



HONORS

PROGRAM

September 2008

THE VIEW FROM HERE

BY DR. MONICA HALKA

Change is in the air...and the furniture and the office and the residence hall and the members of the Honors Program. We have welcomed our third cohort of freshmen—115 energetic interesting new personalities—to the newly renovated Field Hall and its environs, where some of our receptions and events will be held during the academic year. Many of our returning students have changed, too, after recent internships, study and travel abroad, or just hard work in summer classes. Check out some photos of their experiences on page 7. And check out our new office space, in Suite 103 of the A. French Building. Though the timing of the move was a bit inconvenient (the first week of classes) and may have left some of you confused as to what the devil was going on, it's a wonderful space that we hope you will visit frequently.



Of course, all our new special topic courses are underway, and we hope to hear how they're going. In fact, mark your calendars for a presentation by Dr. Joel Sokol's class on "The Mathematical Modeling of Election Issues" the evening of October 30. We have also invited a couple of very special speakers to Atlanta to meet personally with HP students and give public talks. The first will be a presentation by Jonah Lehrer, author of "Proust was a Neuroscientist." Please make plans to attend his talk the evening of October 1 in the LeCraw Auditorium of the Management Building.

Jonah Lehrer will be speaking on Oct. 1

Note that to find out about any of our events this year, you can check our faithfully updated calendar which is found by going to the Honors Program website link "News & Events." (You may find that to be the most useful change yet.)

2nd Annual Honors Program Retreat

BY VICTOR LESNIEWSKI

So you are a couple of weeks into your first year of college. What are your impressions? Maybe you have had enough already and need a break to clear your mind. Or do you walk around Field, nodding to a familiar face without actually knowing who that kid is? You might not even know why you are living in Field, and you might be wondering what this whole Honors Program thing entails. Don't you wish there was a weekend retreat that could fill those voids? Well, you're in luck!

See Retreat pg. 2

New Advising Strategy

The Honors Program will open a satellite office on the basement level in Field Residence Hall. The Field HP office will be open twice a week beginning mid-September and will offer hours that accommodate a student's busy schedule.

Photographer Needed

The HyPe is in search of a photographer. Interested volunteers should contact Dr. Halka at monica.halka@gatech.edu for more info.

Retreat (cont.)

It's called the Honors Program Retreat and it's happening September 20th - 21st at the beautiful Indian Springs State Park. Join us for a weekend of action and interaction. From salsa dancing and improv to biking and hiking you will finally get a chance to meet the other students from Field and exchange more than a "hello." Want to gain some insight into Georgia Tech and the Honors Program? Professors will join 2nd and 3rd year students who have been there and done that (trust us, we have) in answering your questions and concerns. Second- and third-year HP students are planning the entire weekend specifically for you, and we know what's worth your time and our own. Plus, we know how to have fun.

So join us September 20th and 21st and escape the hustle and bustle of Tech!

We'll be looking for you. Get more information and RSVP at http://www.honorsprogram.gatech.edu/HPRetreat/Home_Page.html

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Mona Lisa captured hiding behind a typical electricity pole in Ho Chi Minh (Photo: Santiago Hässig)

It's Not About The Money

BY EMILY WEIGEL

Let me tell you about the time \$100,000 was dangled in front of my face, taken away, and I left the whole situation smiling. A few months ago I was approached to take part in the Ford College Community Challenge, a competition between schools to compete for one of five \$100,000 grants. As members of this team that included undergrads, grads, faculty and staff from Georgia Tech, our task was to create a greener community, not only for Georgia Tech itself, but the city of Atlanta. Our team worked for months to create a final proposal that ultimately "missed the funding by a hair," but our impact will soon be seen across campus.

After the Honors Program bike-share program got underway in the fall of 2007, word got out and more serious discussions began around campus about expanding the program to a larger scale. Eventually, this idea evolved into a significant portion of Tech's grant proposal. The bike section of the proposal included smart bike racks with automated solar-powered kiosks where students, faculty and staff could swipe their Buzzcards and check out a bike.

The plan also involved modifying some of the CRC's cardiovascular training equipment to recover some of the energy expended during exercise. Not only would this help raise renewable energy awareness, it would also charge your cell phone or MP3 player.

So why am I talking about things that will never happen?

Though we didn't get funding, the modified bike energy plan is now a part of Mechanical Engineering's Capstone Design project under Dr. Bert Bras. Through discussions around campus with Facilities, Capital Projects, Campus Police, Alternative Transportation, Student Affairs, the Manufacturing Research Center and Housing, bike usage has become a part of GT's Campus Master Plan, with more bike lanes, racks and safety measures becoming available for bike riders.

Meetings are still going on to further this kind of development on campus, so I encourage you to contact Koji Intlekofer (kintlekofer3@gatech.edu) to get involved. Remember, it's not about the number of wheels, it's about the degree of freedom.

Arts & Leisure

My Odyssey

BY DIANA KERCKHOF

Penelope's tumbling locks
lost their luster
as she could find no solace
from the grease of the suitors.
Her eyes turned grey,
her lips now a knife,
for it was all she could do
to keep their beards from scraping her cheek
and their knuckles from invading her.
Even the boy Telemachus
was sooty from toil,
his ears bleeding from the arrows that flew
from the slimy jowls of the swine...
Penelope hid her bruises
and escaped to the sea nightly,
lying on the beach
so that the waves
caressed her
breasts,
kept the secrets between her legs...
She moaned for her Odysseus...

And his moans were different completely
in the arms of Calypso,
at the feet of Circe.

But in the end, Odysseus returned
and forgot Calypso,
forgot Circe,
Prayed to Athena,
slaughtered the suitors
clapped his son on the back
and made love
to dear, sweet Penelope.

Bitten and Smitten: Vampire Love

BY SARAH GILBREATH

It's official: America has fallen in love with a vampire. The fanged hero of Stephanie Meyer's ridiculously popular Twilight series, Edward Cullen has captured the hearts of women everywhere and set even more impossible standards for men to not live up to. Hurricane Edward hit over the summer, while I (like many other HP kids) was studying abroad. I hadn't heard of the book series, but I was keeping an eye on Facebook, and when more people started to have "Edward Cullen is my boyfriend" bumper stickers than "Nick Jonas" ones, I knew something huge had happened.

At its most basic level, Twilight is essentially a love story between an ordinary teenage girl and a vampire. Of course, given the diet of vampires, the relationship has certain complications. Then there are "tracker vampires," those who hunt mortals merely for fun. While it all may sound like the sort of thing only teenage girls read, the audience is surprisingly wide: this story is appealing to just about any age range, and many guys find themselves "sucked" into the plot (sorry, I had to). Given this popularity, I'm not going to delve any deeper into the story for fear of spoiling it.

Currently, there are four books in the series: Twilight, New Moon, Eclipse and Breaking Dawn. Controversy has also swirled around the recently leaked draft of Midnight Sun, an unfinished manuscript. Meyer has spoken out quite harshly against those who caused the leak and has stated that the actual work (and by consequence the whole Twilight universe) is now "on hold indefinitely." However, she has made the controversial transcript available on her website for fans to view.

Naturally, there's a movie in the works: look for the film version of the first novel to come out on November 21 of this year, replacing the spot traditionally held by everyone's favorite teenage wizard (Harry Potter's release date has been pushed back to summer of 2009). Trailers can already be seen on Apple's website, and the MTV movie blog is running continuous news on the film, along with special "Twilight Tuesdays." If the popularity of the books is any indication, the movie is sure to be a hit.

2008 Olym

Skill, Speed, Risk: Olympic Kayaking

BY CAROLA CONCES

If you're like most viewers, you probably mainly tuned into Olympic coverage of swimming, gymnastics, and track and field. John Watson, an Honors Program third-year student, was interested in the lesser-known sport of kayaking. John dedicated eight years to the sport, and got to watch his friend and former training partner, Benn Fraker, race to a fifth place finish in the men's single canoe slalom event in Beijing.

John began kayaking at the age of nine, when his dad introduced him to the sport. He began training and racing with the Atlanta Center of Excellence, a local slalom racing club. As he progressed to an elite level, his training under former Olympic Team coach Mike Larimer consisted of about six varied strength and endurance workouts each week. He travelled widely through the U.S. and also spent two summers competing and training in Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Austria, Italy, and Germany.

Slalom racing, explains John, is "a very obscure sport in the US...I was one of about 10 athletes in the entire Atlanta area. However, one of the benefits of this is that it is a very close-knit family of athletes, families, and friends that come together throughout the spring for numerous regional and national races." One of the stars of this community is Peachtree City's Benn Fraker, a nineteen-year-old GSU student and Olympian whom John describes as "a determined, athletic young man with a strong sense of humor." The two medaled together in a doubles canoe event at the 2004 Junior Olympics. Georgia Tech is also well-represented in the sport. Scott Shipley represented the US in the 1992, 1996, and 2000 games. By alternating semesters of study and training, he graduated from Tech with a Mechanical Engineering degree after twelve years. Don Giddens, Dean of the College of Engineering, is the father of another accomplished kayaker, Eric Giddens, who competed in the 1996 Olympics.

Kayaking combines all of the elements that make a sport exciting: skill, speed, risk, unpredictability, and high intensity. As John describes it, "The sport of kayaking, racing down churning whitewater, is a very uncertain thing. Anyone can have a good day, and anyone can have a bad day. There's no way to predict which way the water will swirl, and that can make the difference between a medal and going home empty handed. As such, the best athletes aren't necessarily the strongest or the fastest, but rather the most consistent."



Benn Fraker and John Watson

pic Games

A Century-Old Dream

BY SIJIA CAI

Boycotts. Protests. Terrorist attacks. What with all the controversy and media buzz about the Olympics this summer, I thought I would offer my perspective into what many Chinese have characterized as the “culmination of a century-old dream.”

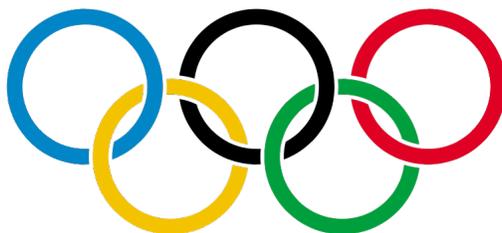
Quite simply, the Beijing Olympics were exceptional. The city had polished itself in every way to welcome guests from all over the globe. One could walk out onto a street and see more foreigners than Chinese. The sheer numbers were overwhelming. China poured 40 billion dollars into constructing new roads and stadiums and improving the city’s infrastructure.

The achievements of the Beijing Olympics are striking given the turmoil that preceded it—snowstorms, earthquakes and the Tibetan uprising. In light of these trials, is it any wonder that, to millions of Chinese, August would finally be the month in which they had the opportunity to showcase what was uniquely Chinese to the outside world?

It is difficult, without a deep familiarity of our history and culture, to understand the extreme sensibility the Chinese have regarding their place in the world. Personally, I have to admit that the media hype about the opening ceremony was surprising. A celebration of sports and humanity was turned into a polarized political issue. National leaders worried about terrorist attacks and embarrassing no-shows. But despite the constant barrage of pessimistic predictions, those issues faded into the night for spectators in the Bird’s Nest on the magical night of August 8, 2008.

The performances by tens of thousands of volunteers were perfectly synchronized. As the final torchbearer, Li Ning skywalked his way around the inner rim of the stadium, the roar of excitement hushed into quiet awe. Capping the whole evening was the path of flame the Olympic blaze traced as it raced up and circled the torch once before lighting up the night sky. At that moment, we all had tears in our eyes. Suddenly, peace and harmony seemed to be a real possibility.

It was an Olympics of many firsts. Numerous countries received their first medals, and world records in a wide array of sports were broken at an astounding rate. When the Games finally ended and the Olympic flag was symbolically handed to the mayor of London, the curtains closed on one of the most successful Games in history and the best experience of my life.

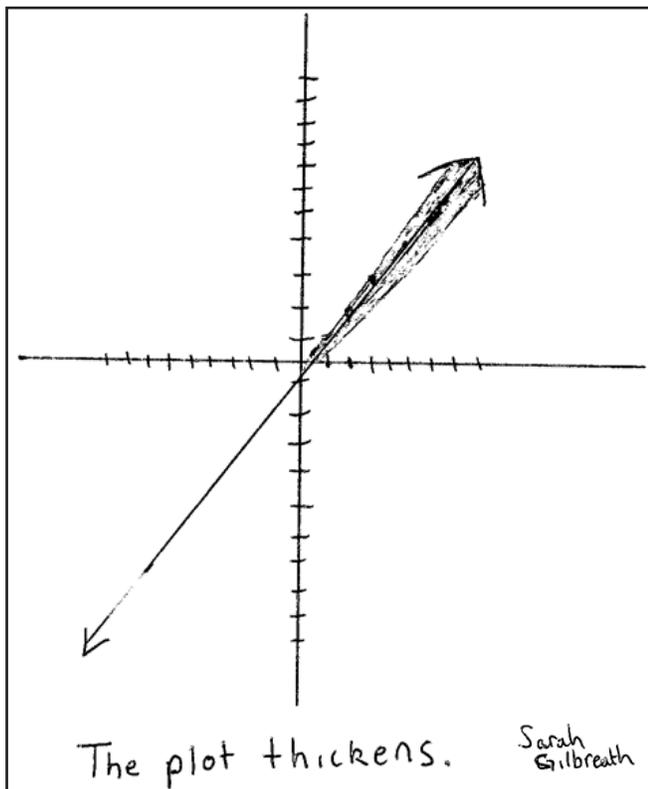


Wild Summer Contest

Be the first to match the people with the experiences to claim your prize at the Honors Program office:

Awarded AFCEA-NOVA scholarship
Oxford summer program-England (Choose 2)
Spanish LBAT summer study (Choose 5)
Study abroad in Thailand
Travelled to Jordan
German LBAT summer study (Choose 2)
Won the 2008 Independent Foreign Fiction Prize
Nearly got deported from the United States
Went to the Olympics in Beijing
Won Aerospace Engineering design contest
Mission Trip to Jamaica
Co-op with GTRI
Italian Film Study Abroad (Choose 2)
Shanghai summer program
Co-op with Bose
Summer 2008 PURA award (Choose 5)
Taught at UC Berkeley technology camp

Santiago Hässig
Paul Verhaeghen
Ben Holladay
John Watson
Victor Lesniewski
Emily Chambers
Christina Graves
Kento Masuyama
Chris Giardina
Lauren Davis
Richard Davies
Audrey Plummer
Bill Bridgers
Virginia Chu
Allison Gooch
Warren Van Nus
Andrew Fish
Sam Coogan
Emily Weigel
Rebecca Hood
Sarah Gilbreath
Sonia Golemme
David Lowry
Drew Blackburn



Artists Needed

The HyPe is in search of cartoonists and other visual artists. Interested volunteers should contact Dr. Halka at monica.halka@gatech.edu for more info.



Warren Van Nus (back row, center) with the GT Motorsports team competed in the Formula SAE event at Michigan International Speedway shortly after spring finals.

Work hard, play hard: **Matt Hoffman** takes a break from his co-op to hike the Desolation Wilderness.



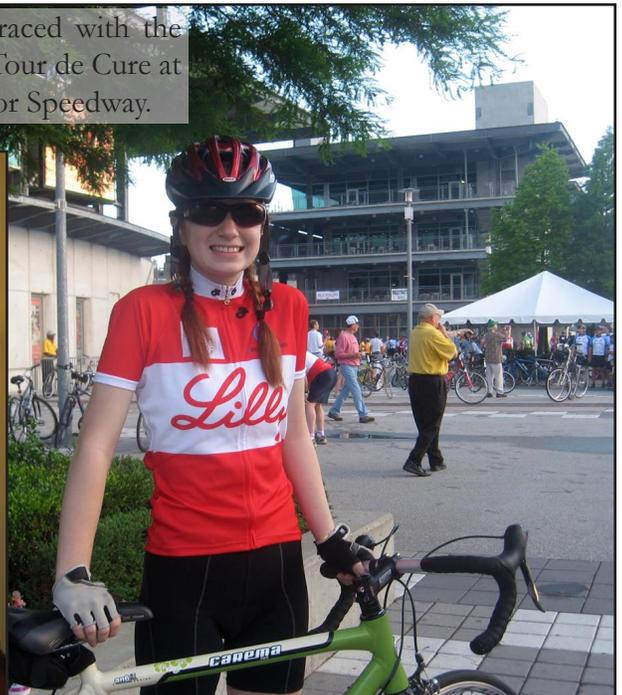
THE SUMMER IN PICTURES

Stefan Stephenson-Moe with friends in Nan Jing Lu, China.

Sydney Shaffer raced with the Lilly team in the Tour de Cure at Indianapolis Motor Speedway.



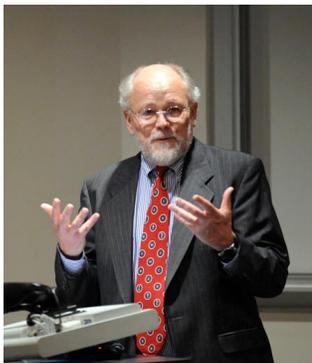
Liam Rattray and friends fought for alternate energy.



Message from the Director

Too Professorial?

BY DR. GREG NOBLES



A couple of weeks ago, during a real yawner part of the Olympics – probably a beach volleyball blowout or something – I decided to click over to CNN to see what the pundits were up to. And there, live on Larry King, were a couple of talking heads discussing

a recent joint appearance by Barack Obama and John McCain, when both of the candidates had been asked a question about a complicated issue that'll certainly be on the debate agenda later this fall. One of the candidates – and I'm not saying which one – gave a slightly longish but decently thoughtful answer to the question, suggesting that the issue was indeed complicated and didn't lend itself to a simple, one-sentence answer. Bad move in the short attention span of TV-land, it turned out. The pundits all picked on him because, as they said almost with a sneer, he sounded *too professorial*.

"Whoa," I said out loud to Larry King and his friends, "since when did 'professorial' become a slur?" That's my line of work, and we professors have been

put on this earth to be in the thoughtful-answer business. The whole idea is to look at complicated issues, think about them a bit, and try to make sense of them – and help our students do the same.

One time I told my US history class, "I teach because you vote." I didn't mean that I wanted to teach (much less tell) anyone how to vote. Ask me now or ask me on November 4, and I still won't tell you. Look at my professorial Volvo, and the only bumper-sticker you'll see is a small Atlanta Track Club decal. No, when I say "I teach because you vote," I mean it's my job – it's every professor's job – to show you that the issues aren't always so easy, that thinking takes work, and that a sensible decision doesn't always come out in a sound bite. It sometimes gets complicated, but it's also how you get politically sophisticated.

So in the two months left in this election season, take some time to think about the issues, engage the complications, seek some sophistication. Do what I do, talk back to the TV, but also talk to your roommates and classmates about what's going on and see if you can summon up some political sophistication. And yes, talk to your professors: most of them are probably not *too professorial*, but just professorial enough.

GeT HyPed

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