

# The STING

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## Alcohol Awareness Day

By Willis Smith

On March 7th, Alcohol Awareness Day Alcohol Awareness Day events were held between the dorm halls as a reminder to students before spring break.

Mother Against Drunken Driving (MADD) helped organize the event and provided the graphic pictures and information for the victim remembrance board with the purpose of reminding students the fatal effects of drunk driving. Safer Auto National Enlistment (SANE) had papers for students to sign a promise that they would drink responsibly and never drink and drive during spring break. WGHR 100.7FM and TKE also helped make this event enjoyable with music and refreshment.

The SPSU police department showed pie charts to explain the problems of underage alcohol violation. The SPSU police department stated that most of the citations given last year were for alcohol violation for students between the ages of 18 and 20 years old in the student dormintories between midnight and six in the morning during the weekend. When asked why so many citations were

given in the dormitories on weekends instead of in parking lots, he replied that beer and alcohol is prohibited in the dorm halls, no matter what age the students are.

The Marietta police department and fire department recreated a drunk driving car accident scene. Four people volunteered to play the

victims, complete with fake blood (cough syrup). Students watched as a fire engine came to the rescue. The fire officers used axes and worked around the damaged cars to get to the injured passengers. The fire officers wore gloves for the accident as if it were still a crime scene. They used the Jaw of Life to drag out the

victims. Once they were able to break open the doors, they immediately worked at getting the passengers out. After the victims were freed from the cars, ambulances escorted them away on on back supports.

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Firefighters Reenacting Accident Resulting From Alcohol

## Spring at SPSU

By Zachary Jones

In the northern half of the world, spring arrived on March 20th this year. The trees of campus were in bloom. Birds were heard chirping between the dorms (though dorm dwellers would swear that those birds always chirp, even at 2am in the morning). Pollen even was seen beginning to stick to cars. Students displayed an overall positive attitude toward the arrival of spring, though some expressed concern.

A few groups of students

wasted no time in taking advantage of the warm weather to participate in outdoor sport activities. On March 20, students were seen playing frisbee between the dorms, as well as playing basketball and volleyball in the Campus Commons. Some students even remained playing at 11pm in the cool night air with the aid of the lights between the dorms.

Other students broke in spring by studying outside. Students were seen sitting

outside studying in the grassy area near the Center for Instructional Technology, on the grass outside the Student Center, and between the dorms. Sitting on the grassy hill near the Architecture building, a few Architecture students were seen with unfinished plans in hand.

"Spring is my favorite time at SPSU. It is nice to see more people getting outside," said one Computer Science student sitting outside of the J building.

Though many welcomed spring, some dorm dwellers complained of the heat in the dorms. Said one Norton dweller, "A lot of people have gone outside or opened their windows because of the heat in here." Other students remembered the heat of last summer and expressed concern for heat in the dorm hallways now that the hallway doors are not allowed to be propped open due to unauthorized entrants.

## Alcohol Awareness Day *Continued...*

Next, the Marietta police officer questioned the student driver and made him walk a straight-line, one foot in front of the other. The college student passenger had a bleeding gash on his leg and was led to the ambulance. Next, the officer administered an alcohol breath analysis, handcuffed the driver, and led him to the police car. While the handcuffed student was escorted into the police car, the last ambulance drove away. The police officer explained that in the actual car accident this reenactment was based on, the college student driver was first charged with Drinking Under the Influence (DUI) and later with Vehicular Homicide after the passengers of the second car died in the hospital shortly after the accident.

The officer advised that the best way to avoid getting into a drunk driver car accident is to be always aware of your surroundings when driving. "If you notice a car moving erratically or driving nearly off the side of the road, chances are there is a drunken driver behind the wheel," he stated. "If you see such a car, drive slowly and avoid driving close to that particular car."

To finish the event, a speaker from MADD talked about the dangers of drunk driving and stated that "many people become victims of drunk driving accidents through no fault of their own." She cautioned all in attendance to drink responsibly and to have designated drivers.

## National Rankings Released for SPSU

By Zachary Jones

In February, 2002, President Lisa Rossbacher released the following rankings for SPSU. SPSU ranked high for various reasons, especially its engineering degrees and culturally diverse student body.

Within the University System of Georgia, Southern Polytechnic State University ranks: #2 in retention of first-time freshmen HOPE scholarship recipients (Fall 2000 to Fall 2001) #3 in SAT scores for entering freshmen (Fall 2001)

In "Engineering & Technology Degrees 2001," published by the Engineering Workforce Commission, SPSU ranks: #3 in the nation in number of Bachelor of Science degrees awarded in Engineering Technology

In national and international competition by student teams, SPSU ranks: #2 in the 2001 International Aerial Robotics Competition (with a special award for best design innovation) #2 (2000) and #6 (2001) in the National Student Steel Bridge Competition, sponsored by the American

Institute of Steel Construction and the American Society of Civil Engineers #4 in the Supermileage Car Team in the National Society of Automotive Engineers Supermileage Competition, with 472 miles per gallon (received "best design" award for the second consecutive year)

In Black Issues in Higher Education (June 7, 2001), SPSU was nationally ranked (for 1999-2000): #2 in African-American women earning baccalaureate degrees in engineering-related technologies #4 in minority women earning baccalaureate degrees in engineering-related technologies #6 in African-Americans earning baccalaureate degrees in engineering-related technologies #9 in total minority students earning baccalaureate degrees in engineering-related technologies #20 in Asian Americans earning baccalaureate degrees in engineering-related technologies

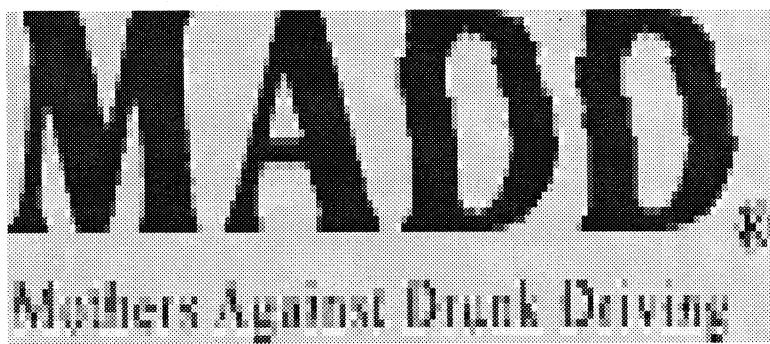
In Black Issues in Higher

Education (July 19, 2001), SPSU was nationally ranked (for 1999-2000):

#3 in Hispanics earning master's degrees in engineering-related technologies #5 in total minorities earning master's degrees in engineering-related technologies #5 in African Americans earning master's degrees in engineering-related technologies #11 in Asian-American women earning master's degrees in computer and information science #17 in minority women earning master's degrees in computer and information science

In The Chronicle of Higher Education (November 16, 2001), SPSU was nationally ranked: #10 in colleges with largest numbers of foreign students (2000-01), among "top professional or specialized institutions"

In the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics, SPSU is nationally ranked: #4 in men's basketball (Division I)



## Students Meet to Discuss Relationships

By Willis Smith and Zachary Jones

On February 13th, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority of Southern Polytechnic State University presented "He Said, She Said", a love and relationship seminar in the Student Center Theater.

The first guest was Michael Brown, Founder and President of BlackSingles.Com, a web site, matchmaking singles to meet and date. The only female guest was Lee Sullivan of the book All Men Are Dogs. Her book contained poems and short stories of the women's perspectives on relationships. Also on the panel was Rodney Mallory, author of Momma's Boy. His book, now in its third printing, argues that men could learn a lot about dealing with relationships based on tips from the most unlikely source: their mothers. Curtis Bunn, writer of Baggage Check, was the final guest of

the panel. Baggage Check, the best-selling novel is about three life-long friends, men in their thirties, who have true commitments to each other but come up short when dealing with women. They all can't commit to women because they have their own emotional baggage.

The seminar took place as a question-and-answer session between the audience and the panel, as follows.

Audience: What compels a person to date?

BlackSingles: "It's all about having options. . . what to find equal; standing. I started the business for people wanting to hook up. Based on last year's input, people that have 'hooked up,' all started as fun, there is a spark, and then they take it to the next level. It's a great success.

Audience: Why are men put off by some women?

Baggage Check: Women are stronger in their

positions. Men are insecure by that. Women's role was to support the men but that has changed.

All Men: We women can buy houses by ourselves. People get confused because we women don't need men for financial security. We have our degrees, we are financially secured.

Momma's Boy: Men are not really secured around strong women and they are scared off by them.

All Men: From the man's point of view, they are tired of being considered as a paycheck and security. Times have changed; relationships have changed.

Audience: Unless we break the cycle of carrying baggage, the cycle will continue.

Momma's Boy: It is important for mothers to teach us to communicate our emotions. If you think it is okay to cry, you're closer to

breaking the cycle of carrying your emotional baggage into relationships.

BlackSingles: I agree. Have a clean start. A clean slate for men and women allows them to be closer in relationships.

Emotional Baggage: The number one issue is trust. Make the trust issue strong.

Audience: Why do women get more emotional? Women consider friends as people to hang out with, go shopping with, while men will sleep with their friends.

Baggage: It's about communication, the need to communicate.

All Men: Women will love first before having sex while men will have sex before loving. When we have sex, it is more than sex. We are giving something of ourselves to you.

Audience: I become friends with many girls and later on before I ask them out,

they've found boyfriends or see me too much as a friend. What should I do next time I become a friend with someone I really like?

Baggage Check: So date first. (laughter)

Momma's Boy: Many girls didn't want to date me. They wanted bad boys and wouldn't talk to me.

BlackSingles: Keep going; keep being friends with them. It may grow into a relationship later on.

For their final words, the panel commented the following:

All Men: True intimacy needs no sex.

Momma's Boy: Be honest.

Baggage Check: I hope this is the beginning of many seminars here. The more we talk the more we become aware of each other and their perspectives.

# Casino Night Makes Gambling Painless

By Rich Merritt

On March 6th, in the Student Center at 7:00 students united for the annual CAB Casino Night. Students took their chances at various gambling tables to have a chance at winning prizes.

Tables with Blackjack, Roulette, Craps, a Wheel of Fortune, and Slot Machines stayed occupied throughout the night, with students waiting at nearly all tables. Though some complained of "bad luck," most students said that they enjoyed the event. One student said she especially liked "the thrill of it all, even though it wasn't real money."

Prizes this year included a television, a DVD player, a sound system, a telephone, various CDs, and gift certificates.



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**Joining The STING:** Any student paying activity fees is eligible to join The STING. We prefer creative students that love to write!

**Deadline:** Next Online Deadline: April 12th. Next Print Deadline: April 26th.



## A Letter from SGA

Submitted by SGA

Fellow Students,

On behalf of President-elect Ware, Secretary / Treasurer-Elect Hammond, the-2002-2003 Legislative Council elect and myself, we like to show our appreciation to the school for electing us.

We like to extend our deep gratitude to the whole school for electing us in office to serve you; our fellow students. Your time, decision and support are highly appreciated and we will try our best to serve you all.

As we move forward into the transition period we hope to work with everybody in setting our agenda for the next school year. We plead with all our fellow students to let us all look for common ground on our issues and compromise on issues in which we disagree, all working and aiming to

make the school life better and students' right enforced. This is not supposed to be easy and no one said it will be, but if we all have the same goals in our minds getting the end product will be easily achieved.

One more time thanks for electing us and remember we are all here to serve the student body.

Thanks

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## Helfer's Hecklers

By Dave Bachtel

If you made it to an SPSU basketball game this year, you've probably noticed a section of fans who seemed to cheer louder, longer, and harder than any others. Their antics entertained us, their taunts made us laugh, and they wore sombreros and dance around to distract the free throw shooters on the other team. They are Helfer's Hecklers.

The group is composed of fraternities, SPSU alumni, and SPSU fans, and they appear at every game possible. The group became official when SPSU basketball head coach Mike Helfer had shirts made, as a way to say thanks to the group of loyal fans.

"To be the man, you gotta beat the man", says Roy Sanders, Heckler's regular.

One of the unique strategies that the Hecklers have adopted is the use of the game's program to taunt the other players using their first names. If a certain name better suits an opposing player than what is listed in the game program, the Hecklers quickly adapt. According to Alex Hilliard, "Southern Poly wins games because the other team has players like Opi, Wolfman, Doogie, and of course, Carlton." Another benefit of the Heckler's antics is that they generate more interest in fraternities and help to break the stereo-types that most Greek organizations deal with on a daily basis. "TeKEs raise hell!" says J.D. of Tau Kappa Epsilon.

When asked what he thought of being a Heckler,

ex-mascot and alumnist Scott Sawyer responded, "Its great, but Southern Tech doesn't promote their own activities enough." He makes a good point. How often are games promoted on WGHR or any other of the school's media outlets? Our newspaper, too has been slacking when it comes to the coverage of sports here at SPSU. According to Scott, a few years ago there were ACTUALLY CHEERLEADERS at basketball games.

If you didn't make it to a game this year, there is no doubt that you missed out on good basketball, some good laughs, and a good time. So don't make the same mistake next year! Show your support and show up!

## WGHR Spring Semester Schedule

By Amy Jalutkewicz

WGHR welcomes nine new DJs this semester. They are playing a variety of music, ranging from Reggae to Trip-Hop. Our newest DJs at WGHR this semester are:

- \* Beau Ray
- \* David Knowles
- \* Deadrian Troupe
- \* Diana Farah
- \* Kemar Morris
- \* Lando Burton
- \* Michael Hipps
- \* Miranda Bennett
- \* Nykia Ashmeade

We also offer our spring semester schedule for SPSU's listening pleasure. You can hear us on 100.7 FM or on the web at <http://wghr.spsu.edu>. Be sure to tune into anytime. If one of our DJs is not on, the automation system will be running to

provide you with some tunes!

### WGHR Show Schedule

#### Sunday's:

10:00 am-12:00 pm - Downplay w/ DJ Rob  
6:00 pm- 8:00 pm - Sunday Night Punk Rock w/ Travis Hudson  
8:00 pm-10:00 pm - At Least It's Not Pop Music w/ David Knowles  
10:00 pm-12:00 am - Stuff With Nate w/ Nate

#### Monday's:

10:00 am-12:00 pm - Miranda in the Morning w/ Miranda Bennett  
1:00 pm- 3:00 pm - Diana's Show w/ Diana Farah  
3:00 pm- 5:00 pm - Alternative Memories w/ Justin & Muffy  
6:00 pm- 8:00 pm - Dub

Sessions w/ K. Love  
8:00 pm-10:00 pm - GL w/ BigDan  
10:00 pm-12:00 am - Crate Unknown w/ Clifton Andrews

#### Tuesday's:

1:00 pm- 3:00 pm - SoPo Hardcore Show w/ John Mills  
6:00 pm- 8:00 pm - DeMarius & Craig Show w/ DeMarius Bell & Craig Gresham  
8:00 pm-10:00 pm - Electronic Playground w/ Toto & Cossix  
10:00 pm-12:00 am - Canadian Time 2K2 w/ Sidman

#### Wednesday's:

12:00 am- 1:00 am - Deneiro w/ Lando Burton  
6:00 pm- 8:00 pm - This Spot Taken w/ Plebe  
8:00 pm-10:00 pm - On The

Real w/ Meoshi Slater & Kemar Morris  
10:00 pm-12:00 am - Two Toed Sloths and a Zygote w/ James Brown from Downtown & the random FOB and the singing big one

#### Thursday's:

1:00 pm- 3:00 pm - Willy's Show w/ William Norris  
3:00 pm- 4:00 pm - De Remate w/ Zach Jones  
4:00 pm- 6:00 pm - Professor Guy w/ The Professor Guy  
8:00 pm-10:00 pm - Comfort Zone w/ Caramel Delight  
10:00 pm-12:00 am - Rich Rock w/ Rich Merritt

#### Friday's:

1:00 pm- 3:00 pm - The Hazard Zone w/ Big Just & Bobby Stevens

3:00 pm- 5:00 pm - The Obsession Connection w/ DJ Jabber  
5:00 pm- 7:00 pm - Phiya w/ Kemar Morris  
8:00 pm-10:00 pm - Mike's Show w/ Michael Hipps  
10:00 pm-12:00 am - The Groove Spot w/ Disfunct Rock Superstar

#### Saturday's:

2:00 pm- 4:00 pm - The Show w/ Cain  
6:00 pm- 8:00 pm - Trippin and Hoppin with Nyk w/ Sick Nyk  
8:00 pm-10:00 pm - The Funk Jazz Colabo w/ Dea' Dren

## SPSU Returns from GACC Tournament, Heads Held High

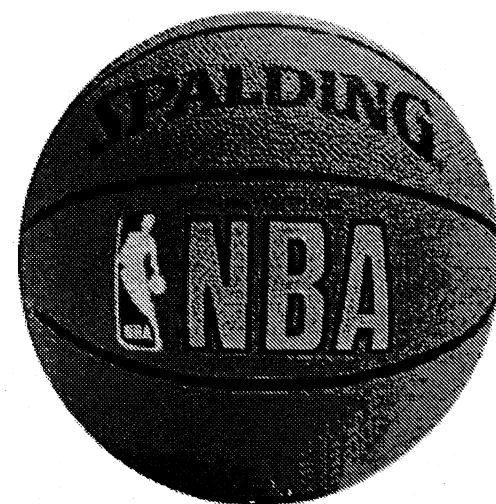
By Dave Bachtel

After a great regular season, the Runnin Hornets were knocked out of the GACC tournament in the first round by Auburn-Montgomery, who would in turn loose to Faulkner in the Championship game. The loss at the tournament does little to affect

the fact that SPSU's outstanding regular season record of 25W-4L was good enough to leave them with a 7th place national ranking after the last Rating (Feb 26), which qualifies them for one of fourteen At-Large bids for the NAIA tournament. There are 32

bids available, and with 18 awarded to conference regular season champs and tournament champs, 14 are left for the top fourteen ranked schools, of which Southern Polytechnic is one. This bid will allow SPSU to participate in the tournament held in

Olathe, KS during March 13-19. By the time this article gets back from press, the results of the NAIA tournament will already be known. Good luck in Kansas, SPSU.



# April Campus Events

By Willis Smith

An all-American family musical *The Music Man* will be playing at the Fox Theater on Thursday April 11 at 8 pm. *The Music Man* is the story of traveling salesman, Harold Hill and his visit to a small Iowa town in 1912. With his fast-talking style, "Professor" Harold Hill convinces the town that unless they adopt his revolutionary music program, "The Think System"; the morale of the children will be forever ruined. He tricks the parents into purchasing expensive uniforms and instruments in order to form the River City Boys Band. While carrying out stages of his scam, he meets and falls in love with Marian Paroo, the willful and spinster town librarian. When Hill's credentials are questioned, chaos explodes and he is forced to prove to the River City citizens his music program does work. Scores of classic hit songs include "Til There

was You", "Gary, Indiana" and "Seventy-six Trombones." Student tickets \$12 on sale at the Student Center Information Desk 4/2 and if tickets remain on 4/8, \$20 for faculty/staff.

Saturday April 6th, WRFG 89.3 GM community radio will host the 26th Annual Peachblossom Festival. This annual WRFG community radio fundraiser will be held in the SPSU Gym. Many local and regional bluegrass groups will play their heart out. Among the musicians will be Dave Evans, one of the greatest traditional blues who will play twice in the afternoon and evening with his band, River Bend. Jim Hurst, IBMA Guitar Player of the Year, will play only one set in the afternoon. Students can pay \$6 for eleven hours of music and entertainment from 11 am to 10 pm.

April 6th, The Tau Alpha Pi Honor Society will host a banquet in the Student Center Ballroom at 6 pm. Meanwhile across the hall at the same time in the Wilson Theater, the Phi Beta Sigma, Fraternity Inc, will hold their Step Show.

April 9th attend another International Forum Lecture Series in the Student Center Ballroom, as this year's topic is American Security and Terrorism in the 21 Century. At noon, a speaker will talk about the topic "Nuclear Weapons in the 21st Century." He will speak about nuclear weapons and the danger terrorists can threat American security with stolen devices.

April 10th, Wednesday, Dr. Kenneth Rainey, SPSU 2000-2001 Teacher of the year, will give a presentation in the Student Center in the Ballroom at noon.

His presentation, "The

Learning Machine: Distance Education and Our Students" will cover the nature of distance education and its students. Key issues concerning students, instructors and institutions on distance education will be addressed. Lunch will be served. If you want to attend an Unviersity Roundtable, you must RSVP your name and email address at the Student Center Information Desk no early than April 1 and no later than April 8th does.

April 13th, come see what talents unlikely students may posses for the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc are presenting the talent show at the Student Center Theater at 11 am. Later in the evening, the Zeta Phi Deta Sorority will host a pajama party at the Student Gymnasium, starting at 7pm and lasting all night long. What a night to show off what you normally sleep in

at bedtime.

April 16th, if you even want to be a star, now you can with CAB's help. CAB is sponsoring "Make Your Own Video" event in the Student Center Lobby. Starting at 11:30 am, you can sing your heart out, show off your talent for that brief moment of college game and get the tape to prove it.

April 17th, the bright, the dedicated, the few students will be honored today. The Dean of Student Office will host the Student Award Ceremony at noon in the Student Center Ballroom. On the same day, same room, six hours later, the Student Government Association will remember Women's Appreciation Day by honoring women.

## Third Annual Ladies and Gentlemen's Auction

By Meg Mbugua

The third annual ladies and gentlemen's auction was a relaxing, entertaining and spectacular evening. The ballroom looked like a scene out of a fancy ball party. The room was filled with balloons drifting towards the ceiling, soft music playing in the background and the tables were laid with beautiful white tablecloths. There were wineglasses filled with sparkling cider and a small menu of drinks and some delicacies was also provided.

The stage had a canopy at the center that was filled with flowers and ribbons, and curtains on either side of it. The people to be auctioned came on the stage one by one, striding to the beats of the music that played as they walked down. They first walked down one side, then the next, and finally down into the audience and out of the room.

As they were walking the auctioneer would give the crowd a few words as to why we should buy the person.

The auctioning started off at five dollars and then in increments of one dollar. After a few people were auctioned for a considerable amount of money, the auctioneer took a break and gave out some raffle prizes. This was a plus for the audience, who were expecting to give and not receive! A Rolodex organizer and a custom-fit bowling ball were just but a few of the prizes that were given away.

After that, more people strutted their stuff and not only did they walk down the isle like they were kings and queens, but a few of them ventured so far as to perform for the crowd. One of the guys decided to do a little something for the ladies and lip-synched to a slow jam, stepping amongst the crowd and singing for the ladies. The desired effect was realized and all were pleased. Others decided to please us with some slow dancing, twisting and moving their bodies in tune with the songs that were being played.

The most noticeable, elegant performance was by Ovin Parris, AKA the Ladies Man. He had a table and two chairs on stage and the DJ played some slow music. He then walked over to one of the ladies and invited her onto the stage with him. He clapped his hands and in a flash someone dressed as a waiter came with two glasses and a bottle of wine. He really was a ladies man, as proved by the amount of money he was auctioned for. He was the highest bought male, and sold for 120 dollars. The highest auctioned lady was Ronda Wright AKA Peach with a Smile, who was bought for 70 dollars. Various items were also auctioned, including a two-night stay at the Marriott Residence Inn. A custom fit bowling ball and a VCR were also auctioned.

Afterwards, the people who were bought got to meet their buyers and had the opportunity to know them while enjoying a few refreshments together. All in all, the event was a success and over

## Sixth Annual Chili Cookoff

By Willis Smith

People are selecting bowls and the waiters are placing water glasses on tables as eaters quickly grab them to quench the burning sensations in their mouths for it is the Sixth Tony Tilman's Chili Cook-off competition. The Tony Tilman's Cook-off is an annual event where SPSU faculty and staff get together to show off their chili cooking skills. People can pay \$3 dollars for five chili samples bowls. Then I had to make a choice of which five chili samples should I taste out of over twenty different chili pots. Some chili names'

1100 dollars was raised for pre-natal care in Cobb and Douglas counties.

This auspicious and glamorous event had especially Ebony McCants to thank, who coordinated the whole event. Many thanks also went to the Captivating Chi Pi Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.

origins come from current events like "The Enron Shredder" or from culture like Pat's Pot of Gold after Saint Patrick's Day or Chief Wiggum's Guatemalan Insanity Chili from the Simpsons television series. Some chili were vegetarian like EZ Vege Chili and Life Grocery Café Chili.

The Tony Tilman Cook-Off annual event is in honor of Tony Tilman who was the dean of College of Technology. Tony Tilman and his secretary, Ann Hough, helped make the first chili cook-off event a huge success that they made it an annual event for the SPSU community. Tony Tilman continued to be involved in the chili cook-off contest for five years, three in which he won 1st place. The contest was originally untitled and known only as a chili cook-off but the college community named the contest in Tony Tilman's namesake in honor of his memory after his death a few years ago.

CONTINUED ON PG. 6

## Third Annual Chili Cook-Off *Continued...*

First place chili winner was the Desperado Stew made by Randy Dowis (Facilities Grounds) who got a \$20 gift certificate for Chili's Bar & Grill and the token piñata. It is traditional for the 1st place winner to hang it in his or her office throughout the year and then hand it over the next year's grand winner.

The second prize was a \$25 Barnes & Nobles gift certificate supplied by SPSU Bookstore which the lucky winner was Terry Trip (Extended University) with Little Brother's Chili. A chili pepper iron skillet with chili pepper mitts was the prize for third place winner William Ketchum of Internal Auditing with his South of the Border chili. Laura Wallace of Human Resources won chili pepper oven mitts and an honorable mention with her Vesuvius' Vixens chili.

If you have the appetite, take a chance and eat chili at one of the four places that helped sponsored the chili cook-off event: Chili's Bar & Grill, Last Detail Catering Company, ABL Management Food Service and Life Grocery Café. By the time I sat down to eat the chili lunch, I was already running late for my next class so I poured all five chili samples into one large container. All five hot chili mixed together, I wonder if the judges could eat five different hot chili samples together. I can't wait for next year's cook-off.

## Jump, Little Children

With Exclusive Interview with Matt Bivins

By Zachary Jones and Betsy Anderson

On March 29th, the guys from Jump, Little Children (J,LC) once again made an impression here in Atlanta, and around the nation. Besides selling out the Atlanta show at the Variety Playhouse, J,LC performed on the set of TalkBack Live of Headline News for a nationally televised Final Four preview show.

Though the band still lacks extensive radio play here on Atlanta radio, large crowds packed the Variety Playhouse in Little Five to capacity. Fans were in for a special treat as Mike Bellar, guest pianist, played alongside the band to add a slightly more jazzy feel to many J,LC classics and new songs alike. Moreover, in a special encore the band unplugged their instruments to give the crowd a completely acoustic performance of "Where She Lies" that inspired Jonathan Gray, bassist, to declare

Atlanta "the best crowd ever!" for the crowd's complete hush during the song followed by immediate roaring cheer at the song's conclusion. Furthermore, the crowd was not disappointed as the band gave an extremely rare cover of Metallica's "Enter Sandman" leading directly into J,LC's own "My Guitar" to finish the show.

Currently, the band is touring in support of their new album, Vertigo. Dropped by its previous label, Breaking Records, a subsidiary of Atlantic Records, the band released Vertigo independently on their own label, EZ Chief Records. Moreover, the band re-released two previous albums "Buzz" and "Licorice Tea Demos" on the new label. In the Fall, the band will go into the studio again to release a new album with internet-released hits such as "Ordinary Girl", "Broken", and

"Darkest Love". Furthermore, currently in production stages, J,LC is working on a new live DVD filmed on March 30th in Charleston, South Carolina.

For more information, check out J,LC's official site at [www.jumplittlechildren.com](http://www.jumplittlechildren.com) or the ever-popular fan-site [www.seven-days.org](http://www.seven-days.org)

Matt Bivins, multi-instrumentalist, took time out to speak with The STING while on the road.

Sting: What did/do you hope to accomplish with Vertigo?  
Matt Bivins: It's been an ever-changing thing. The first thing we wanted to accomplish was to actually put the album out. I think Vertigo is a good example of a slice of time in our history. We're very glad it saw the light of day and very proud of it. I think it's time to move on to the next album.

CONTINUED ON PG. 7

## Book Review: The Wheel of Time

By Joshua Shannon

Last year, I reviewed Robert Jordan's *The Wheel of Time*. However, looking back I realized that I did not give the series a fair review; I listed only the strong points, and not the weak points. Because of that, I apologize to the readers and hope that this review will be both a better and fairer review.

*The Wheel of Time* is about the struggles of Rand al'Thor, Perrin Aybarra, Mat Cauthon, Egwene al'Vere, Elayne Trakand, Nynaeve al'Meara, al'Lan Mandragoron, Min Farshaw, Aviendha, and Moiraine Damodred. The series starts with *The Eye of the World*, and the latest published is *Winter's Heart*, with *Crossroads of Twilight* being published this fall. Over all, each book in the series is fairly well written, with every ending leaving the reader eagerly awaiting the next book.

One of my favorite things about this series is that there is a constant theme of balance in the books. For example, saidin (the male half of the One Power) balances saidar (the female half of the One



Power), and both of those as a whole are balanced by the True Power, wielded by selected followers of the Dark One. Other examples of balance include the Dragon's Fang balancing the Flame of Tar Valon (together, they look

like the yin-yang symbol), Perrin's carefulness balanced by Mat's recklessness, and, without spoiling the story too much, the way Min, Elayne, and Aviendha all balance each other.

One major criticism of the series is that new readers must start with *The Eye of the World* if they want to have any clue about what is happening in the rest of the series. Every book is connected with every other book, which can make it a daunting task for slow readers to get through the whole series (so far, about thirty-six hundred pages have been written just in the main story alone, not to mention the short story by Jordan that gives a little back story for Moiraine and Lan, and a supplemental guide released a few years ago). Another criticism is that the series starts to slow down. While many readers disagree with where and when it starts, everyone of those readers will agree that it does happen. I have found that the books slow down in *A Crown of Swords* and *The Path of Daggers* (numbers seven and eight), but I also found that in *Winter's Heart* (number nine), it starts to pick back up. However, others will argue that the slowdown occurs as early as *The Fires of Heaven* (number five), and continues on through *Winter's*

*Heart*. The last major criticism that many people have is that it can seem as if Jordan is just dragging out the series to make more money. While I think that the reason it is taking so long with the series is that Jordan has so much to tell, I can definitely see where this criticism is coming from.

Overall, this series is one of the best I have read. Since January of 2001, I have read the series ten times and am working on my eleventh time. The only other series that I have enjoyed as much is JRR Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, which some consider to be the masterpiece of the Fantasy genre. Even though I do have a few criticisms of the series, I highly recommend it because no other series has involved me with the characters as much as this one has, and few have been as well written as this one. Any fantasy fan will miss out if he does not at least try to start the series.

# Jump, Little Children *Continued...*

S: When do you think that will be coming out? I know you have some new stuff that I've heard, Ordinary Girl, Broken, Darkest Love.

MB: Next spring. We'll be recording it in this winter, this fall actually.

S: Do you have a personal favorite song on Vertigo?

MB: Words of Wisdom.

S: When you took Vertigo to radio stations, what have been their general attitudes towards it? Are there any specific types of stations that have been more receptive to it?

MB: It's been a little frustrating as far as that goes. Well, radio has been pretty cool towards Vertigo for some reason. I actually thought originally that the album wasn't going to be radio-friendly at all. And too, there ending up being a few songs on it that I thought would find a home next to Coldplay or Radiohead. The stations that don't care so much whether you're signed, the stations that are willing to take some risks on a band that might be

independent, those are the stations that have been playing us. A great station in Nashville called Lightning 100, they play us, and a few other around the country have been really good to us.

S: I've heard you on college stations and internet radio, as well.

MB: I was going to mention that, too. Definitely college stations, we've visited a few of those too. The internet radio thing, I've always been excited about. It seems like it's becoming much more of a reality now. A lot of internet radios have been playing the album a lot. Radio Paradise is one that I know off the top of my head that has been playing the album a lot, so it's exciting.

S: Who are your musical influences as a band?

MB: We each have different musical influences. I know that Jay, who wrote most of the songs on Vertigo, was listening to a lot of Jeff Buckley, Rufus Wainwright, and Radiohead, of course. I think you hear a lot of that if

Vertigo. Someone described the album as Jeff Buckley meets Squeeze. <laughter> I don't think any of us have ever really listened to Squeeze. I'm sure they're good. <laughter> We used to be in an Irish band, so we played a lot of Irish music. Some of us listened to a lot of punk rock. There was an REM phase.

S: I know most of you trained at the same performance arts school. Are you still involved in the activities there? Do you feel an obligation to the place that had a lot of influence on you as a band?

MB: It's definitely the place that shaped us the most, as a band. We're in the process of starting a scholarship fund at the school for certain North Carolina students that can't necessarily afford to go. We try to give back to the School of the Arts because, even though we didn't all stay to get our degrees, it meant a lot to us. It's a wonderful place.

S: It seems like most of you have side-projects, other bands, music lessons, assisting

other musicians. How do you think this affects the band as a whole?

MB: It definitely brings in more influences. I think in Jay's case, writing songs for Rosebud solidified what the Jump, Little Children sound would be. For a while I think that songs that could have been, should have been Rosebud songs were Jump, Little Children songs, so they didn't fit as well. I think having that to have an outlet for certain songs that he wants to write is really good. For me, playing Irish music in New York City and teaching lessons forces me to be a better musician in a lot of ways. Playing Irish tunes is much harder in a lot of ways, so practicing more and the experience is really good. I think playing with other people reminds us how much fun we have playing together. We can bring the influences and experiences from side projects back to the band, but this is definitely what we want to do. When we came together as five people with a lot of different influences, I think it's

been a slow but fun process to come to a point where we feel like we have a Jump, Little Children sound.

That's definitely been helped along by learning as much as we can about each other. Having side projects and doing other things have definitely helped us to get the outlets, get the ya-ya's out, then coming to focus on Jump, Little Children work.

S: Do you think you write better in love or out of love?

MB: That's a good question....in love, for me personally. Much easier to write. At the same time, it's a little easier to write when you're depressed. So I think the combination of being in love, and maybe it's not going the way you wanted it to. Or being in love but missing the person that you're in love with, because you're far away. It's definitely easier to write when you're depressed. That's the truth, but love is a catalyst for a lot of things.

CONTINUED ON PG. 8

## Keller Williams --- Acoustic Scientist

By Rich Merritt

It's about nine, and I find myself standing outside the Variety Playhouse. The crowd is a tad bit hippish, with some regular UGA-type folk added to the mix. I pay my 15\$, enter the Playhouse, get a 5 minute massage for 5 bucks, and get ready to enjoy the music. The stage is literally coated in candles, with five string guitars near the

back, a bass to my left and an electric guitar to the right. No drums, and no space for more than one person. I'm scratching my head--- why is this place so packed for one guy? He couldn't be able to play more than one instrument at a time could he? The answer, thanks to technology, is yes. The lights dim, a roadie starts lighting the candles (takes over

3 minutes to light them all it seems) and the show is on.

Keller Williams walks out on stage with a guitar, starts playing for a little while, then takes the guitar off and grabs another. Only thing is, somehow he's made a live recording loop of what he just played! So, he takes the other guitar, adds its tones to the loop, then records bass sounds and the freakiest sounds you have ever heard mouthed out of someone's mouth since Police Academy. I have never ever heard anything like what this dude played. Needless to say I found myself humbled and amazed at this awesome power and creativity that Keller expressed willingly and freely. The man had absolutely no fear whatsoever doing whatever he wanted to do with his guitars, and also had the real expression of being absolutely happy at his occupation. His newest CD,

## Musicians Making a Difference

By Rich Merritt

Ken Block decided he wanted to host a fundraiser on February 16th. Ken Block is the lead singer of Sister Hazel. Ken Block raised \$150,000 for his cause: The fight against Cancer. It was a sold out night of 1,100 miscellaneous ages, personalities, and ways of life. All these people were together at the Earthlink Live for one night to celebrate life and fight in the only real way musicians can fight disease-by fundraising. The musicians providing this celebration of life included Sister Hazel, Hootie and the Blowfish, Edwin McCain, Emerson Hart of Tonic and Jason Ross of Seven Mary Three. Musicians who provided items for

Laugh, is excellent, but does not compare by any measure to seeing the man live. Keller, you are welcome back in Atlanta anytime!

auction included: Matchbox 20, Stuart Scott, Matt Sorum, Bangles, Shawn Mullins, Bare Naked Ladies, REM, Vanilla Ice, Alien Ant Farm 2, Beastie Boys, Indigo Girls, Ani DeFranco, John Mayer, Our Lady Peace, Sister Hazel, 3 Doors Down, Pat McGee, Seven Mary Three, Jessica Andrews, Daryl Amburgey, Stone Temple Pilots, Dexter Freebish, Tia Sillers, Kevin Kinney, Better Than Ezra, Josh Joplin, Vertical Horizon, Shelby Lynn, Train, Mathew Sweet, Bee Gees, Elton John and Hootie and The Blowfish. Of these the highest bid was \$8500.00 for Circle of Life sheet music signed by the Elton John. This first-time event begs to be repeated, as it was successful both in providing a concert of intimate performances and collaborations and in funding a most worthy cause.



Keller playing Electric, with Acoustic in wait

# Jump, Little Children

Continued...

S: I know you are going to do a CNN show right before the Atlanta show. How did that come about?

MB: Yeah, Headline News. We have fans at CNN. It's kind of strange, because if you'd think of a band that would be playing for a Final Four preview show, I wouldn't necessarily pick us. But, we have fans at CNN and they asked us if we wanted to do this for Headline news. It's going to be our first national TV thing, and it's going to be fun. Funny and fun.

S: What about the DVD, the video that you're filming this Saturday?

MB: We decide that we are going to do a combination of touring in the fall and recording the album, the next album. We kind of wanted to have recorded the album before now, but it didn't work out that way. We needed to have something for the Fall, and we thought a DVD would be really fun, because we've never done that before. We found some people that worked at Screen Gyms in Wilmington, and they've offered to come and film the show. We have some people from Nashville, friends that are going to film some B-roles, some in-between skits that I think will be really funny. I think it'll be a learning experience. Our friend, Mike Bellar, who was featured a lot on Vertigo, will be on the piano, and I think it'll be a really great show.

S: What do you think you would be if you were in a circus?

MB: Jonathan was a carnie barker. I know that's the fair, but I think they do have carnie barkers at the circus, maybe a ring leader type. Evan has always been fascinated by the freaks. I have a feeling, I don't know which freak, but he'd be one of those. Though I do have a fear of heights, I would like to be one of those sexy girls on the high-flying trapeze. <laughter> Jay, I bet Jay would really love to be shot out of a canon. If I could be a clown that did a lot of mime, too. I don't know whether the trapeze girl could do the mime at the same time. Ward, being the most orga-

nized of the band, he would have to be the ring-leader. So, that would kick Johnny out of his job, so what would he be? Johnny would be the perfect lion, the lion that was whipped around the cage, but eventually got up and killed his master.

S: I know that your fans have been described as intense. What do you like most about your fans and what aspects could you do without?

MB: We've gone through everything that we've gone through, and there are fans here! And they listen to us, they read the internet. We sold out Los Angeles. We sold out San Francisco. We're selling out Chicago tonight. That's because our fans are the kind of fans that Tori Amos has, that Ani DiFranco has. They're loyal, but more than loyal, they're evangelistic. <laughter> They really do go out and spread the word. For that, they are absolutely the most amazing fans I've ever seen. We are incredibly lucky to have a group of fans like that. It's astounding sometimes. To realize what we can make them do, not in a manipulative way, but in a way "Hey! We need help" and they're here to help. I don't know that many bands at our level that have that. The flip side of that is when a few fans take that too far. They'll steal your mail, they'll chase you down the highway and get right on your bumper, and scare you. They'll do things that are beyond the norm, the kind of things that make any mother nervous. For the most part, though, people are so sweet and kind. It's 1 in a couple hundred that goes crazy.

S: Where do you think Jump, Little Children will be in five years?

MB: Good question, because five years ago we had a totally different idea of where we might be. We used to say we wanted to be on David Letterman or whatever, but now we'd be so happy to have something along the lines of Ani DiFranco or Tori Amos. A touring career that sweeps the entire country. I think that based on this tour,

we're on a way to that. Being able to go on the road twice a year and do a United States tour and make enough money to survive and make a new album every year and a half. Just be band that really makes a living doing this, not a huge living, but a living. The fan base is growing. The desires of fame and riches are always something to strive for, but I think we would all be happy doing this, playing music together, writing it. As long as writing the music is still fun, and the songs are still good, I think that's what we what to be doing in five years, have this. 'Cause this is the only thing we own. We're not business men. I think we're very proud to have this, something that we feel at home with. Hopefully in five years it's just going to be bigger on this level. There have been some daunting times. Last year was very scary, but I think 2002 is a new phase for us. I'm really excited about what's going to happen.

S: How will you think Johnny getting married with affect the band?

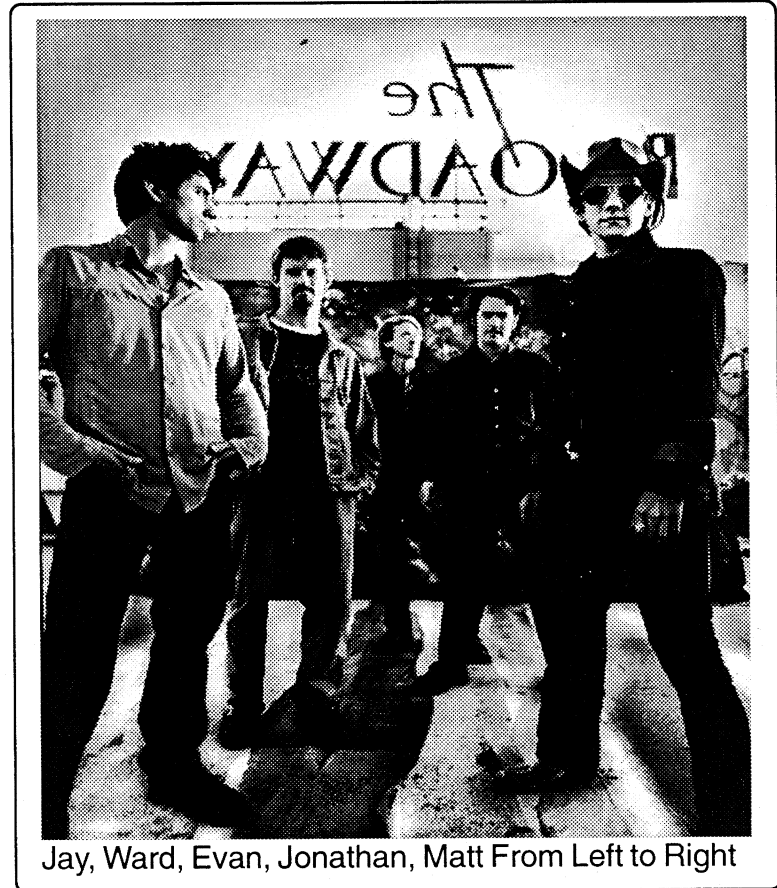
MB: I think it's definitely going to be the Yoko Ono of the band, break us up and everything. <laughter> No, I asked him that yesterday, and I don't think it's going to change him at all. He's kind of been married in essence for the last couple years. He wants to have kids. He wants to have a family, so that might be hard on him if we don't make the money. He's the bass player and he's going to stick with that, that's what he does for a living. It'll give us even more ability to poke fun at him.

S: That allays some fears that some have.

MB: No, he's solid as a rock.

S: What do you guys like to do on your time off?

MB: We all do different things. Jay, especially in the summer months, loves windsurfing, being out on the water. Evan tries to see as many movies as he can. Ward, for the last few years, has been doing jobs that help him learn how to build things. His goal is to build his own house someday. I, suffering from



Jay, Ward, Evan, Jonathan, Matt From Left to Right

ADD, do a lot of different things. I spend a lot of time on the internet, on my computer. This year I haven't been able to live in New York. I have been living in New York for the last couple years. I had to move away for the year, but when we get some time off again, I know I'll be back. I just love New York, the big city, and sitting around drinking coffee and going to see a show that night, and soaking up the experiences of big city. But, I do love Charleston as well. There are some beautiful things about Charleston as well. And too, I'm admitting this for the first time, I'm going to be doing a show, knock on wood, if everything goes well, I hope to do a production of a show called Headwig and the Angry Inch. I don't know if you've seen the movie, but I was really inspired to see it, but it started off as a play in New York City. But, hopefully I'm going to do a production of it in Charleston. It'd be really hard for me. I'm not necessarily the best singer, but I'm going to take some voice lessons. It's been a long time since I've done anything like that. I'm really excited to express myself. I think it'll be good for me.

S: Is there anything that you do when the band is under pressure, maybe ritualistically, before each concert?

MB: Yeah, we suck our thumbs. <laughter> No, when the band is under pressure, we laugh. Before

shows, we laugh. Some of us in the band are really funny, and we find a way to laugh even when things are really depressing. My brother, especially, people wouldn't imagine it, but he is one of the funniest human beings. Last night, he and Ward went on this rampage through a Ramada. You would not believe. I can't even describe it. He's always inventing characters. He has this new character that commands people to do these little dances. So, Ward was doing these little dances all up and down the hallways of Ramada. We just laugh. Though it's going to sound so cheesy, we really are best friends.

We're lucky to be able to hang out with each other all the time. Going back to before, we're really excited about Jonathan's wedding. It's going to be so much fun. We're excited about planning the bachelor party; we're excited about planning the wedding itself. It's going to be beautiful. It means so much to us. We're so excited for each other when things happen. When things are down, we're just there for each other. We sit around and talk. We make sure that we're ok. We care about what's going on. Those are the things we try to do when anyone's under pressure, or things aren't going well, we try to have fun. Because it's not always fun, obviously life's not always fun, but making the best of it is why we have stayed a band for so long.



# Devalue Your Education

By Mercedes

Cheaters. I hate them. I think the only word that comes to mind is scum. I had an exam the other day and the girl sitting beside me was scum. She was wearing a brown turtleneck and was peering into her open backpack to get formulas for our exam. This infuriated me, but what infuriated me more was what happened afterwards. I proceeded on discretely pointing this out to the teacher, who appeared to not care. In fact, I'm pretty sure he did not care and he probably takes to the same notion that many of you students do. The notion believing these pieces of scum are just going to screw themselves later in life, when the graduate, knowing absolutely nothing. I ended up dropping this class because I was not going to tolerate a teacher who allows his students to cheat.

Let me tell you why this notion is wrong. Each time you allow a student to cheat on his work, you are degrading your education. When these cheaters get out into the real world and they get fired from their job because they did not know the required material, it reflects on you.

You maybe wondering how so? The person who hired the cheater is going to look at this institution and think, "this person graduated from SPSU and they don't know their material. Therefore, I will no longer hire graduates from SPSU, no matter how good their grades are, no matter how many internships they completed." This is a true story and it is time for you as students to wake up and start doing something about dishonest students, because apparently some of the faculty doesn't care.

It is up to students to defend our school name and our honour. This means you need to turn in your dorm mates, friends, brothers and sisters. I understand why you would not want to take on a task as the one I'm suggesting, but think about it when you graduate and the company you so desperately want to work for will not hire SPSU students because of one piece of scum that ruined it for you.

It is up to the teachers to defend the school name in which they teach at. It is from my experience that there are two types of teachers. There are teachers who want to

make a difference and care about what they are teaching. They also want to help students succeed and are willing to catch cheaters. Then there are the teachers who are either bored with their job, don't care anymore or plainly just ignore these undesirable students. An institution should have teachers who care, who want to continue their job teaching, and want to continue their career to eventually become the Dean.

So I'm asking students and teachers to wake up. Decide if this is the institution for you. Decide if you really care that your education is devalued when you let that person sitting beside you cheats. Teachers need to decide if the name of the institution means anything to their teaching career. The reality is, if you really care, then do something about it. At least you can walk away knowing, you tried.

# Why Software Engineering Isn't Engineering

By Zachary Jones

To begin, consider the definition of "engineering" from Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary: "1) the art of managing engines, 2) the application of science and mathematics by which the properties of matter and the sources of energy in nature are made useful to man in structures, machines, products, systems, and processes."

Upon what science and mathematics is software "engineering" based? Where is the theory upon which this engineering principle is based? Granted, the field is very young compared to the other engineering principles and hence may not have had time to develop such theory, but as the field stands now it lacks the necessary theory.

The book "Software Engineering: A Practioner's Approach, Fifth Edition" states that "throughout the industry, 'software engineer' has replaced 'programmer' as the job title of preference." It seems to me that programmers who sit in their cubicles/dorm rooms building software use little if any science/mathematical direction to developing their systems and programs. Granted, once again, it would not be logical to judge an entire engineering

discipline by the poor application of its principles by a few of its devotees.

I can, however, judge very stated technique of software engineers. Though the processes and models currently in wide use add direction and guidance to the building of a software product, they are far from engineering, which relies on mathematics and science. Consider what the book mentioned previously states about the use of mathematical approach to software engineering, "Although the formalism provided by mathematics has an appeal to some software engineers, others (some would say, the majority) look askance at a mathematical view of software development." Is this an engineering principle??

Fred Brooks, software "engineer," stated, "Einstein argued that there must be a simplified explanation of nature, because God is not capricious or arbitrary. No such faith comforts the software engineer. Much of the complexity that he must master is arbitrary complexity." Can true correctness of a software product be verified by science and mathematics when much of it is 'arbitrarily complex'?

Instead of "engineering", consider the definition of "management" from the dictionary mentioned at the outset: "1) the act or art of managing: the conducting or supervising of something (as a business), 2) judicious use of means to accomplish an end, 3) capacity for managing: execute skill, 4) the collective body of those who manage or direct an enterprise." Surely, I would not object to the field to be called "Software Management," or "Software Process Management."

For a programmer to elevate himself to the position of engineer is obscene. I should know, for I once studied Computer Engineering Technology here at SPSU and changed majors to Computer Science when I realized I wasn't going to be sitting at a computer working away for most of my time here, but rather learning the theory and principles by which an engineer is guided.

# Student Identification Cards - Why?

By Willis Smith

When new students come to Southern Polytechnic State University to enroll in classes, they are required to get student identification (ID) cards with their pictures on front of the card and their signatures beneath the name. There is usually a fee of \$15 to pay for the student ID card. I often wonder how useful are the ID cards really for I have been here for over two years and I have not yet bought a SPSU student identification card. It is quite surprising how easy a student without a college ID card can get around on campus. If I need to rent a book from the library, I write down my social security number down for the student library assistant to check the computer. The truth is the school does not really

need your ID card but only the social security number. The only place that would accept only student identification is the Student Health Recreation Center and even I don't go there to exercise. Running outside is more practical to me. The campus bookstore accepts student ID but drivers' licenses are acceptable to them as well. There are only a few events that are free to students with their ID but is it really worth paying \$15 to go to three events each semester for free? I think not. Maybe the problem is the school does not use the identification cards to their full potential.

The last college I attended, Rochester Institute of Technology, put the advantages of using student identifi-

cation cards in every way possible. With every student identification card, there was a student picture and signature on the front. On the back of the card, there was a metal strip line like a credit card which held all money information about the student including the value of their meal ticket plan. Vending machines had sliding slots to swipe the cards through. Sometimes you didn't even need coins to buy junk food or sodas but your ID card. Sometimes students put in money into their school accounts to use their ID for buying school supplies at the bookstore. Even campus police sometimes stopped me and ask for my student ID as part of their routine patrol.

Here at SPSU, the student ID is used only as identification, nothing more. I even notice some ID cards in the lost and found boxes at computer labs and I ponder if they miss their cards. Is it any wonder there is not much use or demand for them here at SPSU? Why then do we go through the process of standing in line and having our pictures taken for a student card the campus don't use much, if at all?

CONTINUED ON PG. 10

## Why Software Engineering Isn't Engineering

Continued...

Moreover, to bring it close to home, it seems that this school's administration is putting a great deal of its marbles into this one bag called "Software Engineering" at the expense of the well-founded traditional engineering disciplines. Though I am enjoying the benefits as a Computer Science major, I object to the fact that, ironically, many of the engineering disciplines have been grouped into a new School called "School of Engineering Technology and Management."

Why do Computer Science, Software Engineering, and Information Technology, all of which lack accreditation, have their own school? Will SPSU be swept up in reorganizing its school just because these programs are currently popular? This school has its very foundation built on the traditional engineering disciplines, in a figurative and a very literal sense, and now it seems to me that SPSU is abandoning and turning its back on them.

## The STING The Official Newspaper Of SPSU

## Are TCOM Majors Being Overlooked?

By Michelle Martin

A job fair was held at SPSU on February 26-28 sponsored by Career Services. Career Services had a list of companies and the majors that they were interested in pursuing. As usual, there was only one heading specifically for Technical and Professional Communication (TCOM) listed the rest were under the heading of ALL MAJORS. It seems as though TCOM majors again are not being pursued for job opportunities.

The recruiters talked with everyone who passed their stands. When other majors, TCOM for example, stopped at their table, the recruiter made a point of stressing that they were looking for engineers, designers, or computer science majors. There was a recruiter from Navy civil service that stressed that any applicants had to have a 3.45 GPA or higher in order to be considered for any other job if the applicant was not engineering major.

Some of the recruiters were approached as to the positions that they were looking for. They were informed that most engineers and computer science majors lack the communication skills that are necessary to work with people. It is because of this reason, and others that were not mentioned that they should also be looking for good communicators to further the abilities of the other majors. The recruiters did not deny the statements that were presented to them but could only agree. They were following the desires of the company.

The Career Services in the past seem to have been of



SPSU Job Fair

little or no assistance for TCOM students. They, along with the Technical and Professional Communication Department, are responsible to solicit companies interested in other majors. Both should be diligently searching for companies that hire "the other majors".

Glenda Shipp, Career Advisor for Career Services, was contacted and stated that all majors are important to the university. "We invited 100 companies to our job fair but only 50 were represented," she states. "Last year there were 115 from companies looking for new hires." "We cannot force a company to hire a specific degree major," Shipp said. "The company will inform us of what they are looking for and from there we try to match it with what we have to offer."

One of the advantages of using Career Services is referrals. "Sometimes a company is advertising for one thing but is looking for another," Shipp stated. "It is our

job to make referrals to the employer showing them they are looking for someone else. We will show an employer a job description of the position they are looking to fill so they will have a better idea of what is being offered." Ms. Shipp further stated.

Ms. Shipp also said, "When new companies move to the area, we will send out mailings [catalogs, brochures] on what SPSU has to offer. There are even times we will go to company meetings to see what the job market is looking for. Program Heads will also come along to explain to an employer what the specifics of their department."

Some Career Services personnel have been confused as to exactly what a TCOM student is qualified for. The employer has had problems distinguishing between telecommunication and technical communication. Ms. Shipp replied, "We have personnel who will go to departments to get a better understanding of certain degrees. We also have

to educate employers on what a Technical and Professional Communication degree is about. It is a new term for them."

The TCOM department uses the selling tool "one its kind in the state of Georgia" to interest students in their department. When it comes to assistance for jobs they fall short. There is no one who is actively looking for opening in companies for TCOM majors. When internships become available through the TCOM department, most companies are only willing to give a small stipend to cover travel expenses.

Dr. Mark Stevens, Program Head of Technical and Professional Communication, was contacted and asked what they were trying to do to bring more job opportunities to TCOM graduates. He stated, "Out of 90 TCOM masters graduates and undergraduates that were surveyed, only 7 were unemployed."

CONTINUED ON PG. 11

## SPSU - Georgia's Technology University?

By Zachary Jones

I like that title for this school. It has a nice ring to it, doesn't it? The self proclamation almost even seems to act as if "Georgia Institute of Technology" doesn't exist downtown.

With all our technology, why does the third bell not ring? Perhaps the most annoying thing I hear every day while traveling between classes is, ding ding ..... ding,

ding ..... ding ding.

Why has there been a bucket in the beloved Computer Science hallway catching the dripping water from the leaking ceiling for at least two semesters with a note on the bucket that says, "Do NOT Remove"?

Why aren't the Computer Science, Software Engineering, and Information Technology degrees here at

SPSU accredited? Granted, no Software Engineering program in Georgia has been accredited yet. But, not so with Computer Science. What is holding us back from accreditation? Is our curriculum faulty or lacking?

Has anyone else had problems navigating through the SPSU website? Perhaps if I were a potential student I might give up looking. More-

over, on our front website, do the main pictures portrayed in the center of the webpage really represent this university as "Georgia's Technology University"? Don't get me wrong, I like the pictures of the soccer players, basketball players, and the two people talking. But, where is the technology in action?

Perhaps I am just ranting, but couldn't we at

least fix these problems that are clearly obvious to the outside observer before we claim to be "Georgia's Technology University"?

## Are TCOM Majors Being Overlooked? *Continued...*

With the confusing with telecommunication and technical communication with the Career Service, Stevens stated, "The degree is sometimes mistaken for a Telecommunication degree. "I have contacted Career Services to rectify this error," he said. "TCOM students after graduation are able to design Web pages, write technical documents, as well as become graphic designers."

"We have an advisory board that consists of alumni who give feedback on what companies are looking for to help us keep up with the changing environment in business. We also use the services of the Society of Technical Communicators for networking for our graduates," Stevens said.

Stevens also stated, "Because of the job market, Emory University had to cancel their job fair. This is a bad time for all seniors." Since the September 11 attack, the country is at war against terrorism, "companies

are hiring fewer employees including new graduates in all fields."

"There has also been a decline in enrollment in the TCOM department in the last 2 years," Stevens stated. "There are presently 88 graduates and 94 undergraduates registered for this semester."

With the combined efforts, TCOM and Management majors alike should insist that their degree is just as important to the school as the engineer or computer science majors. Most of the TCOM majors agree that when it comes to Co-Op jobs or internships will have to look for them on their own.

As a future TCOM graduate of SPSU, it is disheartening to see that there are very few listings for the degree. Instructors urge TCOM majors to seek Career Services out when looking for a job but there are few or no jobs listed for this major.

## Stairway to Nowhere, New Architecture Building

By Dave Bachtel

Although I had driven by and walked around the new architecture building several times before the writing of this article, I had never seen its interior before. As a guide, I recruited first year architecture student Adam Hatley to show me around and explain some of the quirks and hidden things of the building.

The first thing that seemed to be out of the ordinary was the apparent "Stairway to Nowhere" located at the bottom of the main staircase. A push-open gate blocks the way to a smaller set of stairs and is labeled "Not an Exit". When these stairs are followed, they lead around one of the yellow pillars to what appears to be a small observation level, overlooking the gym across the street. Adam explained that this gate was most likely in place to meet a particular building code, and prevent people from running into a dead end and burning to death should a fire occur. Hmm... makes sense.



The New Architecture Building

The lobby and hallways of the building were left purposely unfinished, providing the space with a rustic "under construction" feel. Water pipes run freely along many walls labeled as "Hot Water" and "Cold Water" with an arrow indicating the direction of water flow.

Next we took a trip in the elevator. I was surprised to find that the fourth floor wasn't accessible. Adam explained that it was more of a maintenance area and that no classes were held there, and that there was not much to see.

On the second and third floors, I was able to see a few of the architecture student's workspaces. Each student is given his or her own little area, where they can store supplies and hook up a computer. I was most impressed however, by the perpetual roliness of the chairs. Adam showed me his workspace. "It's open and yet confined. [The chairs] are great, we all roll around, no one walks anymore!"

I continued to scope the premises, looking at some individual workspaces containing everything from models to pictures of peoples friends and cars. A lot of architecture students were working diligently, so of course I had to interrupt them and ask what they thought of the new building...

"Like 20 times better than our old place," says Joe O'Daniels, a first year architecture student. Matt Walsh (2nd year) said that "[It] has more space, more relaxing, more comfortable, and it's a really nice build." But Ariel Merevil (1st year) isn't so sure. When asked, he commented that "It lacks the character of the old building". "[It's] Loud but nice," according to John McCall. Michael Harrel (4th year) like most people, enjoys the nice, smooth surfaces to roll on. Nicole Fritcey (3rd year) has her own reasons for being on the third floor. "I like the box seats we have when watching baseball games," she said.

What do I as a reporter think? I know I'm really not an authority on the subject of aesthetic design or and artist, but I think it's a pretty cool building. It looks really nice when driving around the campus. The only thing that remotely bugs me is that the guy's bathroom is pink, but I think I can live with that.

## Why I Worry about the State of Student Life at SPSU

By Amy Jalutkewicz

I worry about what is happening to this school. The student body has become apathetic about what goes on around campus. The last semi-unified attempt at anything on this campus was when students banded together at the Sycamore Grove for a memorial service after September 11th for victims of the World Trade Center.

Members of the Student Government Association (SGA) have approached me to tell me how it is great that I am involved with on-campus activities and how we need more people to get involved. These representatives of our SGA told me that we need to improve communication on campus by having more events on campus and to be sure that we promote these events. I cannot argue the logic in that statement. What defies logic in my mind is that SGA cannot even follow this simple mantra for improving student life and involvement at Southern Polytechnic State University.

Case in hand: this year's

SGA elections. I don't know how many of you remember last year's SGA elections, but there was a huge push to advertise the deadlines for applying to be a candidate for an SGA officer or representative. This year, I saw three signs: one in J-building on the second floor by a little-used computer lab and two hidden away in the myriad of signs at the Student Center. What happened to the communication that SGA wants on-campus organizations to foster with students? Furthermore, I have yet to see a sign promoting SGA elections this year. Kudos, SGA; way to foster communication on campus!

I wonder what kind of message SGA is trying to send to the Southern Polytechnic State University student body. I would think they would make an attempt to raise the bar and act like leaders since they are the people who are representing the student body. Leaders: as in people who are worthy of following and trying to emulate. I don't know

about you, but I want my leaders to be someone I can be proud of and willing to follow. I have found a few on this campus, but I promise you, they aren't in SGA.

Especially now. Our uncontested candidates in the recent SGA election are hardly what I would call leader material. Some of them are the ones who told me that we needed to promote communication on campus. Maybe these incumbents that are now leading SGA for next school year will begin to communicate freely with this campus. Maybe they will not try to kill everything that is good and fun about Student Life and SPSU. But, I predict a school year of filibustering about irrelevant subjects from our newest SGA president, since that is what he does now in his role as representative on SGA.

What do I want to see on this campus? I want to see SGA prove me wrong. I want to see them become the leaders they say they are going

to be. I want to see SGA become the major force on this campus to stimulating and reviving student life at SPSU. And I want to see more students become involved with campus life. We are here and we ought to make the best of it. It is tiresome listening to people complain about how nothing ever happens on this campus when they won't make an effort to make things happen.

I am graduating this semester. When I come back as an alumna, I want to see more student involvement in the activities I worked with on campus. I want to see people involved with any organization on campus. I hope there will be new organizations on campus for people to be active in. However, I think my biggest fear is going to come to life; I think student life is going to become a myth at Southern Polytechnic State University.

# Poly-Caffeinated - An SPSU Coffee House

By Zachary Jones

Imagine the following scene. Your brain and body are worn out from the day's activities. All you want is to take a break from the goings-on of class, studying, and stress. Actually, a coffee sounds really good. Or a nice hot tea. "What's open?" You travel downstairs in the Student Center to Poly-Caffeinated, the student-managed and -operated SPSU Coffee House, open all school day. Here you order a coffee, sit back, and sink into the bean bags on the floor...no, this time you choose the posh huge chairs in the corner. As WGHR bumps softly with its eccentric tunes, a small group of SPSU students plays cards across the room. Does the image sound appealing? It is my dream.

Students often complain of the food service downstairs not being open when they would like it to be. Well, in a student run environment, then they themselves would be responsible for the hours. Consider the application of management and economic principles that could be applied.

Moreover, a student-managed and -operated coffee house would keep the money of the students within the campus, not giving to off-campus contractors. Where would the initial overhead come from? There are a variety of possible options. Consider if SGA itself provided the initial start-up money with the stipulation that the money is to be paid back from the profits of the business. Private student investors could also provide some of the money.

Where would the coffee house be? Do you know where the faculty have an eating area that always seems to be empty? (Why don't the faculty want to eat alongside the students anyway?) No longer. Here we combine our forces to design and construct a new environment where students and faculty alike can hang out, much as Architecture and Construction students joined forces to transform WGHR.

Moreover, on top of the cross-curriculum opportunity it would provide, what of the artistic outlet it would be on

campus? I am foreseeing that all of those people who are always playing guitar and other instruments in the dorms will be up there on Wednesdays for open-mic night.

Would you support a student-managed and -operated coffeehouse here on campus? Can SPSU handle it? Please let me know at [zjones@spsu.edu](mailto:zjones@spsu.edu).

**Campus Events can be located at [www.thesting.org](http://www.thesting.org)**

# Letter from the Editor

By Rich Merritt

I'm sitting in my chair in the STING office and I can't hear a sound other than my keys hitting the keyboard. It's the night before Spring Break begins, and I'm thinking. I'm thinking about SPSU. Namely what it is and what it is not. So, I've come to realize that this place teaches people a whole lot about what the real world is actually like. Lack of females on campus an issue? Meal plan gripes continue? Not enough campus life? These complaints and many others are real and clearly present, but I think we forget about what we do have and what this place does offer. I myself rarely get directly involved with the conversations and issues of other students, but I notice that anyone can get to know nearly anyone who goes to school here. No social group is really dominant, and thus anyone can carry on a conversation, if they chose to initiate it, with nearly anyone else on campus. Also, nights on campus tend to be rather safe and relaxing. I personally like to sit on the tree stump over Cobb Parkway and listen to the cars. They remind me of the sea just

a little. While we do have problems on campus, perhaps we fail sometimes to see the positive aspects of this campus. If you are here just to get your degree, take the time to look around just a little before grabbing that diploma. You might find something here you did not expect.

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# Wanting to Backpack Europe

By Mercedes

Backpack Europe- Do it while your young, while your broke and before you get tied down to a house, 2 cars, ½ kid and a picket fence. That's what I suggest you do before or after you graduate. Traveling is therapeutic, so why not do it?

I get sick of hearing people babble about traveling once they retire. I have no patience for these people. Here's why: The older you get, the more set in your ways you become. Not to mention you lose your taste buds; so you won't be able to taste fine French foods. Your sight starts to go; so you can't see the details of the Duomo in Florence. Your body is physically exhausted; so you can't walk far with a backpack. So backpack Europe while your young.

Learn about yourself.

Take my word for it, employers look for well-traveled individuals. Why? The people who take long journey's to backpack Europe or Asia or Africa, gain knowledge. They gain acceptance, understanding, they learn about themselves and they come back instantly cultured. This means you will always have something to talk about with clients you don't know. You can talk about seeing Van Gogh's art, to being at the Beatle's museum, seeing the Pope, to picking grapes in Italy for wine to rating the most beautiful cities in the world. Backpacking Europe will change your life.

If you think your broke, think again. Tickets roundtrip to Amsterdam are \$259 (check out [Clarkhoward.com](http://Clarkhoward.com)); it cost this much to fly to California.

So if I've convinced you, I suggest you to run over to the local bookstore and purchase A Rough Guide to Europe and Lonely Planet's Europe "On A Shoestring." Buy both if you are serious about doing the trip soon. If your still thinking about it buy the Rough Guide first; it covers detailed information about where you're going, the history and why it is important. The Shoestring guide, in my opinion, is better for practicalities and the cheap way to travel Europe; hence the name, a shoestring guide. It will tell you cheap places to stay and eat (which are generally fairly good), what days museums are free and how to get there without breaking your budget. Buy both, because the Shoestring guide is absolutely useless in telling about tourist attractions.

So once you have decided to go, start getting these documents ready.

1. Passport: \$40 If you do not have one, call your post office and see if they take pass port applications. You can run to Kinko's to get your passport photo. If you lack time or you have lost your passport, you can do an express service (around \$120). In an emergency, you can always drive to New Orleans and do a "walk through" at THE passport office. Once you receive your passport, photocopy the front and back, twice. Give one copy to a trusted friend or relative (someone you can contact immediately) and keep the other in your backpack.

2. Insurance: start shopping around for insurance. You can get cheap travel insurance

trough council travel or any student travel agency. Make sure it covers theft, medical treatment, emergency evacuation and personal liability. This is a must!

3. Rail Passes: The rail system is the only affordable way to travel. You really don't need to drive (not to mention it's much more costly and you need to obtain an international drivers permit) Check out [raileurope.com](http://raileurope.com), from here you can pick out the desired rail card needed. I suggest in one month to go for a 10 or 15 day inconsecutive pass costing \$644/\$914 for students under the age of 26.

CONTINUED ON PG. 14

# Carnival: Eat, Drink and be Merry

By Mercedes

Each year, many of us drive to New Orleans to take part in the annual festivity of Mardi Gras. Most of us go there to party, catch beads and entice girls for eye candy. Not many of us look take the time to know the religious meaning behind Carnival season.

Mardi Gras literally means "Fat Tuesday." It is the last day before Ash Wednesday where it is acceptable to eat meat, drink and be merry, IE. The last day to do all your wrongdoings before Ash Wednesday, which interestingly enough is the day Lent begins. It is also commonly called "Carnival," which the name itself has roots too. The Latin beginning "carne" means flesh or meat. When carnival ends and lent begins, it is no longer acceptable to eat meat, nor acceptable to drink and party.

Not only does the name have meaning, but the time of year Mardi Gras takes place has roots too. The carnival season starts on January 6th, the twelfth night, and ends the night before Ash Wednesday, Mardi Gras Day. To figure out when Mardi Gras Day is one must figure out the day of Easter. Easter is the first Sunday after the first full moon after Christmas, and Mardi Gras Day is 46 days before

Easter. On the first night of carnival, one can see the Mystic Krewe of the Phunny Phorty Phellows (krewe being any of several groups with hereditary membership whose members organize and participate as costumed paraders) kick off the season with bead-throwing and a wild street car ride. From January 6th to the end of the season, nightly there are parades, shows and merriment in the French Quarter. The real party's begin two weeks prior to Mardi Gras day, where you can see families, friends and neighbors gathering outside their homes watching the parades pass them by.

The weekend before Mardi Gras Day, the carnivals and the crowds suddenly become loud and rowdy. The biggest days are Saturday and Sunday. Saturday starts off with the Krewe of Tucks. This is perhaps one of my favorite parades because it is not overly large and the floats and costumes are all risky. Krewe of Tucks constantly offends groups and organizations. This year, one of the floats named "Cat Licks" dressed as priest and nuns, which in turn upset the Catholic Church. The Krewe of Tucks is also known for tossing out underwear (including thongs), toilet paper and strange troll dolls holding

mugs of beer. This krewe has a short history, for they were founded by a group of drunken Tulane students who followed parades with a wheel barrel and toilet. The person sitting on the toilet bowl was considered king, for he was the drunkest. Following the Krewe of Tucks is Endminion, which is one of the two prettiest parades. The floats

are large in size, some of them three stories tall, and some of the three floats long. It is known for tossing nice beads, cups and doubloons (metal shiny coins). This parade takes 7 hours to start, go through the French quarter and finish in the Superdome.

On Sunday, the larger parade is Bacchus. I have heard various rumors on why

this parade started, but the one I most commonly hear is none of the out of town business men could get their daughters or wives princess of the parade. The main reason for this is the parades choose their Kings and Princesses because they are from the community (of Louisiana) and are well known. These men were unhappy because they were closed off from New Orleans social circles and thus decided to start their own parade. The reasons Bacchus became popular was because they had the largest parades and paraded on Sunday night. In addition they also broke carnival tradition by choosing a king that had nothing to do with New Orleans and was a well-known celebrity. It also threw out more beads and doubloons than any other parade. Still today, Bacchus is one of the prettier parades, still throwing massive amount of beads.

So next time you want to take part in the Mardi Gras spirit, think of the meanings behind it. In addition, if you really wish to have a good time, try to get on a Krewe (as some parades do not have stipulations) and you can really see what the fun is all about.



Mardi Gras

## Carnival: Eat, Drink and be Merry *Continued...*

4. Hostelling/Camping cards: useful, not necessary. If you wish to save money, I suggest getting one. Purchase the HI card (Hostelling International). This will knock off anywhere from \$1-7 a night and possibly get you free sheets.

5. Student Cards. The International Student Identification Card (ISIC) cost \$25 and can be purchased at Council Travel. Don't go without this. It is the ONLY widely known student card that is accepted. It takes money off of train rides, museum cost, saves on exchange rates and much more. It also gets you cheap tickets through airlines.

6. Visas: The rough guide and the shoestring guide both have a list of countries in which Europeans and American's need visas before entering. If

you wish to travel to one of these countries, try to get the visa before your trip. This way, you won't get ripped off or encounter "other taxes." The best way to get these is call that country's consulate.

Now with the paper work out of the way, it is time to start shopping for the necessary backpacking essentials.

1. Backpack/rucksack: Be sure to buy a quality backpack. I suggest one at REI for \$150 or above. Rucksacks are hard to come by when traveling, so it is essential that you find one that fits, has quality straps, and won't rip or tear easily. It also helps if it's waterproof. Females need to be very select in choosing the right pack. It needs to have additional hip and back

support; ask a sales person at the store to guide you. Do not buy the largest pack available. Remember the bigger it is, the more likely you are to stuff additional unneeded items.

2. Footwear: Comfortable walking shoes are a must. Do not bring anything that you would not walk in for 2 miles, up 130 stairs with 30 pounds on your back. Leave your combat boots at home even if you have worn them for 3 years. I suggest a light pair of hiking boots/shoes or cross-training sneakers. In addition to these shoes, bring a pair of sandals. You can wear sandals on the beach, the days you want to casually stroll around town and in shower (unless you want foot fungus).

3. Long Pants: Do not bring

jeans for they are heavy, take forever to dry and get dirty easily. Not to mention in Europe, light blue jeans are generally a symbol of someone who is poorly dressed. Long, lightweight cotton pants are acceptable in churches/mosque, not to mention they dry quickly.

4. Sleeping bag: If you plan on camping, buy a sleeping bag according to the lowest temperature you will be in. Regardless, of camping or hostelling it, a sleeping bag is good to have. It will cushion your rides on the overnight trains and keep you from paying \$1-3 a day for sheets. Once again, I urge you to buy a top quality sleeping bag for they tend to be lightweight.

Now to the exciting part: plan your trip. Have a basic idea of

where you want to go. It is also necessary to determine if a traveling companion is needed. If you stay in hostels and keep an open mind, you will encounter other students who are making the same journey. Chances are you will be traveling with them from city to city (who knows- you may meet a traveling partner in the first city you stop). If you plan to go with a friend or significant other, make sure you are willing to accept them for who they are (including their quirks, temper, disorganization, etc.) After a month of traveling you will KNOW that person; make sure you really want to know him.

This covers the beginnings of traveling in Europe. Check out the next issue for phase 1 and 2 of backpacking Europe.

## Mexico: One Traveler's Account of Three Cities

By Mercedes

This year I wanted to do something unique and go somewhere interesting, yet somewhere that American dollars would go far. I read in *The Rough Guide to Mexico* two sentences about Yelapa, Mexico describing it as a deserted tourist destination during the daytime. What made it attractive to me was it had no electricity, yet had sushi, huts, beaches and massages. I mentioned to a friend and we decided we had to visit Yelapa.

I bought a standby ticket for \$202.63 flying Delta Airlines to Mexico City and connecting to Puerto Vallarta. I ended up missing my connecting flight and stayed in Mexico City. I took a cab to the biggest street in the centre and found a hotel for \$16. I was amazed that my room was very clean, fairly new, was at the very top of the building and had a balcony looking directly at the National Palace.

I explored the centre of town, where I saw a better version of Buford Highway with tacky items, Jesus memorabilia, clowns and ventriloquists. I spent two hours wondering around the square (which is said to be the

second largest in the world). I then found a place to eat which had some of the best food I've ever had for \$3.

Once I arrived in Puerto Vallarta, I took a 30 minute bus ride to Boco (\$0.45) with a man, who sang out of his armpit for tips. I then caught the water taxi (\$6), which was the only way one can get to Yelapa. I was under the impression that Yelapa was an Island, but I found out it's a cove in Mexico. It also had electricity, which arrived last year. The beach was not sandy, but appeared to feel like kitty litter. Surprisingly, I enjoyed this more because it was easy to walk on barefooted and the rocks did not get in my clothing. I found a grass roof, cedar walled cabana with two beds and bath for \$20 a night. It had a lovely courtyard with a brick walk and included a hot shower and two light bulbs. It also had a hammock inside which I spent a few hours in each day.

The first night, I met my next-door neighbor who was from Canada. He showed me around Yelapa, which included taking me to the discoteca, arcade and the cheapest restaurant on earth. Yelapa's

discoteca was nice for a town with the population of 1000. It played Mexican dance music and had Corona's for \$1. It seemed to be the place for young people. We danced until late and then went to eat burrito's for \$0.05. These burrito's are perhaps the best tasting one's I've ever had in my life. The meat was tasty and so were vegetables, not to mention it was all cooked in front of you.

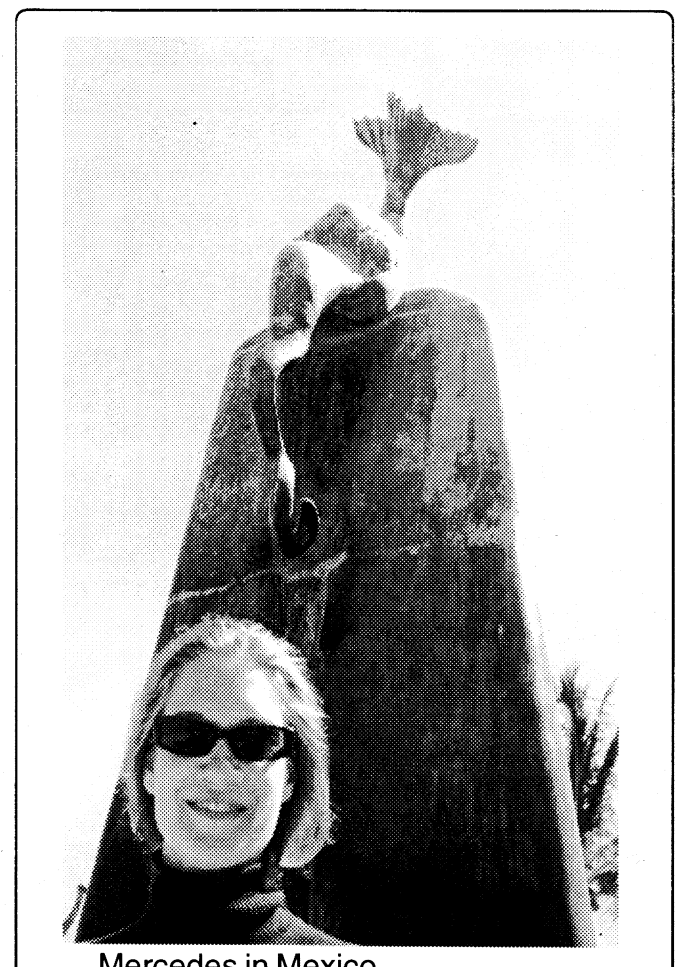
The following days, I spent the rest of my time in Yelapa hiking to the waterfall. The hike was quite beautiful, for it followed a river. I spent many hours swimming in various lagoons, swimming holes and sitting on rocks. It took 4 hours going up and I never made it walking once, so I hired a horse for \$20 (the entire day). In addition to horseback riding, I went parasailing (\$30). It was quite the experience, for I saw whale surface in the ocean.

My last day in Mexico, I spent in Puerto Vallarta. It seemed to be the expensive-college-touristy place. It has a beautiful beach with a beautiful sidewalk that followed the ocean. The walk had strange bronze sculptures that also functioned as benches; I could

not help but spend a few hours looking at the sculptures because they were truly unique. I also had my last Mexican breakfast, Huevos Rancheros (\$2.50), and my last fresh squeezed lime margarita (\$3).

Mexico was truly beautiful. I suggest going there for it won't break your wallet; I spent \$275 after my plane fare and even then I had a few

\$25 meals. It makes it an ideal place for a college budget. The two warnings I have for you are the more touristy a place, the more expensive it will be and second be sure to know a bit of Spanish so you won't get ripped off as much and you will meet the nice people who speak a bit of English and also who are more than willing to make your vacation wonderful.



Mercedes in Mexico

# The Sky is Falling --- Wait That's Me!

By Rich Merritt

It was the middle of spring break, my plans started going to hell, and I was annoyed in a "I want to do something but have been denied" kind of way. The question spinning inside my mind was "What can I do to make this break memorable?" Like a huge halogen light bulb lighting a night sky the answer came to me. Skydiving. Why not jump out of an airplane at 14,000 feet?

So I was standing outside my car about an hour or so from Marietta. I swallowed and approach a tan vinyl sided building. The letters ASC (Adventure Skydiving Center) and a drawing of a parachute are carved in the concrete in front of the door. Over the door is a sign that reads "Future Skydivers Enter Here". I opened the door and entered.

After signing away my right to sue the place if I get hurt and paying 200 bucks for

the entry fee, I met my instructor/tandem jump partner, who started to explain the concepts of skydiving. Overall, all I really had to do was arch my chest as if I was a bird stuck in the upstroke of a stroke of it's wing. After that, I suited up into a multicolored jumpsuit, put on a body harness that went around my shoulders and thighs, and considered for a second just what I was about to do. Jump out of an airplane at 14,000 feet. Still not nervous, but my mouth is getting dry for some reason...

We along with the other fallers get our call on the intercom that it's our turn to hit the skies. So, we head out of the ASC building and walk to a small airplane. Me and my instructor enter and start reviewing the arching back once more. Before I know it, the plane starts moving. For the first time that day I was a little scared you might say.

When we went airborne, and started the 10 minute climb to our destined altitude, I couldn't help but stare at the magically shrinking world. Before I know it, the time arrives. I am very glad we were the first duo out of the airplane, because if I had to watch someone else jump, I think I would have overdosed on adrenaline.

My jump partner snaps his harness to mine, and opens the door to the airplane. The world looks like a very tiny place. Frankly I'm a bit nervous now. I'm trying not to think of the words "splat" and "crater" too much. We then approach the very edge of the airplane floorboard, and he shouted "READY! 3! 2! 1! GO!" At go we left the normal human world of gravity behind. Feet are useless. The only thing you could hear was wind. Pure wind. I screamed bloody murder and could only barely hear myself inside my

head. You can still breathe air in normally when you are falling at 120 miles an hour, but it is slightly harder than normal. In only 30 seconds the ground seemed to double in size.

The parachute is pulled at around 5000 feet. When we got to that altitude (took less than 1 minute) I suddenly felt a most strong pull on my shoulders and thighs and the wind got calm again, like before the jump. However, now I had to deal with the slightly unpleasant feeling of the harness rubbing on my upper legs. The wind starts blowing, and we are getting blown off course a bit. My instructor put us into a little spin, and I realize I need to clear my ears of air so I can hear him. These 5-7 minutes or so were long and arduous yet mesmerizing as well. It is rare in everyday occurrences for the one to feel totally reliant on a series of straps to

keep oneself alive, but in skydiving the straps are your "savior" if you will. We drift on the way down, so the instructor just rotates in the direction opposite of the drift. We approach land, lift our feet up, and end up with a rear seat landing. My bum is sore, but I am alive and back on terra firma. I don't think I will ever think of sky, clouds, air or falling as the same ever again. Skydiving is an amazing activity that everyone should consider. I myself found it to be rather rewarding, even with the stiff price of admission of 200 bucks.



Rich, Our Editor is a Real Air Head

# COMICS

GOOD NEWS, DILBERT. I'M PROMOTING YOU TO MORE WORK!

IT'S THE SAME PAY AND TITLE. BUT IT MUST BE GOOD BECAUSE I CALLED IT A PROMOTION AND I'M SMILING!

STILL... SMILING... GOOD... NEWS... YOU'RE SCARING ME.

I WORKED SIXTY HOURS LAST WEEK.

THAT'S NOTHING. I WORKED SEVENTY HOURS.

THAT'S NOTHING...

OH, WAIT... I JUST RECOGNIZED THE PATTERN.

SEND A COPIER REPAIR GUY. AND MAKE SURE HE'S GOOD-LOOKING.

BECAUSE I LIVE IN A BIG TIN CAN AND I WORK IN AN EGG CARTON. FLIRTING IS THE ONLY JOY I HAVE.

NOTHING'S WRONG WITH THE COPIER YET, BUT I FEEL A FIERCE PAPER JAM COMING ON.

AND I'D LIKE THE COPIER REPAIR GUY TO BE A TALL NON-SMOKER WITH WELL-DEFINED ABS.

OH, YOU'RE NOT A DATING SERVICE, EH? WELL IF I GIVE YOU MONEY AND YOU SEND ME A GUY THEN IT'S JUST SEMANTICS.

AND COULD YOU SHAVE HIS BACK AND OIL HIM UP BEFORE YOU SEND HIM?

I CAN'T COMPLETE THE ONLINE SELF-ASSESSMENT SURVEY. IT ASKS WHERE I NEED IMPROVEMENT AND I DON'T NEED ANY.

THE PROGRAM WON'T LET ME LEAVE THAT QUESTION BLANK.

AND PEOPLE WILL UNDERSTAND THAT I DON'T MEAN IT?

SURE.

ARE YOU A MAN-AGER?

NO, I'M AN INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR.

SO, BASICALLY, YOU HAVE THE SAME JOB DESCRIPTION AS AN ANT?

I'D LIKE TO SEE AN ANT TRY TO WEAR HUGE GLASSES LIKE THESE!

IT'S CRITICAL THAT YOU FINISH THIS ENGINEERING ANALYSIS BY TUESDAY.

AAHH... IT HAS THE SWEET SMELL OF AN UNNECESSARY ASSIGNMENT.

STOP BEING YOU.

FEASIBILITY OF USING NON-EXISTENT SOFTWARE.

HEE HEE!

WHAT A DAY I'M HAVING. FIRST MY KEY CARD DOESN'T WORK, SO I HAVE TO TAILGATE INTO THE BUILDING.

THEN MY NETWORK PASSWORD DOESN'T WORK. NOW MY VOICEMAIL DOESN'T WORK!

IS IT POSSIBLE FOR ANYTHING ELSE TO STOP WORKING TODAY?!

OH, MY HEAD! YOUR TOOTH BROKE OFF!

NO, NO, NO. UM... HMMM.

AAAAAA! WHADDAREDO?! WHADDAREDO?!

MY... MY POINTY IS GONE!

AAAAAA! YOUR FANG!

MY FACE! MY BEAUTIFUL FACE!

ROB! BUCKY! FUNGO! SNARE! OH! OH THE WALL! TOOTH! TOOTH!

CALM DOWN! WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY?!

THE SNARE! THE FERRET! THE TOOTH!

WHAT?! HAVE YOU BEEN SLEEPING NEXT TO THE CLEANING SOLVENTS AGAIN?

I THINK I NEED ATTENTION. OH, YOU ALWAYS THINK YOU NEED ATTENTION. I'M TALKING TO SATCHEL RIGHT NOW.

HUMINA HUMINA HUMINA

LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT-- YOU BROKE YOUR FANG ON THE WALL AS YOU WERE TRYING TO ENTRAP FUNGO SQUIGGLY INTO A ROPE SNARE THROUGH THE FERRET FLAP IN SATCHEL'S WALL?

YES! WHY IS THIS SO HARD FOR YOU TO UNDERSTAND?

I, I'M SO MAD I CAN'T EVEN SEE STRAIGHT...

WELL, GET A GRIP AND TELL ME WHERE YOU CAN SEE SO I CAN STAND THERE AND MAYBE YOU'LL FOCUS ON FIXING MY TOOTH!

TRY STANDING OVER THERE...

ALRIGHT... BUCKY GOT HIS TOOTH KNOCKED OUT... SATCHEL, STOP FREAKING OUT AND GO GET A GLASS OF MILK!

I'M NOT THIRSTY!

GET A GLASS OF MILK FOR THE TOOTH?! NOW WHO'S FREAKING OUT?!

SOMEBODY GIVE THE TOOTH SOME THING TO DRINK AND LET'S GET IT BACK IN MY FACE!

THERE'S YOUR TOOTH! IT'S STILL STUCK IN THE WALL RIGHT WHERE FUNGO PULLED YOUR FACE INTO IT!

I SMELL THE FERRET! IS HE STILL OVER THERE?! WHAT'S HE DOING?!

YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW.

WHAT'S HE DOING?

HE'S EATING THE BOLOGNA FROM THE TRAP YOU SET.

YOU KNOW, BUCKY, WITHOUT YOUR FANG, YOU LOOK LIKE A DIFFERENT CAT! YOU'RE LIKE INSPECTOR CLOUSEAU WITHOUT THE MUSTACHE!

CORRECTION: I'M LIKE TOM SELLECK WITHOUT THE MUSTACHE.

CORRECTION: YOU'RE LIKE MINNIE PEARL WITHOUT THE TAG.

NO... NO... NO! NOT THAT! PLEASE! FOR THE LOVE OF DOGS, NOT THAT!

THE VET SAID IF YOU DIDN'T STOP CHEWING THE BANDAGE YOU GET THE COLLAR. THIS IS YOUR FINAL WARNING.

Pant pant pant

BUCKY, I JUST RAN INTO MRS. GARCIA IN THE HALL...

HOW FUN!

SHE MENTIONED THAT A VODOO DOLL OF THEIR FERRET WAS PUSHED THROUGH THEIR PET FLAP TODAY... NATURALLY, SQUIGGLY CONSIDERED IT A THREAT...

NOW, SEE, I WOULD CONSIDER A BUCKY DOLL A PRESENT... I GUESS IT'S A FINE LINE. HUH?

IT'S A BIG, FAT, GLOW-IN-THE-DARK LINE!

IT SOUNDS PRETTY!