Caltech pulls off second Rose Bowl prank

PARUL PUBLI
Contributing Writer

The Caltech culture is an integral part of any Techer's collegiate experience. It comes as no surprise, then, that over a hundred undergrads across every house and class partook in the largest-scale prank that Caltech has seen this year.

On Jan 6th, just 5 minutes before halftime at the Bowl Championship Series, the moment of truth arrived. High up on a hill overlooking the Rose Bowl, the pranksters watched as a crowd of over 94,000 people bore witness to a large Pasadena sign flashing CALTECH in orange lights.

"Pranking the Rose Bowl again was something we'd wanted to do for a long time," said Ricketts senior Samantha Piszkiewicz. "We also really loved the Hollywood sign prank, so we thought we'd merge the two and pay homage to both."

It all started when Julie Jester, president of the Prank Club, emailed potential recruits a week before construction began. Five days before the championships, the construction of eight 12 feet by 20 feet frames started with a core group of about 20 people. Though the initial plan was to build and show the sign at the Art Center College of Design, the group received word on the second day of construction that the president of the Art Center had vetoed the use of the location.

With the aid of Tom Mannion, Vice President for Student Affairs and the Prank Club advisor, Professor emeritus Kip Thorne was brought into the scheme. Because Thorne's home in Mirador Ranch had a hill overlooking the Rose Bowl, with Thorne's and the HOA's approval, construction began at the site. "The key was when the Mirador Ranch HOA gave approval to let the students carry out the prank," explained Mannion. "Then we knew we could carry out the prank without any police shutting us down."

With a location secured, work on the sign continued. Caltech's prank fund, which alumni periodically donate to, provided the $10,000 necessary for supplies. Christmas lights were then taped to the Pasadena sign so that they would spell out "Caltech" and excess lights were taped off. The green strings of wire were then painted white to match the sign. Hannah Potson of Dabney House took charge of ensuring the lights worked. Car batteries were used to provide the voltage necessary to produce the effect.

Continued on page 3

News briefs from around the globe

Helping readers burst out of the Caltech bubble

Need to know < 100 words about the world this week – topics sorted from good to bad by The Tech Eds

Medical research funded $11M given for research on biodegradable glue to replace sutures [CNN]
Chinese to ban smoking 32 Chinese cities will ban smoking in public by the end of the year [CNN]
MLB lowers suspension 162-game suspension imposed on A-Rod, less than the original 211 [ABC]
Yelp posts questioned 7 Yelp reviewers ordered to be revealed by court for investigation [ABC]
Christie causes traffic 4-day traffic jam in Sep. found to be caused by NJ governor's aides [ABC]
College athletes tested 60 percent of surveyed college athletes read at 4th-8th grade level [CNN]
Ariel Sharon passes 85-year-old former Israeli prime minister passes away after coma [NYT]
Food with Mannion!

Do you like eating food?
How about free food at nice restaurants?
Ever want to tell the world exactly what you think of said food?
The Tech will be beginning a new column to chronicle the foodie experiences of new writers every other week...The Catch: They’ll be going head-to-head with Tom Mannion who will be reviewing the same restaurant. If you have ever thought you were more of a gourmand than our resident master chef, now’s your chance to prove it!
Email us for a spot on the list at tech@caltech.edu

Write articles for the Tech

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PHOEBE ANN  
LAURA SANTOSO  
Contributing Writers

Hi everyone! This is the Caltech Y Column, designed to inform you about the Y and the opportunities we provide for you to inspire your passions, whether by participating in our programs or leading your own!

Founded by students in 1916, the Y was organized to provide extracurricular activities planned and implemented by students as an opportunity to gain leadership skills and discover their passions and themselves. The mission of today’s Y remains the same—to provide opportunities that will prepare students to become engaged, responsible citizens of the world. The Y seeks to broaden students’ worldviews, and raise social, ethical, and cultural awareness through teamwork, community engagement, activism, and leadership.

The Caltech Y’s mission and core values stand on five key pillars: leadership, civic engagement, service, adventure, and perspective. Regardless of which pillars capture your interest, feel free to attend any of the below programs, or contact us to organize your own!

Here’s a sampling of past programs held by the Y:
• Alternative Spring Breaks: Costa Rica, New York, Yosemite, San Diego, San Francisco
• Make-A-Difference Day: Hillside Home for Children, LA County Arboretum and Botanic Garden, Children’s Hospital

Upcoming programs for this term include the Costa Rica Alternative Spring Break and an Explore LA Lakers Game! Stay tuned!

If you have any questions at all, feel free to contact the Caltech Y at (626) 395-6163 or caltechy@caltech.edu. Feel free to drop by at one of our weekly meetings at the Caltech Y at the Caltech Y (505 S. Wilson, next to CEFCU), time TBA.

Go to http://caltechy.org/lists/ to self-subscribe to announcement lists for upcoming events and sign-up information.

For a student’s perspective, feel free to contact Phoebe Ann at phoebe.ann2@gmail.com or Laura Santoso at santoso.laura@gmail.com.

Caltech Y Column: Look out for new events

BCS National Championship prankened by Techers

Continued from page 1

Each of the 8 boards for the letters was split in half to drive it to location in a truck. Actually setting up the frames, however, proved far more difficult than originally anticipated. “The hill was near a 60 degree incline, and we had sixteen massive signs to carry up,” Jester elaborated. “When we initially saw the space I was really skeptical about how we could conceivably get everything up there.”

Talia Minear, a Blacker House freshman, explained the process by which the signs were set up: “We rigged up a really excellent pulley system to get it up half way, with people on harnesses as a counterbalance.” Minear continued. “My favorite part was rappelling down the hill to hoist the letters up. It still took us eight hours to hoist it and about ten more to assemble everything once we were there.”

On the day of the game, the lights went on as planned. What wasn’t planned, however, was the difficulty in keeping the lights flashing. As Piszkiewicz explained, “There were a lot of technical difficulties because the inverters were really bad. Batteries that were supposed to last for several hours only held for significantly less than that. We had to be really innovative.” In order to maximize how long the batteries lasted, only some lights were used: patterns were flashed such as “Cal” and then “Tech”, or each letter in a sequence. The hundred Techers that showed up at the Rose Bowl throughout the day took batteries from their cars at the bottom of the hill and used them to maintain the power.

“For scientific progress, you need a little bit of rebellion at times” says Piszkiewicz. “There are a lot of crazy ideas that people try to shoot down. Caltech teaches us to be creative, to consider those ideas, work together, and follow through.”
Brad/Chad Couture: A guide for traveling in style

Brad Chattergoon Contributing Writer

Happy New Year and welcome back to the new term! I hope that you guys are refreshed and ready to get to work on what I’m sure will be another term of sacrifice, sleepless nights, and lots of crying over how much work we have to do… ok, maybe that crying part might be just me.

To kick things off I want to talk about what to wear when traveling, since we’ve all just been traveling this might be a good time to potentially review our clothing choices.

GENTS: Let’s start with your choice of pants: The duration of a flight is spent mostly being seated and, if lucky, sleeping.

This means that it is important that whatever is on your lower half better be breathable and comfortable.

For some this means sweats but sweatspants are the lazy man’s approach to travel and do not come off as stylish. I recommend a trim fitting pair of jeans with 2% spandex/elastin. These give you the style that contributes to a put-together look after a long flight and also provide some organization of blind dates for meetings across time zones. For our service, we will flip a coin to determine who will pay for a taxi, but they will not run in the same circle. Further, they are great options. If in doubt, a fitted button down will not fail to contribute to a great travel outfit.

Shoes: Again, avoid flip-flops and trainers; also add heels to that list. Boots are good, boat shoes are also nice, and I’m a big fan of a girl in ballet flats with a brightly colored toe.

Carry-on: If you can, ditch the rollaboard in favor of a duffel bag as your single carry-on item. Duffels take up less space in the overhead bin so it’s much more likely to find a spot for your bag and smaller duffels can easily fit below the seat in front of you.

LADIES: (The following was written assuming knowledge of the preceding portion of the article.)

Outerwear: Blazers with the sleeves slightly rolled are an amazing choice. A cardigan also works wonders.

Carry-on: Opt for the carry-on sized rollaboard and a tote, as these are two very feminine items to travel with.

Skirts: When traveling, since we’ve all just been traveling, maybe that crying part might be just me. As before, recall airport security lines so avoid anything that has straps, buckles or other impediment to removal. Keep it simple.

Blazers with the sleeves slightly rolled are an amazing choice. A cardigan also works wonders.

Top: As usual you have a bit more freedom in this department. A fun tee or a vest top, either paired with a scarf, are great options. If in doubt, a fitted button down will not fail to contribute to a great travel outfit.

Shoes: For your shoes you have a bit more freedom in this department. A pair of loafers for a more business-like look or a pair of trainers for a more casual look. A seasoned well-styled traveler knows that traveling can be a stressful time, so try to relax, stay hydrated, and if you tend to drool when you sleep, it’s only fair to warn your neighbors. Safe travels!

Contact the Counseling Center if you have any questions.

(626) 395-8331
Stephen Malkmus is an artist who may not be known by everyone, but his work is almost certainly familiar to many. A founding member of California indie rock group Pavement, he toured as their singer and one of their two guitarists and contributed the majority of the band’s songwriting from 1989 until they broke up in 1999. While they reunited for a limited tour following other products of the decade’s scene such as Neutral Milk Hotel and Of Montreal, they do have a healthy cult following, and their hit single “Cut Your Hair” is still well known today.


Typically, Stephen Malkmus and the Jicks have remained fairly close to traditional Pavement-style music, opting for cleaner sound instead of the latter’s lo-fi approach, but generally keeping the meandering, light indie- and alt-rock sound of early Pavement but not quite pop radio material. The solo act nature of the group has allowed Malkmus to embrace some experimentation, introducing prog-rock-like guitar solos, time signature transitions, and other elements not entirely expected in this style of music. However, I can’t help but feel that this ability for him to “do whatever he wants” has led to a sort of stagnation in his songwriting where he’s just doing it for fun instead of trying to make a statement or something catchy or anything that usually motivates bands to expand and push forwards. I have absolutely no problem with this—I've been a member of several bands and I've massed around, writing songs by myself for myself, and the latter is less stressful and easy to see the appeal of. However, that’s just not what I'm looking for in my music, and so the majority of Malkmus’s work is a bit lost on me, with its generally slower and quieter sound. The album’s opener, “Planetary Motion”, gets off to a good start with a strong pulse, contrast between shimmering high notes on guitars, and dark, heavily distorted riffs. The drums feel a little weak, relatively quiet in the mix and rarely doing anything but providing a backing for the song which sounds like it could have in most cases been accomplished with electronic drum loops.

The “Janitor Revealed” has an undeniably catchy vocal part the entire way through, and there are some very well-constructed moments between them and the guitars, clearly written by someone who understands what makes music sound good. To me, though, the song felt like it was always building up to something, which sounds like it could have in most cases been accomplished with electronic drum loops.

Stephen Malkmus & The Jicks

Almost halfway through the album, we get a solid groove with an insane amount of distortion, and a dual-guitar solo that sounds like it could have come from a classic Weezer record. The next two songs are also fairly enjoyable. The album “Wig Out At Jagbags,” for the most part, follows this trend, although it is a bit different from the preceding Mirror Traffic, with predictable, eagaging structure and sound that just doesn’t seem to convey much emotion.

Wig Out At Jagbags, for the numbers of hours required for the remaining hours, they would have only been able to sleep for 5.6 hours a day. They wouldn’t have had the time to find better jobs, go back to school, or do anything to improve their quality of life if they wanted to afford rent. If the relationship between rent and minimum wage continues to follow the current trend, many workers will soon find themselves joining the homeless. The costs of food, shelter, and clothing have skyrocketed; the value of minimum wage has plummeted. Minimum wage is not the same as living wage, and even with the increases at the beginning of the year, it is still insufficient. If the inflation of the cost of living greatly exceeds the increases in minimum wages, then the increase of wages is largely symbolic and utterly useless. Cheap rent must be affordable on minimum wage before there can be a decrease in the homeless population.

This isn’t a call for students to act heroically; at this point, there is little we can do for the homeless on the other side of the fence. We can donate money to the Salvation Army and other charities. This also isn’t a call for students to become social justice activists; minimum wage is a political matter for the most part, and I know that we rarely concern ourselves with the details of our wages. But there are also Techers who will be entering the economic sector, who will be joining non-profit organizations, who will be working in the public sector. We are all always influential. There is much that we can do to remedy our society’s ills and inefficiencies.
Answers to last week’s crossword puzzle from puzzlechoice.com

Caltech Public Events is now hiring student ushers.
$15 per hour to work concerts, performances, lectures, films and parties.

No experience needed, no hard labor, flexible schedules.

*Requirements: Caltech student, Positive attitude, Friendly personality

To apply email Adam Jacobo (ajacobo@caltech.edu) or call (626) 395-5907

For info on Caltech Public Events visit: www.caltech.edu/content/public-events
Beavers face stiff competition at Western Invitational

GoCaltech

Facing their best competition to date, the Caltech fencing team traveled to the Western Invitational on Saturday afternoon which was hosted by Stanford.

The event featured one top 10 team (Northwestern University) as well two others (Stanford University and Air Force Academy) who were just outside the national rankings.

Highlighting the event for the Beavers was the men’s 16-11 win over Florida. All three respective weapons won their bouts as Epee and Sabre both posted 5-4 victories while Foil won 6-3. Matthew Jin continued his fine first-year campaign with a perfect mark in his three foil matches. In their three bouts, Stan Schor (Epee), John Christian (Epee), Harrison Miller (Sabre), Jon Schor (Sabre) each chipped in two individual wins during their respective weapons. The women’s team had its best showing in the event against Florida as well. While the Gators won 17-10, a handful of Beaver fencers posted multiple wins in their respective weapons: Christina Meyer posted two wins in her three epee bouts. Both Katie Fisher and Emily Hernandez won twice in their Foil bouts while Sonia Kim had two victories in her Sabre bouts.

MENS RESULTS
Air Force 22, Caltech 5 (Epee 8-1, Foil 8-1, Sabre 9-0)
Stanford 25, Caltech 2 (Epee 8-1, Foil 8-1, Sabre 9-0)
Caltech 17, Florida 10 (Epee 5-4, Foil 6-3, Sabre 5-4)
UC San Diego 24, Caltech 3 (Epee 8-1, Foil 9-0, Sabre 7-2)

WOMENS RESULTS
Air Force 22, Caltech 5 (Epee 7-2, Foil 9-0, Sabre 9-0)
Stanford 22, Caltech 5 (Epee 9-0, Foil 5-4, Sabre 8-1)
Northwestern 27, Caltech 0 (Epee 9-0, Foil 9-0, Sabre 9-0)
Florida 17, Caltech 10 (Epee 7-2, Foil 5-4, Sabre 5-4)
UC San Diego 22, Caltech 5 (Epee 9-0, Foil 6-3, Sabre 7-2)

Beavers open 2014 against Pomona-Pitzer, Occidental

GoCaltech

In their first meet of the 2014 calendar year, the Caltech swimming and diving team had a host of solid finishes against Pomona-Pitzer and Occidental. Jacqueline Masehi-Lano finished first in the 200 yard butterfly with a time of 2:13.68. During the 100 yard butterfly she placed second with a time of 0:59.87 which was just 0:00.57 away from winning the event.

The duo of Patric Eck and Chris Bradley scored points for the Beavers in the 200 yard freestyle. Eck clocked a time of 1:52.60 to place third, which was less than two seconds away from winning the event, while Bradley’s time of 1:55.34 placed him fourth.

Kevin Yu placed third for the Beavers in the 200 yard butterfly with a time of 2:04.39. Yu also finished third during the 100 yard event by touching the wall at 0:54.37.

The diving duo of Alex Place and Ben Grabowski had a fine afternoon. Place won both the one- and three-meter diving competition with scores 183.70 and 201.10 respectively. Grabowski was just a few points behind Place in the one-meter with a score of 178.80. Jeff tallied 164.75 points in placing third during the three-meter competition.

Next weekend Caltech hosts Whittier on Saturday at 10:30 a.m. and will also welcome Chapman and Mills from a Sunday tri-meet.

Weekly Scoreboard

Women’s Basketball vs. Hamline (@ CMS)
L, 90-58 Final

Men’s Basketball vs. Cornell
L, 61-49 Final

Men’s Basketball at La Verne
L, 62-52 Final

Men’s Basketball vs. Ohio Northern
L, 102-69 Final

Women’s Basketball vs. Swarthmore
L, 97-80 Final

Women’s Basketball at La Verne
L, 70-67 Final

Women’s Basketball at Redlands
L, 66-25 Final

Men’s Basketball at Redlands
L, 82-69 Final

Women’s Basketball vs. Cal Lutheran
L, 79-69 Final

Men’s Basketball vs. Cal Lutheran
L, 77-53 Final
**Principle of Least Action**

**Ben Bartlett**

#2 - “Hogwarts”

**A Comparison Between Caltech and Hogwarts Houses**

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(Also, every time I see someone spell it “CalTech”, I post on some internet forum talking about “Hogwarts.”)

*principleofleastaction.tumblr.com*

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For more photos, videos, and archives of previous issues, check out the Tech website!

tech.caltech.edu

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