



Caltech, Harvey Mudd, and Scripps party- a success?

By Joel Nikolaus
STAFF WRITER

Anthony Chong, ASCIT President, said that Tom Mannion estimated that over four hundred Caltech students attended the party this last Friday, well over the original estimate of only two hundred to three hundred students.

Regardless of the large turnout, student reactions to the party

were mixed. Some had good things to say about it, calling it “a great party”. Several Mudd students said it was good to be “maintaining a nice, healthy rivalry.”

Many Caltech students complained about the unconventional layout. Instead of being confined to the various house courtyards like most Caltech parties, the event was spread out on a large open space

between the Mudd dorms, and it lacked the characteristic Caltech construction.

Some student complaints centered on the long lines for the buses and the music- due to the ASCIT Board of Directors underestimating Caltech interest and not correctly guessing which hours were “peak hours”, according to Chong. “Originally, we planned for two buses and a third between the peak hours,” said Chong.

The purpose of the event was not just to put on a party, but to test the idea of mixing with another school.

Many students, both Harvey Mudd and Caltech, said that “it would be nice to do in the future.” One Harvey Mudd student said that the party might not have been the best, but he was also quick to point out that “nothing went wrong.” Several of the interviewed Mudd students asked, “Will you guys put one [a party] on?”

Chong said that it is “hard to do a first thing,” and that he would “like to see something happen” that builds on this party. “I don’t know what it would be.”

Many students noticed the



Photo by Tina Ding

Teachers, Harvey Mudd students (“Mudders”), and Scripps girls dance to techno music on Harvey Mudd’s lawn.

similarities between the two schools. Spread among four of Mudd’s eight houses, the party

Houses. At the different Mudd houses students gathered around a bonfire, played water pong, and listened to the Mudd jazz band.

One Mudd student said that Caltech students “fit in well here” and said that he thought felt they were the “same kind of people.” Caltech students made similar statements.

Some said they wish there was more interschool interaction, after noticing that students

“It is hard to do a first thing... I would like to see something happen [that builds on this party]. I don’t know what it would be.”

-- Anthony Chong, ASCIT President

showed off similarities between Caltech’s Houses and Mudd’s

often congregated by school on the dance floor.



Photo by Tina Ding

Two Mudders duke it out in a swordfight during the party.

Freshman matriculation surges to 257, fears of a housing crunch Administrators say it’s not a problem

By Tina Ding
STAFF WRITER

Admissions confirmed 257 students have currently matriculated to Caltech this year, an increase of nine students from last year. Although the number is comparatively high, Caltech Housing says that it will still be able to accommodate the enrollment of the possible large class.

“The real negative aspect of a large class is sophomores getting pushed off the houses,” said Rick Bischoff, Director of Undergraduate Admissions

The Interhouse Committee (IHC) only made space for 248 students. However, according to Peter Daily, Director of Housing and Dining, housing the students should not be a problem.

“We have flexibility on the balance of the Housing properties should it be necessary – given some advance knowledge that we will need to house additional freshmen,” said Daily.

There is a discrepancy between

the matriculation number and the students that actually attend in the fall. According to Bischoff, last year’s matriculation number of 248 dropped to a final number of 236 students. Some students decided to attend other schools once they were admitted off of those other schools’ waiting lists.

The number of last minute withdrawals was higher last year than in previous years, and Bischoff believes this year’s rates will be even higher due to the slow economy. According to Bischoff, attending college is especially stressful for the typical upper middle class family, which can’t easily pay college tuition but isn’t poor enough to receive aid.

So far, administrators don’t know about Harvard and Princeton’s waitlist situation, important factors for the number of students that drop Caltech admission at the last minute. Last year, Harvard and Princeton each accepted about 200 students from their waitlists.

“Our target is 230 students, which means a target of approximately 245 current

matriculations,” said Bischoff.

“While I would put my faith in Bischoff’s idea, I believe that if the number goes above the number given to the IHC it will be a disaster,” said former IHC Chair Chris Watson. He envisions students being kicked out of their rooms or “unfairly” forced to share large singles as doubles.

The higher than targeted matriculation is surprising, according to Bischoff, because “Admissions made the exact same number of offers as last year and eliminated the merit scholarships.”

The increase in matriculation, Bischoff believes, is due to the “superior recruitment” in the last year. Admissions introduced webinars, online information chat sessions in SURF, student life, and medical school run by the representatives from each division, including alumni.

The diversity in the incoming class is also higher: 14% incoming students belong to minority groups, up from 8% last year. The percentage of women stayed steady at around 43%.

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Roast Beef, Smoked Ham, Pastrami
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- The Californian - \$7.25**
Smoked Ham, Turkey Breast, Swiss Cheese, Lettuce, Tomato, Russian Dressing on a French Roll
- New Jersey Turnpike - \$5.25**
Roast Beef, Turkey Breast, Swiss Cheese, Lettuce, Tomato, Russian Dressing on Rye bread
- Submarine Sandwich - \$7.25**
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- Californian - \$5.25**
Roast Beef, Cheddar Cheese, Lettuce, Tomato, Mayonnaise on Onion Roll
- Lumber Jack - \$6.25**
Roast Beef, Ham, Turkey Breast, Jack Cheese, Lettuce, Tomato, and Russian Dressing on a Kaiser Roll
- Reuben - \$6.75**
Corned Beef, Swiss Cheese, Sauerkraut, Russian Dressing grilled on Rye Bread

Broad has a new menu, which centers on sandwiches instead of burgers and enchiladas. The new menu was put into action last Monday.

According to Dining Director Peter Daily, the Dining employees present at the taste test of the sandwiches were excited about the new menu-- taking entire sandwiches when they were only supposed to take bites of the sandwiches to taste.

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Bring back TQFR comments- interesting and helpful

By Casey Jao

UNDERGRADUATE

There is a saying in music that the first rendition of a piece you hear becomes your definitive rendition. I fell into a similar trap with TQFR. When the new TQFR results came out, I was sorely disappointed by the lack of entertaining comments that had made the previous TQFRs interesting to read. The students' rants and raves had been supplanted by a sea of statistics, which I skimmed and put away.

A month later as I was preparing to write this piece, I took a more level-headed look. The survey questions are comprehensive and relevant. The response statistics give a detailed, concise if unspiced summary of a

professor's teaching. Many points normally covered in written critiques are highlighted in the questions. Many vague survey questions from the old TQFR have been refined. Instructors looking for targeted assessments of their performance will likely find the new TQFR valuable.

But students would find TQFR even more helpful if they could view the course comments, which are currently restricted to faculty use. The survey includes open-ended questions because no battery of questions of reasonable length can anticipate everything students have to say. Moreover, students often put more thought into their written responses than their 1-to-5 rankings.

Further, words matter more than numbers in very small classes,

when statistics don't say much. In a class of three, for example, maybe one person did really well and thoroughly enjoyed the class; another did poorly and hated the instructor's guts because of the final exam; and the third person didn't complete the survey. People's written explanations can also clarify their numerical responses.

According to a March 10th email from ASCIT VP for academic affairs Andrey Polateyev, "student comments will not automatically be published under the new framework" because Caltech no longer has the resources to screen the comments for profanity.

Since, according to Polateyev, "professors will be able to see raw comments for their classes instantly," what harm is there in

releasing the raw comments to the students? The professors would be more likely than the students to get offended since they are the subject of the comments. Maybe we should screen the comments from the professors instead.

Perhaps a more workable solution would be to find students to screen the comments each time, as was mentioned in the email. Compared to a permanent staff members, students would probably be willing to work for less. They might also accept other forms of compensation, like food.

Alternatively, one could automate the screening process. Some online discussion boards automatically mask blacklisted words. It should not be hard to also flag variations such as those

obtained by spacing the letters or inserting padding symbols. If a four-letter word manages to evade a carefully written screening routine, it probably would evade a human reader as well.

Prior to TQFR, students turned to the ASCIT Clue for frank course and instructor evaluations. This service is restricted to students; faculty are not members of ASCIT, hence cannot access the comments. As such, a lot of behind-the-back grumbling takes place on Clue with few results.

By contrast, TQFR is open to both faculty and students, so will likely make a bigger impact on the Caltech community. The surveys ought to continue. But there is no real benefit to withholding any part of the survey results from the community.

ARC Summary May 11, 2009

- The ARC is currently planning to re-release CLUE in addition to TQFR in order to provide student to student comments for course planning. If you have any suggestions for the new CLUE, please let us know.
- ARC Committee signups have been posted on the Olive Walk! Please sign up if you're interested -- see the ARC website (arc.caltech.edu) for more information on committees.

The California Tech is obligated, under the ASCIT Bylaws, to publish the minutes of the Board of Directors. The BoD minutes are published as-received and without further abridgment. For unabridged versions of the minutes, consult Laura Conwill, ASCIT Secretary.

The Editors include minutes from IHC meetings and excerpts from the ARC's meetings voluntarily as a service to the community.

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IHC Minutes for May 9, 2009: Housing issues, Paul is "extra sausage"

Weekly Meeting - Lloyd - May 5, 2009

Present: Pallavi, Tim, Max, Nick, Daryl, Benji, Robbie, Brian, David
Absent: Sly
Guests: Daniel and Kirit, Dvin

Avery spots

- Avery saved 30 spots for frosh, and deans saved 2 spots in unaffiliated for special needs Avery upperclassmen. There are usually two or three frosh assigned to Avery for special needs. David found it unfair to other Avery members because Avery didn't have a say. So, he arranged something with the deans where the deans would save two spots in Avery unaffiliated for those frosh. This is an issue because it's taking spots away off-campus spots for people in other houses, and David didn't discuss it with the IHC beforehand.
- Right now, 91 bed spaces, in the past there have been 82 bed spaces internal spaces. There are additionally 29 off-campus spots in Avery.
- Anthony and Paul showed up wearing only pizza boxes. Paul claims one is "extra sausage."

Back to Avery...

- The concern is that this is expanding Avery.
- Daryl: Why dump all special needs kids in Avery? Sounds like enlarging the house and taking away off-campus spots from other houses. These kids will essentially be Avery members living in off-campus spaces.
- Can these students rotate?
- Benji: They used to funnel people into Avery if they had special circumstances. Things are different now that

Avery is a house.

- Special circumstances kids have rotated into other houses.
- David: Unfair to Avery to save rooms for people they don't pick (and have to continue to save rooms for them as upperclassmen).
- Benji: It's important to put all kids in the space that's safest for them. And we don't have the information to make that call. And we won't have that information.
- David: These spots would only be guaranteed for frosh. They could get into the house through the internal Avery lottery in future years. David will commit to giving them an internal room Sophomore, Junior, and Senior year if need be.
- Robbie: Unaffiliated frosh year, internal lottery later years is a good compromise.
- Benji: Why not Marks or Braun?
- By picking into Avery off-campus, you become a member of Avery and can in the future participate in Avery picks.
- We'll have them live in Avery unaffiliated, and we'll look into having them rotate (but stay living in Avery). We'll look into this more, but the decision is that they get to keep those spots reserved from off-campus.

Summer rooms

- We need to set aside 200 bed spaces for summer students.
- Email Pallavi with numbers from last year.
- Not enough time between SURF and preseason to clean rooms.
- Preseason athletes are supposedly randomly put into houses, but it doesn't seem random. Fleming hasn't had preseason athletes for the last

three years.

- We should shuffle around where people who are here over the summer or are here early for school year are housed.

Prefrosh

- 256 people accepted their offer of admission.
- Expect to drop down to 241.
- We set aside 248

Frosh camp UCCs

- Guaranteed spots as UCCs for certain offices? That's how it is now.
- Benji: Having these positions doesn't automatically make someone a good UCC. They should go through the same process as everyone else.
- Some others agree.
- Daryl wants to continue to organize Study Habits at frosh camp instead of being a frosh camp UCC. It's okay with the other house presidents.

Rotation meals

- There will be 16 rotation meals, each prefrosh will go to two meals at each house.
- First rotation meal will be on Friday night around 10:15 (if we did it much later than that, some frosh might have gone to bed)
- Three rotation meals Saturday - lunch and dinner will each count as a rotation dinner, and a late-night meal will count as a lunch
- Sunday's dinner will be before sunset and Monday's dinner will slightly after sunset because of Yom Kippur.

Other things

- Everyone has second but not third term dues (of those present).
- Faculty at dinner - Presidents should make a list of faculty

who have come to house dinners, who has been invited, and who will be invited. Send it to Tom

- Hall of Justice (SAC 15) - IHC members should get their individual combo from Mike Raven.
- Rollover dinner soon
- Multihouse funding has been upped to \$200 per term per house.
- Three people met with Anneila about the Harassment policy
- Anthony, Tom, and Pallavi will meet with security about alcohol policy. They'll talk about a lot of issues that have happened.
- Tim will email IHC about interview scheduling.
- Pallavi talked to Lee Coleman about having a more serious talk at frosh camp about the counseling center and diversity center instead of Challenges and Choices. He'll think about it.
- Women's discussions have been organized or are going to be organized in all the houses. We don't know who's started it or who's organizing it.
- Andrew from Alumni Office (Alumni Fund director) wants to attend an IHC meeting. Alumni Association is funding house reunion events during alumni weekend.
- Subset of IHC interviewed a MOSH candidate today. It went well.
- If people want a desk or other furniture from CSS, there is some available.
- Tim will work on scheduling retreat.

Upcoming meetings

- Meeting with housing on Monday.
- Meeting in Page tomorrow to discuss alcohol policy. Page dinner is at 6:45.

“State of Play” engages despite its sharp title

By Hillary Walker

In defiance of its bland title, “State of Play” proves to be a smart, sharp, engaging thriller. The film, set in Washington, blends politics and journalism in a seamless way and asks hard questions of both.

When a purse-snatcher and a witness are gunned down with precision, investigative reporter Cal McAffrey (Russell Crowe) begins to ease out the details with his rough, doughy, self-assured charisma. The next morning, Sonia Baker, lead researcher for U.S. Representative Stephen Collins, dies in a subway accident. Speculation connects the death, deemed a suicide, to her romantic relationship with the married congressman. This suicide, however, soon begins to look like a murder, as Baker had been scrutinizing a private, Blackwater-esque security company that stands to gain billions of dollars in military contracts. The shootings and the subway death eventually blend into a larger crime, and McAffrey, a college friend of Stephen Collins, eagerly throws himself into this complicated web. Dewy online columnist Della Frye (Rachel McAdams) accompanies him, and the incongruous partners clash over investigative methods and mediums of publication.

The journalists face scenes that are both physically and emotionally frightening, and the film effortlessly maintains a mood of intense anxiety. Despite innumerable twists and new directions, the narrative remains quite taut. The history and motives of the characters are revealed through tiny fragments—a few illuminating sentences sprinkled here and there. In general, this subtle method strikes the ideal balance between clarity and concealment.

At times, “State of Play” pushes the bounds of plausibility, but this is a rather minor flaw in a thriller. The film’s end, however, is a larger problem. “State of Play” introduces grand topics such as the decline of newspapers and the privatization of war but unfortunately forsakes these subjects without thorough contemplation. The final vigorous twists pull the film into tangles, but these knots never seem to sum to a meaningful whole. By the closing minutes, everything feels disconnected. With abundant emotional thrills, “State of Play” is quite enjoyable, but ultimately, the work is perhaps too rich in scope to be forced into a package of two hours.

ASCIT BoD Minutes May 8, 2009

ASCIT Board of Directors Meeting – Minutes

May 8, 2009

Officers Present: Anthony Chong, Andrey Poletayev, Pallavi Gunalan, Maral Mazrooei, Nadia Iqbal, Laura Conwill

Officers Absent: Michael Maseda

Guests: Tom Mannion, Sarah Marzen, Brian Merlob

President’s Report:

• **Alumni Weekend:** Alumni Weekend will be May 14-17. There will be lots of alumni around that weekend and they will be participating in house activities and attending academic lectures.

Officer Reports:

• **V.P. of Academic Affairs (ARC Chair):** The ARC met with Melany this week, and they decided to go ahead with improving CLUE and make it the primary feedback website. About 30 faculty

members have been recruited to be frosh advisors for next year.

• **V.P. of Nonacademic Affairs (IHC Chair):** The IHC is trying to organize more interviews for appointments. Two of the new RAs have been appointed; the other two will be appointed within the next week. Page had a productive meeting with the deans and the IHC on Wednesday regarding the alcohol policy.

• **Operations Director:** Mike has been emailing Tom to set

up a meeting regarding the Big T. Mike emailed the grad student in charge of the bike shop who said that keys to the shop are available, and that every other weekend he has an open shop, a better option for many students. Mike is meeting with Dvin and Josh tonight to talk about dividing the work on the donut website between DevTeam and the donut team, and he will subsequently meet with the donut team.

• **Treasurer:** Maral has been working on finishing things up with last year’s budget, including DevTeam and some clubs.

• **Social Director:** The jazz band for ASCIT Formal is Lounge-o-rama. The HMC party is tonight and the ASCIT movie is tomorrow!

Other:

• **Tom Mannion:** Tom Mannion said the Beckman Institute is a very versatile party location. Several years ago, it was used for a Young Presidents’ Organization event. ASCIT should have no trouble holding ASCIT Formal at Beckman.

Submitted by Laura Conwill
ASCIT Secretary

Caltech Personal Account Statements will be available on line only beginning in July.

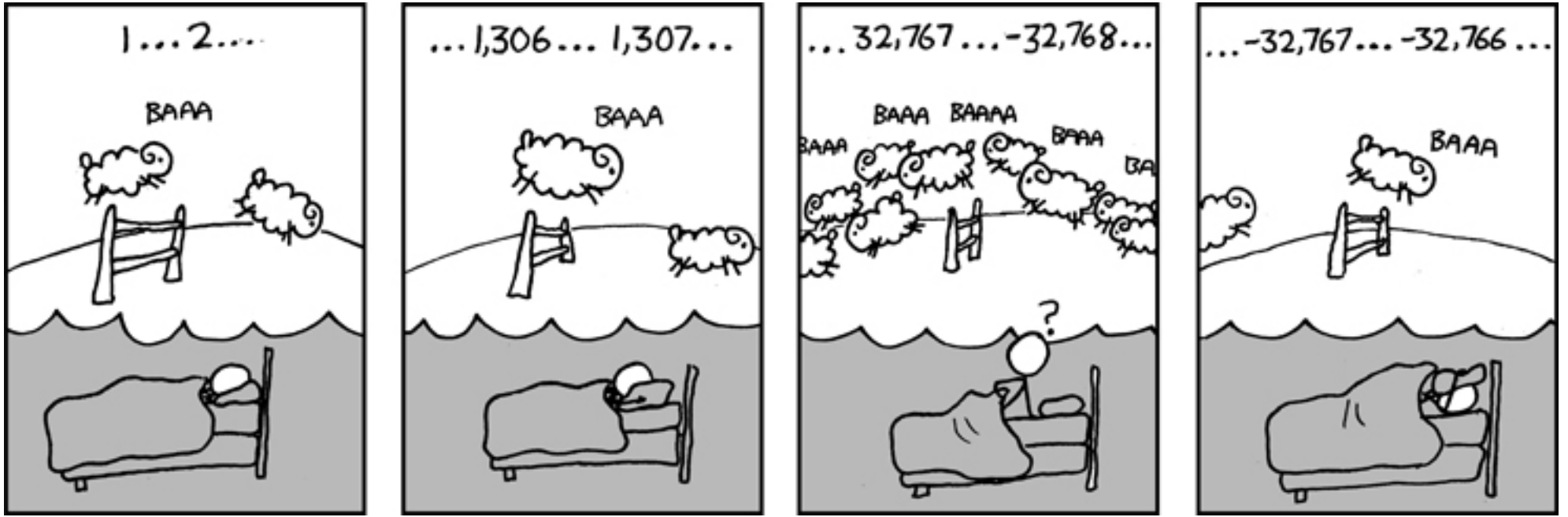
If others should view and/or pay your bill, please go online to access. caltech, then select CASHNet and set up a user name and password for them. All previous payment methods including checks will still be accepted.

Thank you in advance for supporting our effort to economize and go green!

The Bursar’s Office

Comics

XKCD by Randall Munroe



twitter

REALTIME RESULTS FOR SWINE FLU 0.05
1,918 MORE RESULTS SINCE YOU STARTED SEARCHING. [REFRESH TO SEE.](#)

- SKEEVE37:** OH GOD I ATE PORK YESTERDAY BEFORE I KNEW ABOUT SWINE FLU!
LESS THAN 10 SECONDS AGO FROM WEB • [REPLY](#) • [VIEW TWEET](#)
- HANNELOREEC:** WITHOUT DUCT TAPE I CAN'T SEAL THE DOOR TO KEEP OUT SWINE FLU BUT I CAN'T GET DUCT TAPE WITHOUT GOING OUTSIDE! HELP!
LESS THAN 10 SECONDS AGO FROM WEB • [REPLY](#) • [VIEW TWEET](#)
- PAULYSHOREFAN:** HOW LONG UNTIL THE SWINE FLU REACHES ME HERE IN MADAGASCAR?
LESS THAN 10 SECONDS AGO FROM WEB • [REPLY](#) • [VIEW TWEET](#)
- CRACKMONKEY74:** SWINE FLU IS GOD'S PUNISHMENT FOR THE ACLU AND LESBIANS AND 9/11 AND NANOBOTS!
LESS THAN 10 SECONDS AGO FROM WEB • [REPLY](#) • [VIEW TWEET](#)
- TWILIGHT7531:** I FELL DOWN THE STAIRS AND THERE WAS A CRACK AND A JAGGED WHITE THING IS STICKING OUT OF MY ARM GUYS IS THIS SWINE FLU?
LESS THAN 10 SECONDS AGO FROM TWITTERIFIC • [REPLY](#) • [VIEW TWEET](#)
- WIGU:** @UNTOWARD NO, THAT SOUNDS LIKE SYPHILIS, NOT SWINE FLU. WHAT DID YOU SAY YOU DID WITH A PIG?
LESS THAN 10 SECONDS AGO FROM TWEETDECK • [REPLY](#) • [VIEW TWEET](#)
- 2011 SENIORS RULE:** MY DAD SAID FLU VACCINES ARE LINKED TO AUTISM, SO TO BE SAFE FROM SWINE FLU I'M TRYING TO LICK AN AUTISTIC KID.
LESS THAN 10 SECONDS AGO FROM WEB • [REPLY](#) • [VIEW TWEET](#)

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