Remembering Sky Rashby
Grad student known for friendliness and wit

BY VIBHA LALJANI

Members of the Caltech community, friends and family members say they are still numbed by the death of Sky Rashby three weeks after he took his own life.

Sky, 28, was a third-year doctoral student in geobiology, studying with professors Dianne K. Newman and Alex Sessions.

Sky was born on February 17, 1979, in his family’s Topanga home, the son of Topanga filmmaker, artist and activist Burt Rashby and his wife Beverly Zbuska-Rashby. He graduated with high honors from U.C. Berkeley in 2002, receiving a B.S. degree in Molecular Environmental Biology with a minor in Environmental Economics and Policy. Last year, he co-authored an article in The Astrophysical Journal. His research at Caltech was on the localization and function of a class of lipid biomarkers.

In addition to scientific research, he was politically active, especially regarding environmental issues. His sister Carolyn Rashby said, “He was deeply concerned about the environment and worked with various environmental organizations over the years to try to make the Earth a better place.”

“[I felt] as if I had just been tackled by a 300-pound linebacker...that tightening of the chest followed by racing thoughts of disbelief.”

-Amy Hofmann, office mate, upon news of Sky’s death

Please see SAC, Page 4

SAC opening delayed
Month set-back due to mold

BY DANIEL ROWLANDS

Students waiting to use the AS-CIT screening room in the Student Activities Center (SAC) will have to wait at least a month, as the discovery of mold delayed the renovation of the underground structure this summer.

Like the South Houses renovation, which finished months behind schedule due to the discovery and removal of asbestos, the SAC renovation was put on hold for several weeks while the mold was removed and the air was tested for spores by independent testing companies.

The project, originally slated for completion by the end of September, is unlikely to be finished until November, according to Greg Norden of the Architecture and Engineering Services department.

Initially, the SAC renovation was dropped from the South House renovation project due to cost overruns associated with the unexpected discovery of asbestos in the South Houses. However, when John Hall became the acting Vice President for Student Affairs, he proposed renovating the SAC as a separate project and $400,000 was diverted for the project.

Once the main South Houses renovation was completed, bids for the SAC renovation were requested, with one of the requirements being that the project had to be completed by the end of November.

Please see SAC, Page 4

Caltech inches up in US rankings
Yield, graduation rates still weak points

BY HAROLD MARTIN

Though Caltech outranked MIT twice this summer in national rankings, Caltech admissions officers say a small marketing budget hurt the school in attracting the students they want. Caltech was named Kaplan/Newsweek’s “Hottest for Science and Engineering” and tied for fifth with the University of Pennsylvania on the U.S. News and World Report list of top national schools.

Despite glowing rankings, Caltech still struggles in enrolling accepted students. Ranking has had little impact on students’ choice of college after being accepted. “It’s not at the end that these things matter, it’s more near the beginning [of the college search],” said former student admissions officer Ben Golub.

One of the difficulties Caltech faces is being out-marketed by competitors for top talent. MIT has approximately three times the admissions budget of Caltech still struggles in enrolling accepted students. Ranking has had little impact on students’ choice of college after being accepted. “It’s not at the end that these things matter, it’s more near the beginning [of the college search],” said former student admissions officer Ben Golub. MIT has approximately three times the admissions budget.

“Unless there is a high level administrative decision, [the admissions budget] is going to hover where it is.” Golub thinks the admissions budget ought to be tripled.

“Our admissions staff is probably half the size of the admissions staff of small liberal arts colleges with nationwide recruitment programs,” said Bischoff. Expanding recruitment could have a significant impact on minorities in particular. “You can

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Best visits in Pasadena and LA

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Energy lectures start Friday
Soccer suffers narrow loss
Rotation revamped
Dr. Quark is back

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Wiki innovator enrolls at Caltech

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Let us know how we're doing

I see ASCiT’s main job as being an interroga-
tion between students and the administration. Last school year, I focused on strengthening the ties between ASCiT and various administrators and feel confident that if any sort of problem or concern were to originate in the school’s administration, ASCiT would be notified in a timely fash-
ion. Unfortunately, in the midst of attempting to build these bridges, the com-
munication between ASCiT and the under-
graduate body took a turn for the worse. Stu-
dents were not always informed of important decisions, or their lives and student opinion was not surveyed as well as it should be. The result of these decisions were made. This next term is going to see the focus shift
in favor of frequent and timely dis-
mension, and will visit the redesigned Donut webpage, and in this weekly column.

Todd Gingrich’s column for the Tech was one of his best ideas as pres-
ident. By writing a column such as this, he allowed the wide read-
tership of the Tech, which in-
cludes graduate and undergradu-
ate students, administration, fac-
ulty, staff, alumni, and friends of
the Institute, an insight into the student body, and a guide as to what our priorities were. I hope to continue this idea, each
week focusing on a different is-
sight into the student body and hopefully giving a little more in-
sight into the administration’s and faculty’s viewpoints.

This past week also marks the introduction of our new Donut website. This represents the cul-
mation of over a year of work and a great deal of pressure. We now have a much cleaner and better interface, the backend has been updated, and the database system that should make it easier for us to keep it up to date, and all of this is possible thanks to the directory, the CLUE, and oth-
ers — we really need to work better and be easier to use.

ASCiT has done a lot this past year; it’s a shame that very few people know about it. With the resumption of a weekly Tech column and the redesigned Donut webpage, I hope to give every-
one a better idea of the roles of ASCiT and the Caltech adminis-
tration, but I can’t do it alone. If there is anything that is troubling you or any-
thing you feel the stu-
dents haven’t benefi-
ted from knowing more about, please drop me an email and I will an-
swer it in a future column.

The party was a smashing suc-
cess, and Interhouse will happen again on November 17th. It’s gonna be two years after the

Caltech traditions and you

before a game against PIC, now Pasadena City College (PCC) across Hill Street. There was some sort of misconconnec-
tion and a near-riot resulted. How about that?

We can trace quite a line from the in-
cident, as reported by the Tech: Engelder: “Get out! I’m study-
ing!” But left after Engelder locked him.” On a side note, another article in the same issue, written by the famous Jackie Robinson was at full strength for the game after miss-
ing the previous year. The

From the Editors

Welcome to Tech, Prefrosh

Caltech traditions and you

Welcome to Tech, Prefrosh

BY CRAIG MONTUORI

Caltech’s been around for quite some time by this point, so we’ve re-
capped a few traditions here and there over the years. I’ll try to

So, here we go. Once upon a time, Caltech had a football team. We were never ranked upon for the entire year. That feat has never been duplicated in SCIAC his-
tory. From the late 1920s to the early 1940s, the famous Jackie Robinson was at full strength for the game after mis-

In the late 60s and early 70s, we were going to have a pep rally

That said, consider the following shameless plug:

After a few weeks of wide-eyed busy-tailed enthusiasm for math-

I f you’re anything like I was as a frosh, you’ve spent the past few months having tree-feeding free fox like a king, watching fire-
wings, and generally wondering if your personal party actually lasts four years.
In fact, but enjoy it while it lasts.

You’ll soon discover that class continuity exists in the daytime, sports or naps take the afternoon, dinner is perhaps more of an ordeal than it should be, and problem sets rope [sic] you from sunset till late night. Good luck!

What happened to the time you spent in late-night conversations and in impromptu excursions around campus?

Time is the most precious com-
modity to a college student. Here is how you will use it during four (or five) years.

No doubt you were inundated by dozens of clubs vying for your email in-box, and if you didn’t try out for a single one, you just might regret it. As much fun as it might be to vol-
unteer for the Caltech Y dress in medieval garb with the Caltech Renaissance Club, dance with the Salsa Club, and play trombone in Pep Band, it’s only 24 hours in the day, and you’ve got sleep and class to worry about.

Experiencing with a handful of clubs is fun, but you should be prepared to be selective with your time. It’s pretty easy to over-
commit yourself to the point of exhaustion.

We used to have a yearly program

during the earliest days in our cur-
riculum (PCC) across Hill Street. There

Of course, I speak from the self-declared historian around here. You can listen to my rambling for free, or you can listen to my rambling for free, if you’re interested by the 44-45 school year, but we were never ranked upon for the entire year. That feat has never been duplicated in SCIAC his-
tory. From the late 1920s to the early 1940s, the famous Jackie Robinson was at full strength for the game after mis-
ning the previous year. The

In November 1938, then-Gov. Ronald Reagan and

The Commission on Campus Unrest

Moving on to the buildings

Caltech tradition and you

This past week also marks the

by Friday of the week before publication.
Attachments, including the author’s name,
submissions to

Letters and submissions are welcome; e-mail

The Tech

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Attachments, including the author’s name,
Hungering for a larger slice of pie

Caltech is the world’s best school for science and math, bar none. And it shows, too. Caltech handily trounces virtually every other college or university in head-to-head admissions yield comparisons. In other words, when a student is admitted to both Caltech and School X, the majority of these students matriculate at Caltech.

What is shocking, or at least disconcerting, is that Caltech statistically and consistently loses when School X is Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Stanford, or MIT. How can Caltech make itself more competitive among the students that we admit and subsequently most actively recruit?

To begin, some of Caltech’s most highly touted features are our 3-to-1 student-to-faculty ratio, the world-class research initiatives of our faculty, the accessibility of stimulating research opportunities for undergraduates, and the tight-knit, intellectual undergraduate community in the student Houses.

How can these advantages be even more effectively leveraged to attract the best applicants and admitted students, particularly scholarship students?

We suggest a multi-pronged strategy of early and targeted outreach to students who have proven ability in math and science. These three prongs are by no means comprehensive, but they have the potential to link together to form a strong foundation:

1) Identify and send written faculty congratulations to top performers in national Olympiad programs in all subjects, such as AIME and USAMO, in the tenth grade and earlier, and students in other demographics of interest. All these types of students often continue to perform and become highly coveted college applicants. Therefore, early contact among these students would raise their awareness of Caltech well before they become applicants.

One way this can be accomplished is through a simple congratulatory letter from a Caltech professor in the student’s field with appropriate follow-up from Caltech undergraduates.

In subsequent communication, these students could be encouraged to apply to the suggested summer research program. We envision an inaugural year that provides 10-15 rising high school seniors with a top-notch educational experience in such a summer research program. Such a program was advocated in the Cain Report in 1985, and Caltech has hosted similar programs in the past, perhaps most notably in association with the Center for Excellence in Education.

This program, called the Research Science Institute, has been hosted by MIT for the past two decades, while Caltech served as co-host in 2004. Consider how such a program could raise awareness among target applicants. Sixteen of approximately 100 students across the Caltech and MIT campuses of the 2004 RSI matriculated at Caltech from across the country and around the globe. In all other years, an average of only three RSI students matriculated at Caltech.

Clearly, this year compares favorably to other years; it is also coincident with a significant spike in the yield of Axline Scholars. This could include involving applicants in the mentor matching process. This small group of students should be placed in and integrated into the undergraduate Houses, giving them an opportunity to interact with and appreciate our intimate undergraduate student community.

Finally, the Prefrosh Week end matching procedure is very favorable to other years; it is also coincident with a significant spike in the yield of Axline Scholars. These students included winners of the Intel Science Talent Search and Siemens Competition, the two premiere competitions for high school students doing research in math, science, and engineering. Unoubtedly, students researching at a preeminent Caltech program could produce high-quality work and thus be in contention for such awards.

If such a program were to exist, a concerted effort must be made to widely publicize this program nationwide, particularly at math and science magnet schools nationwide. Furthermore, such a program should be designed to demonstrate the benefits of our small size and high quality research, such as the accessibility of research opportunities for talented students.

This could include involving applicants in the mentor matching process. This small group of students should be placed in and integrated into the undergraduate Houses, giving them an opportunity to interact with and appreciate our intimate undergraduate student community.

And it shows, too. Caltech already has part of the existing infrastructure to establish such a program, including the current Freshman Summer Institute and Axline SURF pre-freshman programs. Further, the SFP structure provides one possible starting point many aspects such a program, such as a process that encourages early contact with the faculty mentor.

We also strongly believe that targeting these three steps will pay off as a big leap in reaching out to pre-college students and attracting the best applicants; this plan would be part of the continual process of improving and expanding our methods of employing Caltech’s most outstanding attributes.

We hope the value of these suggestions will be seriously considered, further refined, and formally implemented. An opportunity to benefit the future of math, science, and engineering is at stake.

Respectfully submitted,
Caleb E. Ng, ASCIT Director of Academic Affairs and ARC Chair
Cedla N. Felsen, Former ARC Chair
Todd R. Gingrich, Former ASCIT Chair
Craig S. Montouri, Former IHC Chair
Leighland J. Feinman, IHC Secretary
Daniel Lo, Interim ARC Chair
Parvathy R. Menon, Fleming ARC Rep and Former ASCIT Secretary
Michael J. Woods, IHC Chair

How to keep the geniuses we accept.

Most deceptively simple, this would involve identifying National MATHCOUNTS winners in the seventh and eighth grades, top performers in national Olympiad programs in all subjects, such as AIME and USAMO, in the tenth grade and earlier, and students in other demographics of interest.

Such a program was advocated in the Cain Report in 1985, and Caltech already has part of the existing infrastructure to establish such a program, including the current Freshman Summer Institute and Axline SURF pre-freshman programs. Further, the SFP structure provides one possible starting point many aspects such a program, such as a process that encourages early contact with the faculty mentor.

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**Caltech/JPL Aero Club**

For more information, go to: http://aero.caltech.edu or email club president and instructor Joe Arcede (joearcede@gmail.com)

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**Learn to Fly!**

Caltech/JPL Aero Club

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Meeting music rooms on hold

SAC projections expected for mid-November

September. Pancake Contracting Company (PCC), with AES in on several other projects, was hired for the project and began working last week at the end of July.

Almost immediately, the project began to get off-schedule due to the discovery of mold in gymnasium wallboard in the SAC. According to Norden, mold problems hadn’t been seen in recent repairs on the campus, but the discovery of mold was unexpected and raised the question of how long remediation would take.

However, he also said that when assessing the mold growth on site, they noted that mold problems were likely, given the SAC’s history of humidity.

In a week, mold was discovered, requiring that work be stopped while samples were tested and the mold was removed. On August 30, after an inspection by Charles Han and Tim Chang, Norden informed Hall that a second pass of mold removal was needed in the SAC and that there would be further delays as a result. Hall passed this information on to Olie Gonzales, the ASCIT President.

According to Hall early last week, “I understand these [mold issues] have been resolved and the project is progressing normally. The Voyager Drive lab is now complete by sometime in November. Despite the delays, Norden had to inform the contractors, who he said were “doing a good job”.

The SAC screening room, the renovated SAC will include a dark room, a dedicated room for the Voyager Drive computers and track electronics labs, a room for the ASCIT DDR machine, and two group study rooms and a general purpose room with sinks (for the Voyager Drive computer labs). There are plans to grow orchids hydroponically in the lab. An avid outdoorsman, he traveled widely in Africa, South America, and China. His interest in biology and applied physics and his passion to apply the art of nanotechnology to the world of biology and medicine, as he said, “is driven by a desire to understand how the world works.”

He was also interested in the idea of nanotechnology, which he said, “is a tool that can be used to grow orchids hydroponically.”

His advisor Dr. Newman, known for his great sense of humor, once quipped that the SAC would be “a superlative like my friendship with Sky.”

One morning I came in to dissect the design of the DNA, and I noticed the red, green, and blue lights of the lab. I thought I would try something that might work. The DNA was rectangles, which was about the size of our small geobiology group (four faculty and approximately 15 grad students and postdocs). For Rothemund, there are three main directions.

Elowitz and Rothemund were among the first to use the technique that they call “scaffolding.”

Having completed several projects in a course of a month, Elowitz and Rothemund lost the SAC completion expected for mid-November… People need to realize that progress accelerate.”

For Rothemund, there are three main directions. Elowitz and Rothemund were among the first to use the technique that they call “scaffolding.”

Elowitz and Rothemund were awarded the MacArthur Fellowship last year as MacArthur Fellows. The fellows are not limited to scientists, but can be anyone who has made an impact on society. Rothemund was being considered for the fellowship because of his work in molecular biology and applied physics and his passion to apply the art of nanotechnology to the world of biology and medicine, as he said, “is driven by a desire to understand how the world works.”

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Rothemund proceeded to develop a technique that he calls “scaffold technology,” which involves creating nanoscale patterns in living cells to allow them to function in a way that they normally wouldn’t. Rothemund has been using this technique to grow orchids hydroponically.

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No boring people, please

James Watson, co-discover of the helical nature of DNA, was more comedian than scientist at his book promotion of “Avoid Boring People” last week. See book review in next week’s issue.

Closing the energy gap at Caltech

Lectures to encourage response to global energy crisis

BY MARISSA CEVALLOS

Leading scientists in chemistry, physics, and environmental sciences will discuss solutions to the global energy crisis, from solar energy to wind power, in a Friday afternoon lecture series held in Baxter.

Each week, one Caltech professor or alumnus will highlight the problems in a particular effort, like burying carbon dioxide in the Earth or storing gas and coal as liquids. A good talk, says organizer and Caltech solar energy researcher Nathan Lewis, will say “here’s what we know how to do, but this is what we don’t know how to do.”

Steve Koonin, former Caltech professor and current Chief Scientist of BP, will kick off the series October 5 with a sweeping overview of the proposed solutions to clean, renewable energy—especially as oil companies pander.

“The idea is to stimulate the interests of faculty, post-docs, graduate and undergraduate students,” says Lewis. “We wanted to get people who could get to the forefront of the challenges in all aspects of energy.”

Before Christmas, lecture-goers can expect to hear about inorganic mimics of photosynthesis from Harry Gray and converting sunlight into electricity and heat from Harry Atwater. The series will tentatively run into February.

Quick Facts

What: Lectures to inspire solutions in energy research

Where: Baxter Lecture Hall

When: 2-3 PM every Friday from Oct 5 until February

No boring people, please

Revamped Rotation simplifies rules

IHC holds information sessions to answer questions about houses

BY SONIA TIKOO

Following last year’s revamp of the rules and ranking systems of Rotation, students and alumni are hopeful that their experiment will prove fruitful. Although the basic nature of the institution remains the same, a number of particulars were changed last year in an effort to make the rules easier to follow.

In addition, a number of changes were made to the Rotation proceedings, with the IHC taking a larger role in helping prefrosh during their first week at Caltech. This week marks the first time these proceedings conducted under the new system.

In the past, upperclassmen were expected to adhere to a set of strict “Rotation Rules,” that dictated courses of action when interacting with incoming students. These ranged from simple actions such as not berating other Houses to rules prohibiting upperclassmen from taking prefrosh off campus for duration of longer than three hours.

“This scheme had been in place for many years, but was not without its problems,” says IHC Chair Craig Munnori. “The rotation rules, as they used to be formulated, were eight pages of ‘you can do this, you can’t do this,’ and so on,” explains Interhouse Committee (IHC) Chair Michael Woods. “As a result, nobody read all of them; they could have been a lot more efficient.”

Former IHC Chair Craig Munnori says last year’s IHC had a list of a bunch of ideas. Rotation rules had gotten too complex and were creating too much worry that a violation on an unclear rule would result in punishment to a student’s entire House. These ideas were discussed over the next few months and then passed along to the next year’s IHC to edit them, change them, or ignore them. Through it all, there was input from Assistant Vice-President of Student Affairs Tom Mannion.

We held an open house to discuss possible issues with the students around May, and this year’s House presidents took comments and criticism from members of the Caltech community.

This process led to the IHC completely rewriting the Caltech Rotation Rules, taking them from their former eight-page laundry list to a new simplified form: the Rotation Code and the four “Laws of Rotation.” The newly formed Rotation Code states that the goal of Rotation is to “allow new students and Houses to arrive at accurate representations of each other. Following this serves the purpose of best matching new students with Houses.”

The “Laws” are as follows:

1. Rotation participants are prohibited from unfairly biasing new students toward or against a House.

2. The idea is to stimulate the interests of faculty, post-docs, graduate and undergraduate students, says Lewis. “We wanted to get people who could get to the forefront of the challenges in all aspects of energy.”

3. Before Christmas, lecture-goers can expect to hear about inorganic mimics of photosynthesis from Harry Gray and converting sunlight into electricity and heat from Harry Atwater. The series will tentatively run into February.

4. Students have from now until December 30, 2007 to nominate a professor for the 2007-08 Richard P. Feynman Prize for Excellence in Teaching. Nomination packages are to be submitted to the Provost’s Office to honor a professor who demonstrates, in the broadest sense, unusual ability, creativity, and innovation in undergraduate and graduate classroom or laboratory teaching.

The Feynman Prize is made possible through the generosity of Jone and Robert E. Paradise, with additional contributions from Mr. and Mrs. William J. Hirt. Nominations for the Feynman Teaching Prize are welcome from faculty, students, postdoctoral scholars, staff, and alumni. All professional faculty of the Institute are eligible. The prize consists of a cash award of $3,500, matched by an equivalent raise in the annual salary of the awardee. A letter of nomination and detailed supporting material, including, but not limited to, a curriculum vitae, course syllabus or description, and supporting recommendation letters should be directed to the Feynman Prize Selection Committee, Office of the Provost, Mail Code 206-31, at the California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, California, 91125.

Additional information including guidelines for the prize and FAQ may be found at http://profs.caltech.edu/FeynmanTeachPrize
The best places to enjoy good eats, sun, and nightlife, brought to you by Dannah Almasco

Walk during the day

- Historic Hollywood Boulevard — Walk the star-studded walk of fame, admire the 200 and some hand- and foot-print collage in front of the Mann’s Chinese Theatre; afterwards, shop and eat at Hollywood and Highland.
- Venice Boardwalk — Enjoy this eclectic beachfront boardwalk filled with street performers, quirky tourist shops and outdoor eating, along legendary Venice Beach.
- Griffith Park - Dubbed the largest city park in the country, includes museums, a zoo, observatory and breathtaking views of Los Angeles and the Hollywood Sign.

Walk around at night

- Old Pasadena — Take a night stroll around Old Pas and discover the many hidden restaurants, cafes, shops, and street musicians.
- Santa Monica Pier - CA’s oldest amusement pier, this nighttime playground is complete with an arcade, ferris wheel and roller coaster brilliantly lit up along the ocean.
- The Grove and Farmer’s Market — A beautifully landscaped outdoor mall (with movie theater) adjacent to the historic Farmer’s Market will give you plenty to do; even the bathrooms are an experience!

Catch a wave

- Zuma Beach — LA’s best beach for surfing.
- Dockwieler Beach — The only beach in LA that allows you to have bonfires.
- Huntington — It’s a hefty drive away, but it’s relatively less crowded than other beaches.

Enjoy a frozen treat

- Cold Stone Creamery on Lake—There’s a reason why the portions are served in amounts of affection.
- 21 choices—This favorite frozen yogurt shop in Old Pasadena is so busy, save time by going online to view the current daily choices of the day before your visit.
- Gelato Di Roma—It’s very difficult to walk past the shop window displaying mounds of 51 different award winning gelato flavors.

Find neat stuff

- PCC Flea Market—Held every first Sunday of the month 8am-3pm, most Techers sleep through this golden opportunity for unique and cheap finds.
- Rose Bowl Market—A Pasadena tradition held every second Sunday of the month, this giant flea market at the Rose Bowl ensures you to find anything you’re looking for, and then some.
- LA Fashion District—A bargain hunter's dream, this 56-block clothing district is in the heart of Downtown LA.

Sip a coffee

- Peet’s Coffee & Tea—This quaint coffee chain is neighbors with Noah’s Bagels on the corner of California and Highland.
- Equator Café—The exotic menu, live bands, bohemian décor and internet café is the epitome of hip.
- Zeli Coffee Bar—A small place attached to Vroman’s Bookstore with free wireless internet.

Buy groceries

- Trader Joe’s—The healthy choice in grocery shopping; great for vegetarian, organic and gourmet foods…plus the fresh flowers are cheap!
- Pavilions—Someone you know most likely owns a Pavilions ValuePlus Card.
- Smart and Final—A warehouse grocery store, get more bang for your buck.

Go dancing

- Level 3—Kiss FM’s nightclub (18 and over every Thursday and Saturday) has a strict dress code and spins current hip-hop and pop hits.
- The Ruby — Also known as Beat It on Sunday nights has 3 different rooms with different styles: 80s, indie and hip hop; print a flyer from online and get in for only $5.
- Tiger Heat—Put on your dancing shoes and party to pop music on Thursday nights at Arena in Hollywood.

Grab some food late at night

- Denny’s-Open 24 hours and located on E. Colorado, Denny’s is a perfect late night pick-me up.
- Original Pantry Café—Techers depart for Pantry runs at 2:45am to arrive in downtown LA at 3 am, when the greasy breakfast food menu is available.
- Mel’s Drive-in—This 50’s style diner will take you back in time with jukeboxes at every table; but with locations in Hollywood and West Hollywood, this 24-hour diner can get pretty busy even in the wee hours of the morning.

Kick back and study or read

- Sherman Fairchild Library on campus—Pick between the silent 2nd floor with private study rooms or the cozy 3rd floor.
- Starbucks on Lake and California—If you can snag a table, this is a perfect place to grab a coffee with friends.
- Border’s on Lake—As quiet as a bookstore with indoor café can get.

Admire art

- Huntington Library, Art Collections and Botanical Gardens — Spend an entire day exploring 120 acres of gardens, admiring art, rare books and manuscripts for only $10 (with your Caltech ID).
- The Getty Center — The collection exhibits Greek and Roman antiquities, French decorative arts, European paintings and other works of art, while the museum’s architecture itself is a masterpiece.
- LACMA — The Los Angeles Contemporary Museum of Art has over 150,000 works from ancient times to the present.
Virgil Griffith had his share of interesting experiences before coming to California as a graduate student. The Alabama native managed to be charged under the Espionage and Sedition Act, featured on the Colbert Report, devise a tool to be used by the largest multilingual encyclopedia on the Internet, and cause significant scandals involving several multi-billion organizations while graduating cum laude from University of Alabama.

Griffith, often referred to as Rompoet among fellow hackers, is best known for his development of the WikiScanner, the public relations nightmare which traces back anonymous edits of Wikipedia entries to corresponding IP addresses and organizations that they are associated with, allowing users to uncover cases of companies, businesses, politicians, and others editing their own entries in a way that benefits them.

Although WikiScanner caused quite a commotion after its August release, it owes its existence to a less controversial source of inspiration—the Nintendo Wii. "I was playing Zelda and I got all the way to the third dungeon, the water dungeon, and it was very hard. I got very frustrated at the puzzle, I still haven’t beat it, so I had to go do something else. And that’s the only reason that the WikiScanner exists, because that dungeon is too hard."

Griffith, a first year grad student in computation and neural systems, was inspired to create WikiScanner after failing to beat a level of Zelda.

"That was pretty scary, getting suits filed against you that have names like the Espionage and Sedition Act," said Griffith. "Those are very scary words that I haven’t seen for a very long time. In terms of raw terror, that was probably it. […] I lost all my money in the lawsuit and I had to drop out of school, so that was pretty exciting."

The following year, Griffith transferred to Indiana University, although he came back to U of Alabama to graduate this summer.

The lawsuit did teach Griffith to be careful with the legal aspects of his projects. "It’s very important to be legally mindful when you’re doing something disruptive," said Griffith. "Any time you have a project that will make people look bad, or especially jeopardize company’s revenue stream, you must talk to the lawyer first."

Taking his own advice in case of the WikiScanner, Griffith was able to design the tool in such a way so as to protect himself from potential lawsuits. So far, the software has caused several public disputes, including those involving PepsiCo, Diebold, the CIA, and others, and was embraced by Jimmy Wales, founder of the Wikipedia, as a "very clever idea," as reported by New York Times.


At Caltech, Griffith, who is interested in consciousness and artificial intelligence and finds brain to be "the hip thing that everyone is doing," will study computational and neural systems. However, as he plunges into his graduate experience, Griffith does not plan to limit himself to academic pursuits. "I fear I may be much, much, much better at creating mischief on the Internet than at science," said Griffith. "I decided I’m going to be splitting my time about 70% science, 30% mischief for the next year, while before it was about 95% science and 5% mischief."

Ultimately, he hopes to do research or work for Google, the latter having several perks that particularly appeal to him. At Google, "You’re treated like a king," said Griffith. "They have infinite coffee, infinite chocolate, infinite tea, infinite little yogurts, really anything. They have little kitchen that is always being re-stocked, so you have cereal and all of that. They even have a place to do your laundry and a shower, so if you get tired or you think best in the shower, you just take a shower in the middle of the day."

Currently, Griffith is working on another project that he promises to be "cute" and "hilarity incarnate." He expects it to be concluded in about a month.

Grad student is Wiki’d controversial

The man who embarrassed multi-million dollar corporations with WikiScanner now enters Caltech as a first year graduate student--is he as good at science, he wonders, as he is at creating mischief?

BY NATALYA KOSTANDOVA

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Soccer suffers narrow 1-2 loss to Whittier

BY RAM KANDASAMY

While many Techers have been on vacation, the Men’s Soccer Team has been back on the playing field for over a month.

The team is lead this year by senior team captains Nathan Chan and Brandt Belson.

Nine new faces join the roster this year, with many of them making significant contributions right away. Promising freshmen include left defender Grayson Chadwick, right defender DJ Seo, forward John Hueng and wing Rebecca Stolz, according to sophomore Brian Yu.

The early results of the season have reflected the promise of the team. The Beavers’ best performance came against Chapman last Tuesday, in a 2-1 loss to the visitors.

Another highlight of the season was the team’s 0-2 defeat on Sept. 12 at the hands of Redlands, a perennial contender for the conference.

The trademark of these two signature games has been the Beavers’ defense, which held an explosive Bulldogs team to just two goals and shut-out a decent Redlands team.

“We are definitely not getting scored on as much,” senior Ma Roa commented.

Wednesday’s narrow 1-2 defeat to Whittier was considered by both Buggs and Yu to be the most disappointing loss so far. The team defeated Whittier 2-1 last year in an away match, which then ended a losing streak that stretched for two seasons.

Both agreed that the team had chances to win, but could not convert.

The letdown led to a seemingly uninspired effort – the team lost 0-6 at Pomona Piirat on Tuesday, its second largest margin of defeat this season.

Women’s volleyball seeks first conference win

BY YANG YANG

“We are going to win our first conference match [this season],” team captain Sarah Stidham declared. “We are going to win.”

The Caltech women’s volleyball team backed up its captain’s certainty with a surprising 2-0 lead at La Sierre in its home opener on Sept. 6. With the team up 26-28 in the third game, however, things began to turn – like they often do – against the Beavers.

“We just missed serves and missed hit,” team captain Sarah Stidham recalled. “[La Sierre’s] play also picked up after the third game.”

Along with the team ended up losing 2-3, the auspicious start and an influx of talented freshmen have the team yearning for its first conference win ever.

Captains Stidham and Erin Peters return for their senior season, in which they hope to score Caltech volleyball’s first win in SCIAC conference play. Although both have been wracked with injuries – Stidham suffered a concussion during the first game of the season while White has sat out several matches with various strains – they are determined to get that victory.

They are backed by returning players junior Marie Giron and sophomore Lisa Yee, who currently leads the team in kills.

“Lisa is just a phenomenal hit- and setter,” Stidham said. “She jumps so high during warm-ups you could see the other team whispering to themselves and pointing at her.”

A trio of freshmen round out the starting line-up: Sarah Kate Peters and Ying Ying Tran. All three, unlike many other Caltech athletes, bring years of high school play to a program which lacks such experience.

“Not playing volleyball wasn’t even an option for me,” said Peters, who played all four years in high school. “I love the sport and even though I knew it wouldn’t be last long in terms of a record, I was impressed when I saw how hard all the girls worked.”

So far, Peters has been the most vocal of the three. According to Giron, Peters is a very positive player whose mood can improve those around her. Stidham believes the team has found a leader for years following.

“She will be captain next year,” Stidham said. “She is very vocal and good at inspiring the team.”

Despite being a four-year volleyball player in high school, Tran did not expect to play much this season.

“One preconception I had [before the season] was that I would be too short to see much playing time, if any, but I guess not,” she said. “I also thought coach [Burl] would be much stricter, demanding that volleyball be top priority, but I’ve found that it’s not true at all. She’s flexible, and cares about her players’ health and personal lives more than our record.”

Griﬃs, expecting the stereotypical Caltech athletics experience, has been surprised at the team’s progress.

“I knew the Caltech reputation in sports,” she said. “So I expected worse. I actually have been pleasantly surprised with how well we all play together, considering the varying levels of experience.”

Although the team remains winless so far, the Beavers played extremely well against Pomona Piirat Saturday, according to Stidham. The team lost in straight sets 19-30, 13-30 and 21-30, but remained competitive in the first and last game.

Upcoming games

Tuesday, 10/2
7:30PM - Women’s Volleyball vs. Whittier College

Wednesday, 10/3
4:00PM - Men’s Soccer @ Claremont-Mudd-Scripps

Friday, 10/5
7:30PM - Women’s Volleyball @ Claremont-Mudd-Scripps

Saturday, 10/6
11:00AM - Men’s Soccer vs. University of Redlands

Youthful water polo begins SCIAC

BY YANG YANG

It looks to be a year of rebuilding for the men’s water polo team as the Beavers field only four returning players with 11 years of combined experience.

Senior team captains Erin Flanagan and Tom Oliver are joined by returning seniors Brian Kearns and Sean Mattingly. Besides the senior foursome, the Beavers are filled with players in their first year of college water polo.

The inexperience showed in a 4-23 loss to Chapman University in its season opener. Freshman Paul Fleiner’s two goals in his first ever water polo game to lead the Beaver offense. According to Fleiner, he “just got lucky.”

Due to frost camp and other retreats, we haven’t been able to practice as a team for the last week and a half, it was hard to go in prepared,” Flanagan said.

“By that we mean that we lack a lot of the experience, we were able to keep up with Chapman,” The Beavers played Chapman again on Saturday and improved from their first outing to lose only 10-20.

Despite the youth, Flanagan has high hopes for the upcoming season.

“We’re well conditioned and we should be able to step up our game and play well this season,” he said. “It should be fun for the seniors on the team.”
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Booklets to give prefrosh a flavor of each house

A second revamp involving Frosh Camp was the removal of House skits from the program. Formerly, Frosh Camp representatives from each house would put on entertaining demonstrations intended to convey their House’s respective sense of humor. Instead, House skits were performed Thursday night on campus. Reasons behind this move included the desire to include more upperclassmen from each House in each production, as well as to move the skits temporally closer to the start of Rotation to increase the cohesion of the week’s procedures.

Filling in the time formerly taken by the House skits was a music and arts rally organized by Team Tech, a new campus group that uses newly granted Moore-Hufstedler (MHF) funds to encourage more involvement in extracurricular activities and attendance at student events. The Team Tech presentation at Frosh Camp included information sessions and performances by One Act Theater as well as selected campus music groups.

Another new addition included the creation of Rotation Information booklets, which were handed out to prefrosh just prior to their return to Caltech from Frosh Camp. According to the IHC Chair, these booklets serve to “give every freshman the first impression of the Houses that the Houses want to be delivered.” The booklets consist of a series of installments discussing the history, traditions, and culture of each undergraduate House. This is distinct from the traditional House “propaganda” freshmen have received each year, which are meant to be entertaining rather than educational.

Capping off the “new Rotation” is a series of question-answer sessions scheduled with the IHC. Monday thru Friday, the entire IHC will be in the Ricketts-Fleming Courtyard from 3:00-3:30 PM so that prefrosh may ask questions regarding Rotation procedures as well as to check the veracity of any rumors they may have heard about any Houses over the course of their stay. In order to encourage student participation, Caltech Dining Services Director Peter Daily will be providing free snacks and drinks, as the meeting times coincide with standard open kitchen.

With all these changes comes a call for added responsibility from the former IHC Chair. Montuori advises, “The students make Rotation. Whether it succeeds, fails, or is changed is entirely up to the student body.”

[Editor’s Note: A controversial change to Rotation was eliminating the ability to blackball a house, a feature that let prefrosh cross off three houses with the guarantee of not ending up in the house.]
The Tech: now found everywhere on campus

Check news stands in most major buildings to find the newest issue of the Tech, Engineering and Science, or Caltech News.

Questions or comments? Please email Engineering and Science editor Doug Smith at dsmith@caltech.edu or California Tech editor Marissa Cevallos at tech@caltech.edu. For a complete list of where to find the closest news stand to you, please email Distribution Manager Matthew Wierman at mwierman@caltech.edu.
Dr. Quark,  

My roommate keeps having sex with this one chick. She's pretty hot and all that but I just don’t like the idea of my roommate having sex. In my room. All the time. And sometimes in my bed. How do I deal with being sexually violated?

Lone Lee

It is my professional opinion as a scientist that you should approach the situation as passive aggressively as possible. Remember, no one likes confrontation, so at all costs do not discuss this with your roommate, or talk about how you feel, and definitely do not try to solve this with a compromise. Instead, do the following:

1. Have you even stopped to think of the plethora of options you have when it comes to exploiting the situation for your own financial gain? You could easily create video evidence of said acts and then ??? and profit!

2. My final suggestion is retaliation. Get your own girlfriend and sex with her on your roommate's desk. While he's doing a set. An hour before the set it due. Have you ever tried doing a set when there's a writhing mass of two squirming bodies in the middle of your workspace? My very scientific analysis indicates that you haven't, but let me assure your roommates that this will always be watching with sad disapproving eyes.

3. With any luck your roommate will flare out and you won't be bothered anymore.

4. You might as well ask if it is ethical for you to make me a delicious club sandwich with pickles. Obviously I think that this is very ethical, but what does the anti-sandwich agenda have to say about that? Scientifically I find the number of people out there who have a thing against sandwiches to be absolutely ridiculous. Sandwiches are a wholesome eating choice the deficiency of which is what is alienating our nation.

5. Maybe the next time your roommate is having sex in your bed, ask if you can join in, after all it is your bed and nothing is more fun than an adventure to new and unexplored territory.

6. Have you even stopped to think about how you feel, and definitely do not try to solve this with a compromise?

Last term I stayed up late studying for a final, and the next day when I was working in lab I was so tired that I by mistake drank some of the radiative mutagen in the hood instead of my usual Kool-Aid (Oh Yeah!). Now I am able to see into the near future. Is it ethical if I look into the future to see what grade I receive on a final, and study harder if it is not within acceptable bounds?

Mar T. McFly

Your question brings to mind the possibility that a time paradox is your bed and nothing is more fun than an adventure to new and unexplored territory.

Lone Lee