

# OPINIONS

Technique • Friday, August 27, 2004



"The South's Liveliest College Newspaper"  
**TECHNIQUE**

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**Quote of the week:**

"If you treat people right, they will treat you right—90 percent of the time."

—Franklin D. Roosevelt

**OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION**

## Don't forget Junior's

With the recent addition of several new restaurants in Technology Square, students have forsaken their old friend, Junior's Grill. Junior's has seen its business decrease to only 200-250 customers on average during the day, with another 100 customers at night since the opening of restaurants in Technology Square and the Student Center Commons.

Simply put, this situation is troubling. Junior's has been serving hot food to the Tech community since 1948. Located behind Tech Tower, Junior's has been one of students' favorite spots to relax and take a break from everything. Hanging on the walls are photos from Tech's glory days and memorabilia, including a piece of the goalpost from our last national championship football game. Perhaps now is the time for returning students to pay a visit to their old friend, and for new students to discover one of our oldest traditions.

Tommy Klemis, the owner of Junior's Grill, has been one of the student body's most loyal friends. He greets everyone with a smile and knows many of his patrons by name. He happily gives free food during Homecoming and other activities.

To attract new business, Junior's has updated its menu, extended its hours and added a coffee bar called "Junior's Juice and Java." While we are fans of the salads and veggie burgers, we feel the coffee and juice bar is a mistake. Junior's shouldn't trade trendy gimmicks for tradition. Instead, fight the "man."

We have a few suggestions to help keep the Junior's tradition alive. First, Junior's serves a great breakfast and hot line, but the items are not offered all day. During the extended hours, breakfast and hot line items should be available. With its proximity to the library, Junior's is an ideal place to go with a group during a study break, and what hungry student doesn't love late night breakfasts? Waffle House has built an empire on the concept. Freshmen need to be educated about the history of Junior's. One way to reach them would be to host a Junior's Night geared towards freshmen, similar to last year's program for juniors. The time to reach freshmen is now because the restaurant is a short walk from their East Campus dorms.

Finally, Junior's needs to further tap into the rest of the Tech community. We would love to see new sports memorabilia, such as pieces from the Final Four. In addition, by opening on game days, particularly during football season, Junior's could reach alumni who haven't had the food since their college years. Junior's could advertise itself as the ideal place to hold alumni events and student group gatherings, perhaps with special group and/or party rates.

In the meantime, we encourage students to revisit an old friend, or acquaint themselves with a new one.

*Consensus editorials reflect the majority opinion of the Editorial Board of the Technique, but not necessarily the opinions of individual editors.*

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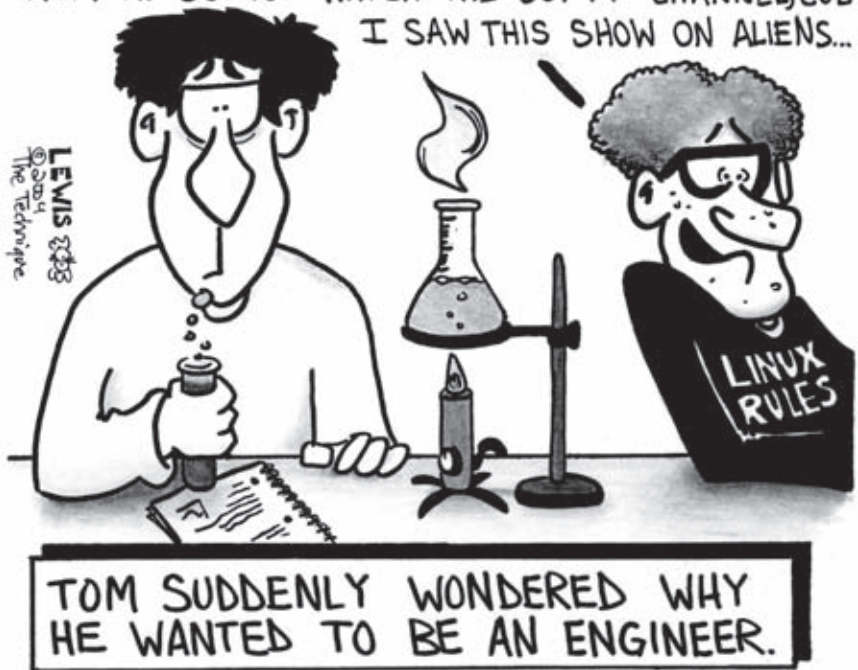
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WE'RE SO LUCKY TO GET THIS FRIDAY NIGHT CHEM LAB! IT'S WAY MORE INTERESTING THAN DRINKING BEER AT SOME PARTY WITH SCANTILY CLAD WOMEN. DO YOU WATCH THE SCI-FI CHANNEL, CUZ I SAW THIS SHOW ON ALIENS...



By Brian Lewis / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

## Web presence needs restructuring

The main Tech website, [www.gatech.edu](http://www.gatech.edu), was redesigned this past week. This redesign provides me with the opportunity to comment.

First, I'd like to congratulate whoever did the redesign. The less cluttered, brighter layout is a welcome improvement over the brown on gray of the last design. I've been a student here for four years and in that time have seen two complete [www.gatech.edu](http://www.gatech.edu) redesigns, but I have yet to see progress across the subdomains of [gatech.edu](http://gatech.edu) as a whole. My goals for this editorial are to present the case for a unified Tech information space and to provide one option for getting there.

First off, an information space is the body of knowledge contained at a specific location. The location can either be physical, such as the Tech Library, the Archives, a textbook or reference volume, or virtual, like [microsoft.com](http://microsoft.com) or [sourceforge.net](http://sourceforge.net). Information in a space is related and preferably cross referenced, it's the size of the network in Metcalfe's Law. The larger and more interconnected a space is, the more valuable, as you can go to a single location to find what you seek.

The problem with Tech's web presence is that there is no consistency across the pages in the [gatech.edu](http://gatech.edu) subdomains. Each department seems to maintain its own site with only token efforts to relate to the others. This fractures the information space into smaller pieces, which are less useful than one big space. From the student end, this means that we have to recall the department, domain and how to navigate the department's site for every piece of information we need. From the author end, it means that multiple sites have to be updated for one change in information. In both cases, time and effort is wasted.

An example: When returning to Tech for the fall, a hypothetical stu-



"Success can only be achieved if departmental webmasters give up control...to a central group and focus on content."

**Karl Guertin**  
 Online Editor

dent wants to see the school calendar ([registrar.gatech.edu](http://registrar.gatech.edu)), move in day for the dorms ([housing.gatech.edu](http://housing.gatech.edu) or [success.gatech.edu](http://success.gatech.edu)), class schedule ([oscar.gatech.edu](http://oscar.gatech.edu)) and pay tuition and related fees ([notbursar.gatech.edu](http://notbursar.gatech.edu), buried in [oscar.gatech.edu](http://oscar.gatech.edu)).

For each subdomain, the student has to remember the domain name, figure out the organizational structure and find the information on the site.

This is too much work, so the wise student just uses Google and finds the information in a fraction of the time. This isn't uncommon for large sites—Google does a good job of pulling the entire web into one information space. However, a site where Google is more efficient than normal site navigation is always disappointing.

Fractured information space and conflicting designs were okay in 1995 when the technology to fix these problems didn't exist and central control would be a bottleneck. Web technology, however, has matured dramatically, and centralized control of a website's appearance and navigation is not only possible, it's easy.

Tech's websites really need a single content management system (CMS). The system would have to have a lower barrier of entry or a higher value than creating or updating an existing page. A custom solution like Buzzport should be able to achieve a low barrier of entry.

The second essential component is flexibility. Flexibility is important

because it's simpler to use a tool the second time. This is where Buzzport fails—it's simply not worth the time to learn a new system when the current one works. With a flexible CMS, students and professors—or, more likely, their TAs—can use the same system for the syllabus, class website and lab instructions.

Is this asking too much? I think not. Such a solution exists and is freely available: the wiki. Wikis are already used in the two colleges that have usability experts: the College of Computing and the College of Architecture. I advocate expanding wiki usage to cover everything Tech-related.

Consider the world's largest wiki, Wikipedia. Wikipedia is an attempt to create a freely available encyclopedia, and they do a fairly credible job of it. The problems they face are remarkably similar to what the Tech web group faces.

The site relies on tens of thousands of content producers to freely contribute articles. Tech relies on far fewer faculty and staff to do the same. The programmers for Wikipedia solved the problem by creating a very powerful and simple markup language and asking people to help.

Wikipedia is far larger and gets far more traffic than Tech's pages will ever receive, they work with fewer resources, cover more material, and are more consistent and cross-

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# Students should turn out to polls this fall

I still remember the first presidential election I ever "voted" in—I was nine years old, and my fourth grade class held a mock 1992 presidential election. We even had our own debates with two boys playing George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton.

However, in our debates, the actors gave speeches on who would give us more recess time, improve school lunches and cut classroom time because my teacher told us to only talk about the issues that mattered to us. When it came time to cast our ballots on Nov. 2, 1992, 100 percent of my class of 26 students voted.

Now according to national statistics based on the 2000 election results, approximately nine of those 26 students will vote in this year's election.

In the last presidential election, the 18-24 age group had the lowest voter turnout. Last week's *Technique* reported that Georgia was below the national average for voter turnout.

Since the fourth grade pseudo election, I've voted in countless mock and student government elections, but this November will be my first time voting in a presidential election.

I've waited 12 long years before I finally reached the age where I could make my vote count, and I cannot imagine why



**"How hard would it be to stop by the Student Center in between classes to make a decision?"**

**Kimberly Rieck**  
Opinions Editor

other people would not want to make their voices heard.

The results of this election year will directly impact the future of the nation, and in particular, 100 percent of the people in the nation's 18-24 year-old age group, not just the less than 40 percent who turned out at the polls four years ago. However, this year in particular, there are several pressing issues including the Iraq war, the economy, unemployment and privacy issues that should concern you.

In 1972, the year that 18-year-olds were first allowed to vote, over half of the age group voted, according to CBS News.

Motivating young voters has become the major focus of a number of groups this year. Some of the biggest groups targeting college-age voters include MTV's Choose or Lose, the Hip-Hop Summit Action Network, Rock the Vote and the U.S. State Department's Election Focus 2004. In addition, there's a youth

voter initiative called "Declare Yourself" that is moving the Declaration of Independence around the country. All of the aforementioned groups are non-partisan.

Several campus groups are also working together to try to get Tech students to vote this year.

The Student Government Association (SGA) has formed the Civic Relations Committee, a nonpartisan committee that will help push for political awareness on campus.

Also according to the *Nique*, the College Democrats and the College Republicans are both planning voter registration drives and other election-related events.

I realize Tech has its share of apathetic students, and you may be one of them.

With classes starting up recently, I can understand how many of you may not have had the time to register and research

the issues.

To find out about the issues, try tuning into CNN or Fox News for a few weeks, and you'll be caught up to speed in no time.

As for the actual registering and voting processes, every Tech student has a computer and everyone passes by the Student Center at least once a day.

As long as you are a U.S. Citizen, you can register to vote at Tech by virtue of being a student here. All voting takes place in the Student Center.

You can register to vote at Tech online through the Secretary of State's website ([www.sos.state.ga.us](http://www.sos.state.ga.us)). The deadline is Oct. 4.

If you're an out-of-state student and want to vote for your state and local officials, you don't even have to send off for an absentee ballot form anymore.

Several sites are making it possible to register online. An example is MTV's Choose or Lose headquarters ([www.mtv.com/chooseorlose](http://www.mtv.com/chooseorlose)).

How hard would it be to stop by the Student Center in between classes to make a decision that will impact history?

If you want to have a say about what opportunities you'll have available to you after graduation, among countless other future events, then turn out to the polls Nov. 2.

## BUZZ

### Around the Campus

#### What's your favorite on-campus restaurant?



**Brandon Gray**  
Fourth-year BMED

*"Junior's is my favorite. The staff is friendly, food is great."*



**John Bonds**  
Fourth-year EE

*"My favorite is Pizza Hut. I love it because it's quick, cheap and easy."*



**Michelle Rivero**  
Second-year ME

*"Tin Drum. The Pad Thai is really good."*



**Wiljeana Jackson**  
Fifth-year IE

*"Jackets: great food and nice ambiance."*

Photos by Antoine Townes

### OUR VIEWS HOT OR NOT

## HOT- or -NOT



### LAN parties

Normally, spending your first Saturday night of college holed up in the library or playing with your computer is a bad idea. But last weekend's LAN party at the library, sponsored by OIT, was the exception to the rule. Freshmen had the chance to embrace their geeky side while still interacting with other human beings, a combination that's hard to achieve. Besides, who doesn't love Halo?



### Down with the booth

Instead of serving as an eyesore to the IC lot, the unused parking booth has suddenly disappeared. We always expected to crash into pedestrians or cars coming around the corner, but now we have room to maneuver. For our safety, though, we need a speed bump. People zoom around the corner too quickly.



### Dude, where's my bike?

Imagine the horror of finding your treasured Schwinn clipped from its rack, and then you know how the poor souls who've had their bikes and cars broken into this month feel. At least eight bikes have been stolen this past month, and twelve cars have been broken into. The *Nique* offers its condolences to the victims of these crimes. Hopefully with the increased awareness, crime will decrease.



### Bricks everywhere

We're all for campus beautification, but why on earth did Tech waste money on bricks for the top of Curran Parking Deck? The volleyball and basketball courts are more than enough for the space. Why shut down pedestrian use to lay bricks in an area that's barely seen? Next time, save the bricks, and our money

## Olympic coverage falls short

Kimberly Mason  
*Northwestern Star*

(U-WIRE) DeKalb, Ill. —

It has been about a week and a half since the Olympics started, and I'm already sick of the game.

The first nauseating thing, or shall I say, person, that comes to mind is Michael Phelps, aka "Aquaman."

The man who refuses to wear anything but a Speedo was on the cover of numerous magazines and television shows.

The media have hyped this 19-year-old to be the swimmers' Carl Lewis, yet the announcers spoke with such excited criticism when he received two bronze medals.

Once again, the fickle media has built up a hero only to criticize his so-called "failed" endeavors.

Further dragging down the spirit of the Olympics are the annoying announcers who shred the gymnasts' routines.

### Letter Submission Policy

The *Technique* welcomes all letters to the editor and will print letters on a timely and space-available basis. Letters may be mailed to Georgia Tech Campus Mail Code 0290, emailed to [editor@technique.gatech.edu](mailto:editor@technique.gatech.edu) or hand-delivered to room 137 of the Student Services Building. Letters should be addressed to Daniel Amick, Editor-in-Chief.

All letters must be signed and must include a campus box number or other valid mailing address for verification purposes. Letters should not exceed 400 words and should be submitted by 8 a.m. Wednesday in order to be printed in the following Friday's issue. Any letters not meeting these criteria or not considered by the Editorial Board of the *Technique* to be of valid intent will not be printed. Editors reserves the right to edit for style, content and length. Only one submission per person will be printed each term.

### Advertising Information

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### Coverage Requests

Press releases and requests for coverage may be made to the editor-in-chief or to individual section editors. For more information, email [editor@technique.gatech.edu](mailto:editor@technique.gatech.edu).

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referenced than Tech's pages. The average Wikipedia article is much more useful than the average gatech.edu page.

Tech has the advantage of having more motivated contributors and a tighter focus, but since we lack the community and single information space that Wikipedia has, we can't leverage these advantages to create a better site.

The biggest barrier to achieving this goal is not technical, but social. Massweb integration across divisions in any large organization is generally stopped by departments that don't want to lose control of "their" information.

Success can only be achieved if departmental webmasters give up control over the appearance of their pages to a central group and instead focus on the content. Doing this multiplies the design and programming efforts of that central group and enables progress on a single, unified solution rather than a dozen re-inventions of the wheel.

Our beloved MaTech is expected to be a technology leader. Currently, the Tech web experience is terrible.

I sincerely believe that Tech can demonstrate its technological leadership by converting all of its information pages to a wiki and producing a superior web experience than our peer institutions.

My goal here is to start a dialog, so I encourage anybody who has an interest in the future of Tech web pages to join the tech-web@lists.nique.net mailing list.

**BLINDED BY SCIENCE A TECH PERSPECTIVE ON SCIENCE ISSUES****Don't blame the messenger, blame the weather**

It seems to have become a stereotype in the entertainment business now: the bungling weatherman who couldn't predict the weather if his life depended on it.

I even heard a commercial on the radio the other day that featured a weatherman telling listeners something like "Today there will be a 50 percent chance of rain and a 50 percent chance of sun, so make sure to bring an umbrella...and some sunscreen."

I understand that depictions such as these are all in jest, but they come out of an increasingly skeptical attitude that much of the public holds towards meteorologists.

I know that as a meteorology student, I've been asked on numerous occasions why weather forecasts can be so inaccurate and why meteorologists have trouble predicting things like the formation of tornadoes and the exact path of hurricanes.

The truth of the matter is that, well, it is really hard.

To say that the atmosphere is a complicated system is certainly an understatement, and I don't think that many people consider this.

And unfortunately, there is a lot we still don't understand, though researchers are working hard to gain further insight into atmospheric processes so that they can continue to improve their predictions.

People need to realize that we cannot make perfect forecasts: we may not ever be able to.

I also think that a lot of the mis-



**"People need to realize that we cannot make perfect forecasts: we may never be able to."**

**Andrea Thompson  
Columnist**

conceptions about meteorology arise from an ignorance of what certain terms or expressions mean.

One of the most common complaints I hear goes something like this: "There was a 60 percent chance of rain today, why didn't we get any?"

Well, what many people don't realize is that that expression means that 60 percent of the forecast area will get rain, not that you will get rain for 60 percent of the day in one area.

You just happened to be in the 40 percent of the area that didn't get rain (probably because you actually brought your umbrella with you to class).

Now I'm not trying to suggest that the public is always to blame for these misconceptions just because they don't know the exact definitions of terms like relative humidity.

I think that meteorologists should make a more concerted effort to educate the public and make these concepts more accessible.

But it does kind of surprise me that more people aren't interested

in learning about something that affects them every day.

A better understanding of weather and weather related phenomena could certainly save many lives.

A prime example of such a situation is Hurricane Charley and the shift that it took from the primary projected path issued by the National Hurricane Center.

I read an article on CNN.com, that interviewed an NHC meteorologist, who told the reporter that he was surprised that so many people were caught off guard by the path shift.

When the path of a hurricane is predicted, a margin of error is always included, which is why the path projection has a cone shape.

Tampa was predicted to be most likely spot for the hurricane to hit, but the areas that actually received the brunt of the hurricane were well within the cone projection.

Unfortunately, the media and the public seized on the Tampa prediction and only that area was really evacuated, when anyone within that projected cone should have left.

Some say they were caught off guard by the rapid intensification of the hurricane, that if they had known it would reach category four status, they would have evacuated.

But when it comes to hurricanes, you have to expect the unexpected.

The truth is that this intensification process is common but not well understood, and therefore difficult to predict.

Many lives could have been saved if the public and the media understood these facts.

Education in these areas certainly needs to be improved, and it is up to both the public and meteorologists to make strides at the gaps in this knowledge.

