Internet Tendency”. This is a collaborative effort by Timothy McSweeney’s Quarterly Concern, a journal created by nervous yet prolific relative friends. Timothy McSweeney’s Quarterly Concern is a journal created by nervous yet prolific relative friends. The site was registered with a club name, URL, and a brief description, enabling ASCIT members to search for them using the Club Finder. Registered clubs may post events on the Event Calendar and make online reservations for the ASCIT screening room for showing movies. Special club services such as managing the club website on donut and offering access to webpage through a standard shell account are available on request. A link to the Caltech Club Resource Hand-book is also provided here which gives prospective ‘club-makers’ information about starting a club, organizing events and fundraisers.

2. Services

• Bookmark: Techers looking for deals on new as well as old books can compare prices at the Caltech bookstore, the campuswide used book store and competitive online booksellers such as Amazon.com. If you aren’t satisfied with the results of your book browsing through lists of books for sale on campus and you are also interested in this feature Members with ASCIT accounts may request additional books for a small fee with the ISBN number, a quoted price and a brief description.

• Chat, Finder and Services: All clubs on campus managed by members of the Caltech community may participate in the experiment as an investor may measure of return if managers started with that. The DowTech is a fixed amount of money invested in a fund. The Residual is the cash amount of assets left after the management fee is collected from the fund. The Tech is a fixed portion of assets and cash, and provides the measure of return if managers started with that portfolio and held on to it. Students who want to participate in the experiment as an investor may visit the CLEF web page at http://clef.caltech.edu/exp/dp/index.html

3. Publications

• Directory Service: One of the most useful features provided by Donut, it may be used to search for any Caltech community member by name, house affiliation, on campus and is also possible with this feature Members with ASCIT accounts may request additional books for a small fee with the ISBN number, a quoted price and a brief description.

• Newsgroup System: This is a server provided to find newsgroups, groups and post messages on the same.

• Online Voting: The ASCIT Voting and Survey System provides online surveys, mostly for student body elections and genetics surveys regarding course feedbacks, athletics, award nominations and similar student affairs. It also invites surveys where results of previous surveys can be viewed.

• Screening Room and Video Library: The website provides a movie catalog to browse for DVDs which may be checked out from the coffeehouse during work hours from the coffeehouse (insert work hours). The website also allows users to reserve a space on SAM Movie Screening Room using the ASCIT account.

4. Committees

This website provides links to the web pages or the ARC, Athletic Committee and the IHC and the list of the members for all other committees under ASCIT.

5. ASCIT Info

As claimed by the Donut webmasters, here is your source for everything you could possibly want to know about ASCIT. This includes Current News, annual ASCIT budgets from 2002 to 2006, ASCIT documents (including By-Laws, rulings of the executive committee, and resolutions of the BoD etc.), minutes of the weekly meetings, a list of current committee members as well as a brief mission statement and history of formation of this undergraduate government.

The Tech will be printing a news story the following issue that describes new features that will be available on donut.

This issue The Tech presents the results from the first week of a financial market experiment conducted by a team of scholars at the Caltech Laboratory for Experimental Finance. Results will be posted here every week for the duration of the experiment.

There were 64 investors and 32 managers who participated in this round, all of them Caltech students. The table lists how the managers performed for the last round. The future market may be identified by names of minerals.

The returns of a portfolio is computed as (final value of portfolio - initial value of portfolio) / initial value of portfolio. The variance is the percentage of the total value of assets invested in a fund. The Residual is the cash amount of assets left after the management fee is collected from the fund. The Tech is a fixed portion of assets and cash, and provides the measure of return if managers started with that portfolio and held on to it. Students who want to participate in the experiment as an investor may visit the CLEF web page at http://clef.caltech.edu/exp/dp/index.html

I should warn that it is in general a pretty liberal place, and sometimes the humor is a little high brow, but unless you’re a coward, you’ll deal with it.

When you come to the site you’re greeted with what Timothy McSweeney is doing (for example, he recently lost himself in a movie, due to thoughts on the roof of his mouth) and if it’s a weekday feature may be. The sort of content you might get to read include “An e- Threat From The Manon Broth el,” “Spam Finally Taps Into Male Desires” and “The 4-Year-Old En tertainment Fantasy”.

In addition to this sparkling content, you can look at other content presented on the site explaining “We will put some things up,” so to speak, on some days, and on other days we will put things such as amusing lists (Reasons Not To Fear The Reaper, Where I Would Look For Hungry, Hippity, Hoppity, Good Advice From The Frost Bitten Prow, The FAQ).

The site also features Dan Kenney answering your questions about his new book “Reviewing New Food” and “Open Letters To People or Entities That Are Unlikely To Respond”. This last feature includes such things as: Open Letter To Orcas, An Open Letter To The Occupants Of A House On The Occasion Of Their Formation, An Open Letter To The Producer Of A “Boy- paper,” and An Open Letter To The State Of New York. You should enjoy this feature, which provide witty quips, amusing away message statements and the chance to feel elitist.

It may be important for you to know who Timothy McSweeney is. Until last Tuesday, I would have told you “too bad” but thanks to the beauty that is Wiki pedia (which should receive its own web view from someone of greater knowledge and literary powers than myself) I can tell you where.

The founder of the site, David Eggers, explained that his family had used ASCIT as a way for Mr. McSweeney, claiming to be his mother’s long lost brother, who would include flight plans as if he was coming to visit. Eggers’ relatives have always denied that there is any such real person, but he admit he is unsure of the truth of their denial.

Before you rush off and log on to your computing machine to travel the highways and byways of the internet until finally reach the home of the Internet Tendency belonging to Timothy McSweeney, there is one more thing you should consider.

Some of my favorite sites (Comedy Central’s Daily Show and Colbert Report archive, YouTube and others of that type) make noise, which means they only good for watching in the privacy of your home, where I can be doing more useful things. McSweeney’s is silent, and thus can be accessed and enjoyed during a usually wasted time of “attending class” instead of wasting time in there.

So visit McSweeney’s.net, and enjoy it.
Career Corner

Techers And Finance Add Up Well

BY: DIPAYAN GHOSH

From his roots as a young professional poker player to the highs of becoming a co-founder of one of the largest trading firms in the world today, Jeff Yass of Susquehanna International Group, LLP (SIG) is presently regarded as a preeminent player in the game of stock options markets. His region of the industry has, in recent years, shown some interesting trends that greatly favor quantitatively-trained Caltech graduates over financially-trained graduates from schools geared more towards the liberal arts and humanities.

In honor of Caltech’s Career Fair, Yass responded to some questions about trading firms like SIG hiring new prospects who have received a more quantitatively education (i.e. in math, science, or engineering) than a financial education (i.e. in economics, management, or accounting).

Tech: How did you come to the point in your career where you are now? Does your success have to do with any particular influences during your college life?

Yass: Yes. You took a probability course during college, and the professor posed the following situation. A gambler has $100,000 and is playing against a house that controls an infinite amount. If the gambler wagers $1,000 per hand and has a 51% chance of winning, what is the probability that the gambler will eventually go bankrupt if he keeps on playing against the house? That number turned out to be just 1.2% (which is (49/51)^100). The lesson I took from this example is that the odds are even slightly in your favor and you are only betting a relatively small amount of money, then you should win over the long run.

Tech: You’re known to have had considerable success as a poker player in the past, and poker is a game that is greatly increasing in popularity today. Do you think you’ve taken any lessons from the poker table that are applicable to your career?

Yass: Yes. The key lesson to learn is that the only thing you control is making the right decision. A good player may only have a 51%/49% advantage, but over time, this difference will show, and the better player will have more success.

Tech: How did you take up business after poker?

Yass: My father was already in business, and I decided to turn to stock options. I wrote my economics thesis on the Chicago Board Options Exchange. After that, I combined a loan from my father with my poker winnings and turned to the industry.

Tech: Many people struggle to understand how a company is initially set up, as in where the idea comes from, where the money comes from and how to generally start up. Do you have any advice on this issue?

Yass: In my case, it was a loan that helped me get started. Also, my parents didn’t want me to stay in the office after college. My suggestion is that if you’re a smart kid and have a powerful idea, go to someone who can raise capital very easily and present your idea. We feel that the environment at Caltech, with the employees you have, is powerful – we used a mathematical approach to trading equities options. We also had a good amount of luck, as the bull market started in 1981. Then we placed a trader in every options pit – the Pacific Stock Exchange, the Chicago Board Options Exchange, the American Stock Exchange, and the Philadelphia Stock Exchange. Our traders were (and are) taught in a rigorous class that showed them how they could make a large amount of money from a small amount of money. Traders are made, not born. An intelligent quantitative person can make money, because this business is largely mathematical. It will be successful. Entrepreneurs want to be able to get the most amount of money out of the best broker or employee. They always want to make as large a return as possible on a small amount of capital, and this

Jeff Yass is famed for his poker skills and expertise in the options markets.

is where the powerful ideas can help.

Tech: Susquehanna seems to be a relatively young company, as it was set up in 1987. How did the company grow so much as to come where it is today?

Yass: [Our co-founders’ idea] was powerful – we used a mathematical approach to trading options. We also had a good amount of luck, as the bull market started in 1981. Then we placed a trader in every options pit – the Pacific Stock Exchange, the Chicago Board Options Exchange, the American Stock Exchange, and the Philadelphia Stock Exchange. Our traders were (and are) taught in a rigorous class that showed them how they could make a large amount of money from a small amount of money. Traders are made, not born. An intelligent quantitative person can make money, because this business is largely mathematical. It will be successful. Entrepreneurs want to be able to get the most amount of money out of the best broker or employee. They always want to make as large a return as possible on a small amount of capital, and this

people who can learn anything in a relatively short time. Most students will take nine to eighteen months to get up to speed, but some Caltech students have done it in 6 months. Also, these students are working at the same time as taking classes as Susquehanna.

Tech: Can you give some estimate on the ratio of newly hired employees with quantitative backgrounds to those with financial backgrounds?

Yass: Approximately 3:1. It has gotten more and more quantitative with the advent of electronic exchanges. Twenty years ago, one person could be responsible for trading five stocks at a time. One can do 50-100 now. The reason is that the company has had so much success is that we have used mathematical processes instead of judgment. How well you process information determines how good you are. Your algorithm better be right since trading is so quick.

Tech: What is your experience with the employees you have hired from Caltech? How are they placed in the company hierarchy when you hire. What types of personality that you are looking for when Susquehanna?

Yass: The Caltech success rate has been fantastic. Amanda (Baldick’s) fulltime job is to familiarize Caltech with Susquehanna. We feel that the environment at Susquehanna is a fit with that at Caltech because of the nature of the work. Generally, Caltech students are advancing rapidly here. There is very little politics or bureaucracy at Susquehanna; if you’re good, you will be rewarded.

Tech: Is there anything else you would add?

Yass: Susquehanna is currently hiring, and we’d love to fill our ranks with Caltech graduates.
Then and Now

Females Were Integrated Slowly

BY: YANG YANG

Long before 1970, there was a popular clamor for a feminine presence on campus. Caltech began admitting female graduate students in 1957, yet the Board of Trustees seemed to have no plans for admitting underage women. On January 10, 1963, an article addressed the reasons.

“A question which appears periodically about Tech is why there are no women in the undergraduate student body and why the school has no plan or provision to admit women,” it says.

The article details a study done by MIT about women in higher education. A popular clamor for a feminine presence on campus. Caltech began admitting female graduate students in 1957, yet the Board of Trustees seemed to have no plans for admitting undergraduate women. On January 10, 1963, an article addressed the reasons.

“It was felt that this money [educating the student] was wasted in the case of a person who did not pursue a technical career after receiving this education,” the article stated.

When the board finally voted for the integration of Caltech five years later, the proposal was greeted by a banner reading “Girls Coming to Tech!” The idea of coed housing was seen as wasted in the case of a person who did not pursue a technical career after receiving this education.

“Great Experiment.” Several female student research associates (SRAs) occupied the rooms, turning Dabney into a coed house for the first time in Institute history. The move was applauded by most faculty and students at Caltech.

“We believe that an integrated housing policy would be fully salable solution,” said the editorial of the May 1, 1969 edition of the Tech.

The life in the houses could be improved accordingly over existing conditions. The Universities of California and Oregon, as well as Stanford University and others all have very successful coeducational housing programs. The dormitory halls are diversified and the attitudes of their residents more varied and, we think, more normal, than those of a forcibly divided school.

An Ad Hoc Faculty Committee on Aims and Goals agreed with the students’ views, recommending that “every effort should be made to find a mechanism for housing women undergraduates within the existing student houses.”

Write for the Tech

If you are interested in working for the Tech, feel free to attend our weekly meetings on Mondays and Fridays from noon to 1PM at the Broad Cafe.

If you print our material, we will not charge you for the amounts listed to the right (at our discretion). Email submissions to tech@caltech.edu.

The California Tech

Carnise Lee, Todd Gingrich, Chandra Barnett, Jean Sun, Joey Koehler, Ben Golomb (Todd Gingrich, Craig Montuori, Hamish Turner, Hamish Turner, Dr. Gary Liberman, Matt Glasmann, Mark Eichenlaub, Head Sports Correspondent)

BY: CINDY KO

Little Miss Sunshine is a movie about the semi-dysfunctional Hoover family and their road trip from Albuquerque, New Mexico to Redondo Beach, California, where Olive, the family’s chaotic, by, myopic, but cute 8-year old daughter is a contestant in the “Little Miss Sunshine” Beauty Pageant.

To make things interesting, the members of the family have their own pecadillos, making them a family made entirely out of black sheep.

The most normal in the bunch is the mother, the remarried, over-worked, and pragmatic sole breadwinner for her quirky brood. Her father is an unemployed, drug-addled, depressed doctor; her son is a hispanic, worshipping teenager; her brother is a depressed academic, recently jilted of the Prout and the love of his life.

It’s difficult enough to get everyone to sit down to dinner, but everything is only made worse by her husband, an over-entitled entrepreneur with no income but a plethora of self-help advice to the contrary.

When Olive becomes eligible for college, the Hoover family and their road trip to Redondo Beach, California, continue. Though they seem like caricatures of their surroundings, they also capture the truly awkward everydayness to their characters.

Grade B+

The movie is not a winner in terms of the storyline. In the context of other movies in the same genre, such as Wes Anderson’s The Royal Tenenbaums, it’s not a brilliant or clever tale. I think it’s very possible we could predict what was going to happen by watching the trailer and the first five minutes. Plot twists? Not going to happen. However the strength of the movie is its ability to capture the truly awkward things that happen in real life—the ones you think are funny, but you never knew anyone else thought they were, too.

I especially liked the scene toward the end of the film, when the puritanic contestants line up on stage. The camera pans over the girls, each more Barbie-like than the other, until the lens passes over Olive, who looks as awkward as a human hot dog on stage. It’s one of those scenes where Little Miss Sunshine are still relatively un-unknown, which puts an air of “everyone knows who they are” among their characters. Though they seem like caricatures of the characters, they also capture the truly awkward everydayness to their characters.

As you would expect, Little Miss Sunshine operates an entertaining show through its wonderfully witty dialogue. The jokes have a subtle humor and are consistent funny humor throughout the movie.

I like the scene when Frank, the depressed/suicidal uncle, asks his nephew, Dwayne, whom he hangs out with, Dwayne, abiding to his self-imposed vow of silence but still managing to be a mouthy teenager, writes on his notepad while Frank reads out loud “Today’s word is ‘everyone’.

Even your family?” At this point Dwayne underlines a word on his notepad, “Everyone.”

Yes, the ending is predictable, but it’s okay—it’s still two hours of good-humored fun.

Maximum Pay

News $25
Features $20
Sports $20
Commentary $20
Humour $20
Good Comics $14
Comics $7
Photos $5

The California Tech

Carnise Lee, Todd Gingrich, Chandra Barnett, Jean Sun, Joey Koehler, Ben Golomb (Todd Gingrich, Craig Montuori, Hamish Turner, Hamish Turner, Dr. Gary Liberman, Matt Glasmann, Mark Eichenlaub, Head Sports Correspondent)
Wary of varied barriers, Caltech’s harried Harriers ferried their very hairy derrieres past wary inferiors last Saturday the 14th. They faced the race pace with grace and encased seventh place. The teams, all with dreams of supreme regimes, streamed past in reams and gleamed in the steam, by which I mean fog.

The gun stung; my ears hummed and one young son sung as the run begun – what fun! The men begin when clock struck ten (minus one). Mud goes thud, clud, as a hundred studs flood past and blood shud from dud buds rubs out. Fans stand and demand their man can expand the land band that spans to the next man as grand plans com-mand tired glands to understand the ban of slowness.

Matt Kiesz’ knees need speed please cause a breeze flees as he’s squeezing ahead. Matt combats wombats so fast that he begat 31st place. His head sped and led our dread spread ahead as we fled the red streads of Redlands’ tread. David “Cupcake” Rosen’s dozen cousins wasn’t present. Dave, the brave knave, gave a wave and behaved not depraved as he slaved away and saved the day. Cupcake did shake fake breaks from flake drakes and take every break to partake of 51st, no mistake.

Billy Zdon has a name that’s hard to rhyme with, even in slant. But he was our third finisher-winner. There, I at least got one little rhyme in this paragraph. I kind of had to make up a word, though. But hey, Shakespeare did that, too, and look where it got him – dead.

Chris Shantz’ pants gave a glance of underpants as he danced past. Tommy Morphet’s corsets tore bits of gore-bits and forced it into orbit. Steve Horikoshi, like Yoshi, would coast but he got the most he could from the gauche-y toasty loafs he wore.

Paul Saffoletta, the proof of better, times though our letter, could spoof a lemma, or just finish in 78th. Ben Lin didn’t win but did begin to grin with his chin thin kin whose shin has no twin, to my chagrin. Nathan Lau, how now?

The ladies made the shady glade a grand parade as they displayed high-grade unafraid cascading masquerade in the mislaid, man-made, sautéed, vveyed, upgraded, well-laid blade of grass they couldn’t evade but could dissuade and persuade to serene their dismayed invading grenading humiliating arcade.

Diana Lin’s lack of sin within Berlin’s violins was irrelevant, but she was our first finisher anyway, in 41st place. Katherine Breeden’s speed in the weeds leads her to succeed and proceed, not recede, indeed she’d need feed reeds to heed her deeds as she agreed to exceed and did stampede to 44th.

Natalya Kostandova... oh man, “Kostandova.” I don’t even want to go there. But she ran amazingly well to secure 48th.

Sarah Stokes broke the yoke and poked some folks to pro-voke and didn’t croak. Masha Belyi evaded hell she never felt she could tell she ran swell she was impelled to be our fifth runner. Heather Widgren, without tail fins, and within a big bin was akin to a pin, I guess.

The team will compete again next Saturday at the conference championships. For detailed results, see http://running.caltech.edu/sc

UPCOMING INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETIC EVENTS:

Tuesday, October 24th
7:30PM - Women’s Volleyball vs. Whittier College

Wednesday, October 25th
4:00PM - Men’s Water Polo @ Occidental College
4:00PM - Mens’ Soccer vs. Whittier College

Friday, October 27th
5:00PM - Women’s Volleyball vs. Colorado College @ C-M-S
7:30PM - Women’s Volleyball @ Claremont-Mudd-Scripps

Saturday, October 28th
9:00AM - M/W Cross Country @ SCIAC Championships (Chino)
11:00AM - Mens’ Soccer @ Claremont-Mudd-Scripps
3:00PM - Men’s Water Polo vs Whittier College
Ostriches: More Than Meets The Eye

BY: HAMILTONY FALK

As The Tech's preeminent investigative reporter I've brought to your collective attention issues such as the dangers of cooking pizza while still in the box, the corruption that lurks within the Caltech Dog Walking Club's upper administration and helped track down the ancient mega-beaver that once banked in the tunnels beneath Millikan feeding on darkness and Techers. Thus I think I've earned your trust as well as your respect. That's why I've decided to ignore the threatening letters from industry and the threatening calls from old men who've dialed the wrong number to reveal something that threatens the very core of the average Techer's lifestyle. That's right, I'm finally going to talk about The Ostrich Problem, or TOP as it is referred to in national security briefs.

Before we confront the problem that ostriches present, it is important that you understand the creature we are discussing. Ostriches are not emus, those giant loveable birds that would never harm you or steal your children. They are in their appearance, with a long neck that is easily broken and considered their only weakness and the ability to run at speeds of about 65 km/h (40 mph). Ostriches would be the largest living species of bird, but they lack the ability to fly, making them instead a type of rodent. The scientific name for the ostrich is from the Greek for "camel sparrow" in allusion to the fact that they are an abomination[1]. In addition, it is well known that the eye of an ostrich is larger than its brain, its heart and its capacity for love.

One might ask me why these foul pseudo-birds are a problem, rather than merely an abomination to be cleansed from the earth and forgotten. If you were to ask me that I would probably tell you that it would be fine if abomination-being was the worst of the problems associated with ostriches, but there is more, so much more. You'll probably hear from government agents and executives of Big Ostrich Corporation that ostriches have the largest eggs of any living creature, that their skin makes some of the toughest leather available and that their feed to weight ratio is among the lowest of all farmed animals. These things are true, but consider that their eggs are actually the smallest relative to the animal producing them. Also, the reason they seem to need to eat so little is that they leach the fences of their farms at night and feed on local pets and children, and their extra tough skin means that they can only be killed by tricking them into starting to eat an oxygen tank and then shooting it with a rifle to make it explode[2].

In addition, ostriches are oviparous which means they pretend to eat seeds and plants but really hunger for num-foolers. They are listed as "dangerous animals" in the United States, United Kingdom and Australia (among other animals known to attack and eat people, such as Tigers, Tiger sharks, Army Ants, Humans and Hippopotamuses) and as "ravenous killers of all that is good" in South Africa, Nepal and the Vatican. Canada lists them as "large birds," shoving once again their neighbors to the north are easily infiltrated by large evil-minded animals with the intent to feed on humans[3].

The Bible knows the truth about ostriches, referring to them as lacking in wisdom and caring little for their young (Job 39:13-18), and the Unitarian Bible[4] adds that ostriches are half-dead beasts that kill the righteous out of jealousy (Ch 7). A final frightening back about ostriches is their ability to see the near future by sticking their heads underground and communing with Satan.

Before you dismiss The Ostrich Problem as someone else’s concern, I think it’s important to realize that California is third in the nation in ostrich-related deaths and Pasadena was listed as one of the top ten places ostriches want to destroy in order to rid the world of all the evil in it. According to police reports there were 17 confirmed eviscerations by ostriches this year, and 24 more that were reported as looking "muggerly suspicious" in the Pasadena area.

Caltech security recently lost two men bringing one down before the foul creature could be incinerated with their death-las-ter. In addition to murder, recent studies show that ostriches will steal anything that is not nailed down[5] and love crack-cocaine. It has also been reported that several ostriches have been heard to say that they hate America. Remember, next time you’re walking alone at night, or hear a strange call that sounds like an old man being kicked in the stomach, be on the lookout for ostriches, because the danger is very real.

(Footnotes)

1 Ostriches are not in fact the bastard off-spring of a camel and sparrow, as is popularly believed, but in fact are born only when a camel is murdered by a flock of carnivorous wersonesparrows when there is no need for its meat, on the night of a full moon.

2 Silver Bullets, Holy Water and Hitting Them With Your Car are also known to work on occasion, but not reliably enough to be used in large scale ostrich control operations.

3 In 1924 Canada elected a bear as prime minister, and in 1977 the chupacabra party took control of 18 seats in the Canadian parliament.

4 More commonly known as The Hardy Boys Case Files Book # 112, The Smugglers of Pirate Cove.

5 They would steal things that are nailed down, but ostriches are very superstitious and believe that proximity to nails will cause infertility.