**RoBoJackets featured in Dragon*Con competition**

By Alan Back

“Every person here, at the drop of a hat, will help out another team, lend them tools… if they need it.”

Kelly Lockhart

Robot Battles Creator

On July 2, the Regency Ballroom of the Hyatt Regency Atlanta became a battlefield for the last day of the 2000 Dragon*Con science-fiction convention. Design teams for the Robot Battles contest took over the area to do their best jobs of turning perfectly good machines into disfigured wrecks of frames of a packed house.

Creator Kelly Lockhart adapted the idea for the competition from Critter Crunch, a similar event held at the annual MileHiCon sci-fi gathering Denver. Only three teams entered the first Robot Battles in 1991, but the field has steadily grown since then: some 20 robots faced off at Dragon*Con.

Teams built and armed robots in one of three weight divisions—lightweight (1-10 pounds), middleweight (10-25 pounds), or heavyweight (25-50 pounds)—and pitted them against each other in head-to-head combat. A robot won a round by either stopping its opponent cold or pushing it out of the ring, and the first to win two rounds advanced.

Gesturing at the teams that were set up behind the ballroom, Lockhart said, “They do it because it’s their hobby and just for enjoyment... Every team here, at the drop of a hat, will help out another team, lend them tools or whatever if they need it.” Participants were indeed toosing ideas and tools back and forth as they got ready to lock horns.

Simon Arthur of Davaun un-veiled an overweight version of his 1999 entry, Stringray. Packing a ramming spike, a lifting arm, and a pair of secondary spikes, Stringray II came ready to throw down.

“I tried to instrumentally develop the design, but ended up having to redo the whole thing,” Arthur explained before the fights began.

Meanwhile, Terry Talton, from Dallas, Georgia, was doing some last-minute testing on his own heavy-weight robot, Tin ‘Lizzie Borden, to make sure its gas-operated hatchet could cut the mud. He then proceeded to chop through the cover and 280 pages of a hardback book while an impressed crowd watched.

Before Talton’s creation could show off more of its moves, though, the rest of the field had to be dealt with.

Most of the lightweight entries were built primarily for speed, which backfired on a few of them when they failed to stop at the ring’s edge and plummeted to the floor.

See Battles, page 10

**Fifth Street Project Partnering with the Midtown Alliance**

**Midtown Alliance, Fifth Street Project a perfect match**

By Jennifer Hinkel

Across the county otherwise known as I-75/85, an empty eight acre expanse awaits rebirth, regeneration, and the implementation of an $148 million plan that will carry campus into Midtown.

The Midtown Alliance, creator of the comprehensive development plans entitled “Blueprint Midtown,” lists more than 30 projects that will be part of Atlanta’s growth and improvement in coming years. Susan Mendheim, the president and CEO of the Midtown Alliance, stressed the importance of Tech’s involvement in the greater Blueprint Atlanta plan.

“The Blueprint calls for Fifth Street to be a major corridor,” said Mendheim. “This pedestrian and vehicular corridor is extremely important to us for a variety of reasons,” said Mendheim.

Midtown Alliance’s reason’s for becoming partners with Tech in this project are “to connect Georgia Tech with the east side of the Midtown area,” and “to provide a bridge to create a boulevard along Fifth Street.”

The Alliance hopes that the project will turn Fifth Street into a mecca of retail, restaurants, pedestrians, and students, complete with plenty of trees and bicycle lanes.

Mendheim expressed the Alliance’s desire to assist in the creation of “a vibrant pedestrian experience,” with hopes of “bringing hundreds upon hundreds onto the street, enjoying restaurants and shops.”

See Midtown, page 3

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**Grad students battle for better health insurance**

**A new plan would be partly school-subsidized and increase competitive advantage of graduate programs, say advocates**

By Jennifer Hinkel

News Editor

Apparently, not even graduate students are immune to health insurance woes.

The Graduate Student Senate (GSS) has been working to improve the current condition of graduate student health care. Currently, students are able to purchase an insurance plan similar to that of undergraduate through the Student Heath Center and Pierce and Pierce, but none of the cost is covered by Tech. Unlike many of Tech’s peer institutions, which offer benefit plans and insurance reimbursement to graduate student assistants and grants in research, students in similar positions at Tech are not offered any such benefits.

A group of graduate students, with the help of Dean of Graduate Studies and Vice Provost for Research Dr. Charles Liotta, are attempting to change the current policy. The students are petitioning for a plan comparable to the one offered through the Student Health Center, costing approximately $400 per student.

Significant progress has already been made; task forces insurance plans similar to that of graduate health care for grads. According to the article, “the preparation of evidence shows that the schools we compare ourselves to and compete against are offering health insurance as part of graduate assistant compensation.”

Though published just a year ago, this realization has yet to come into practice.

Jenelle Piepmeier, the previous chair of the Health Services Committee, composed the paper, along with Graduate Student Association, but none of their efforts has yet to come into practice.

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See Midtown, page 3

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**Summer Housing Check-out Reminder**

Due to summer conference scheduling, the Department of Housing has implemented the following check-out/check-in policy for those living on campus during this summer:

You must either move out of your summer residence hall space by August 4 or be able to move to your fall residence hall space on Monday, August 14. If you choose not to store your belongings on August 4, you must be absolutely sure you will be able to move your belongings on August 14. Otherwise, a housing staff member will be forced to pack your belongings and place them into a temporary storage area at a cost of $100 per day. The Department of Housing will not be responsible for the condition of your belongings.

Additional information is available at the Housing Web site (www.housing.gatech.edu) under the header, “Summer 2000 Closing.”

See Housing, page 14

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### Summer Semester Final Exam Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Meeting Time</th>
<th>Exam Period</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Examination Time</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MWF 10:40 - 11:50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>7/29</td>
<td>8:00 - 10:50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MWF 1:20 - 2:30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>7/29</td>
<td>11:30 - 2:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTH 10:00 - 11:45</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>7/29</td>
<td>2:50 - 5:40</td>
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<tr>
<td>MWF 9:20 - 10:30</td>
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<td>Mon</td>
<td>7/31</td>
<td>8:00 - 10:50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTH 8:00 - 9:45</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>7/31</td>
<td>11:30 - 2:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MWF 8:00 - 9:10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>7/31</td>
<td>2:50 - 5:40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MWF 2:40 - 3:50</td>
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<td>8/2</td>
<td>8:00 - 10:50</td>
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<tr>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>8/2</td>
<td>11:30 - 2:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERIOD FOR CONFLICTS</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>8/2</td>
<td>2:50 - 5:40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Good Luck!**

**NOTE:** For a class meeting at irregular times, the examination period is determined by the day and hour at which the regularly sequenced class meets.

**EXAMINATIONS FOR COURSES SCHEDULED DURING EVENING HOURS (5 p.m. or later):** Examinations for courses scheduled during the evening hours will be conducted either during the regular evening class hours during the period of July 29 - August 2, or during the examination period for a daytime section of the course if one is available and the instructor approves.

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**Midtown**

Tech students will need to cross the interstate on Fifth Street to reach such buildings as the DuPree College of Management complex and the new University Bookstore location.

The retail space in the development will number more than 20,000 square feet. If it leases at average Atlanta rates at approximately $18 to $20 a square foot yearly, the retail space could bring in revenues of almost $400,000 each year in leaseholds alone.

Students can anticipate part of the expansion as what Mendheim refers to as a “critical mass of retail,” or large retail areas that attract top quality restaurants and shops.

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**Health**

Government Presidents Doug Britton and David White said the Graduate Student debated a resolution by Piepmeier two years ago that called for the administration to look into health care provisions for Graduate Research Assistants and Graduate Teaching Assistants. The unanimously passed resolution has still not yielded a plan to offer grad health care as part of a compensation package.

One of the primary goals of those who advocate a new plan is to make Tech more attractive to grade. A Strategic Plan for the Georgia Institute of Technology, a plan detailing the mission, strategic context, and goals for the future success of Tech, includes as an objective to “attract the best graduate students—a crucial lifeline for future research excellence.”

In 1996, an implementation committee compiled a working document which detailed objectives to achieve this goal.

Although the document states that “by Fall of 1998, the Provost and Senate Vice President for Administration and Finance will work with the Board of Regents to develop a fringe benefits program for graduate assistants,” no such program exists two years after its set date of implementation.

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**Health**

A Discussion of Graduate Health Insurance Coverage

1998 Student Health Committee

“The preponderance of evidence shows that the schools we compare ourselves to and compete against are offering health insurance as part of graduate assistant compensation.”

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**Studying for finals**

**Library hours for Finals Week**

- **Friday, July 28:** 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
- **Saturday, July 29:** 9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
- **Sunday, July 30:** 12:00 p.m. - 2:00 a.m.
- **Monday, July 31:** 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 a.m.
- **Tuesday, August 1:** 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 a.m.
- **Wednesday, August 2:** 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 a.m.
- **Thursday, August 3:** 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 a.m.
- **Friday, August 4:** 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
OPINIONS

The views on these pages are our opinions. If you don’t agree with them, fine. Write us a letter. We would like to hear what you think. We will probably even print it in the paper. You might like that. So write us.

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

Quote of the week:
"If you don’t like your job, you don’t strike. You just go in everyday and do it really half-assed. That’s the American Way.” – Homer Simpson

OUR VIEWS Consensus Opinion

Graduate health care

Health insurance. As undergrads, we don’t think about it very much because we’re covered by our parents’ insurance. For graduate students, though, health insurance is a very real concern.

Just a short while ago, grad students received the option of purchasing health insurance from the Health Center. Now they want Tech to help subsidize their insurance costs. Having chosen to forgo the working world in favor of continuing their education, grad students have decided the opportunity cost of going to school is lower than that of going to work. That doesn’t mean they shouldn’t be entitled to some help with their health insurance, though.

On the other hand, Mr. Mendis is clearly a quant man. He is obsessed with numbers to make the GTPD look good. The various articles over the past 18 months report them because most people know that the response by the police will be inadequate, if they bother to do anything at all.

Mr. Mendis has obviously never dealt with the “keystone cops,” better known as the GTPD. These people are some of the sorriest, saddest excuses for law enforcement that have ever worn the shield. The various theft or other crime reported on our campus. Mr. Mendis tries to compare our crime rate with those of large campuses like UCLA, but fails to mention that they have nearly FOUR times our student populations.

The problem is not that we have less crime, it is that fewer people report them because most people know that the response by the police will be inadequate, if they bother to do anything at all.

Mr. Mendis seems to be a spokesman for these people. In all fairness, they probably do meet some minimum requirement, but so does government cheese.

It seems like every month there is a new problem with Housing. July is no different as students are beginning to realize how inconvenient this summer’s move-out schedule is.

Housing made the mistake of scheduling conference housing until August 12 before they had decided when Fall Semester would start and before they had decided when students would be able to move into their fall assignments. This means that students cannot move straight into their fall housing from summer housing unless they are on campus on August 14, which is right in the middle of break.

Most students will not be on campus over the break, which means they must move out of their summer housing before they leave. This is a problem for students who do not live nearby and have nowhere to store their belongings.

Housing made a scheduling mistake, and in the future they need to plan ahead. They should make sure to set student housing schedules before allowing conferences to book on-campus housing.

Course critiques

Course critique for regular summer classes will run from July 17 until July 28. We encourage you to fill them out at www.coursesurvey.gatech.edu/student_login.cfm. Professors really do take your suggestions into consideration!

Campus security definitely an issue for Tech students

This letter is in response to Sean Mendis, who wrote in a previous issue that campus safety is not an issue. I personally wonder if he even lives near or around this hellhole part of Atlanta, or if he even lives on this campus.

I have been here since the summer of 1999, and I can tell you, that security IS an issue here at Tech. Mr. Mendis has obviously never dealt with the “keystone cops,” better known as the GTPD. These people are some of the sorriest, saddest excuses for law enforcement that have ever worn the shield. The various articles over the past 18 months about their response system only help to reinforce this belief.

Mr. Mendis tries to quote some numbers to make the GTPD look good. Mr. Mendis seems to be a spokesmen for these people. In all fairness, they probably do meet some minimum requirement, but so does government cheese.

Maybe I’m just spoiled, but I came from a town just outside of Tampa, FL and we had fewer police patrolling a larger area and yet we had fewer crimes.

I wonder why it is that people think that they’re getting good security when there isn’t a day that goes by when there is not a major theft or other crime reported on our campus. Mr. Mendis tries to compare our crime rate with those of large campuses like UCLA, but fails to mention that they have nearly four times our student populations.

The problem is not that we have less crime, it is that fewer people report them because most people know that the response by the police will be inadequate, if they bother to do anything at all.

Mr. Mendis, who has written in a previous issue for Tech students, cannot move straight into their fall assignments. This means they cannot move straight into their fall housing from summer housing unless they are on campus on August 14, which is right in the middle of break.

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There are limits to how much Tech can and should do, though. Paying for all of the insurance will create too large of a financial burden for the institute. And while subsidizing health insurance for the graduate student is a good idea, subsidizing health insurance for the student’s family may be outside of Tech’s means.

Subsidizing part of the cost of graduate health insurance is a smart move on Tech’s part as it may be the pivotal factor in a student’s decision to come here for graduate school. We want to be competitive with the other top grad schools in the country, so why not add a little incentive to encourage students to come to Tech?

Housing move-out

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We would like to hear what you think. We will probably even print it in the paper. You might like that. So write us.
Harry Potter is magical—can’t we just leave it that way?

Like many Atlantans my age, I spent the later part of last Friday night in Buckhead... only I was at a booknote, waiting for Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, the latest book in J. K. Rowling’s immensely popular series about a boy wizard. Like many people of any age, I had been eagerly awaiting the new Harry Potter... and knowing what would happen to Harry, Ron, and Hermione as they tolerated Draco Malfoy, avoided Professor Snape, and foiled You-Know-Who’s latest plots at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

Like much of the world, I have fallen in love with Harry Potter. Much of the world, for many of us, do not include all of the world, though, and like any wildly popular phenomenon, the Harry Potter series has its share of detractors. Harry Potter is sexy. Harry Potter is saucy. Harry Potter is willing. Many might not include all of the world, though, and like any wildly popular phenomenon, the Harry Potter series has its share of detractors. Harry Potter is sexy. Harry Potter is saucy. Harry Potter is willing. Many might not include all of the world, though, and like any wildly popular phenomenon, the Harry Potter series has its share of detractors. Harry Potter is sexy. Harry Potter is saucy. Harry Potter is willing. Many might not include all of the world, though, and like any wildly popular phenomenon, the Harry Potter series has its share of detractors. Harry Potter is sexy. Harry Potter is saucy. Harry Potter is willing. Many might not include all of the world, though, and like any wildly popular phenomenon, the Harry Potter series has its share of detractors. Harry Potter is sexy. Harry Potter is saucy. Harry Potter is willing. Many might not include all of the world, though, and like any wildly popular phenomenon, the Harry Potter series has its share of detractors. Harry Potter is sexy. Harry Potter is saucy. Harry Potter is willing.
NASA and Tech team up to teach high school rocket scientists

By Becca Cutri-Kohart
Ernest Rocket Scientist

Recently, researchers across campus are seeing younger and younger. It’s not just an illusion. There are actually high school students on campus performing innovative and cutting-edge research under the supervision of professors all summer through the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) SHARP Plus program. The NASA program takes top high school students from all over the country who are part of under-represented groups in engineering (women and minorities) and pair them with professors and researchers to participate in hands-on research. The eight-week program (June 12 to August 4) takes place at 14 universities all over the country.

At Tech, the program is administered through the Georgia Space Grant Consortium (GSGC) office, under the direction of Dr. Erian Armanios and Wanda Pierson. Participants are selected through a highly competitive application process.

The NASA SHARP students at Tech are paired with professors and doing research with them on topics that include smart sensors and doing research with them at Tech are paired with professors they are working for have given her “guidance in college selection and how [universities] actually go about their research.”

All the NASA SHARP participants are required to continue their work into the academic year as well as present both written and oral reports about their progress. Without will enter her research in the International Science Fair Competition.

The high school students aren’t the only ones who benefit from this program. The professors they are working with have given her “guidance in college selection and how [universities] actually go about their research.”

The students rapidly integrated themselves into both the Tech and Atlanta communities. They live in Cloudman and dine at Brittain, and they can often be seen playing volleyball in the East Campus Courtyard. They take cultural and educational field trips to the Atlanta Botanical Gardens, NASA Marshall Space Flight Center, Lockheed Martin, Delta and more.

The students’ chaperone and live-in advisor, Micadel Calbirk, said the students are adapting well to college life, since they are all “very disciplined and doing fine… they are learning to be more responsible.”

The final outcome of the program is college-bound engineering students who have been exposed to university-level research and college academics. The participants’ opinions of the program, however, can be summed up in the words of Sarah Wilhoit, “This is worthwhile. I’m glad I did it.”

Real World Digested

‘Real World’ adventures continue

Jamie Schulz
Will not strip for Melissa

Since I had nothing better to do on the holiday weekend, I watched the “Real World” on MTV, for you, dear reader, probably while you were out doing something more interesting.

It seems our own Tech ambassador to N’awlins, Matt Smith, still isn’t warming too well to Julie. He practically shot her down when she asked him to go to the drag show. His excuse? “I don’t like that; it’s not normal.” Wise up, Matt; you attend school in the city that has been labeled as being the gay hub of the south. It’s an everyday occurrence in Atlanta. Tol- erate it, and have fun. Need we remind you that you’re in New Orleans? She’s going to give up sooner or later.

But Melissa seems to be the one to watch. She broke up with “Frat Matt” because she felt they were too different, and that he only used her for the glamour associated with the house. The show seems to be focused on just three people right now. Very aggravating.

But if it doesn’t get ratings, why show it? And why do they all have to be so two-dimensional?

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But if it doesn’t get ratings, why show it? And why do they all have to be so two-dimensional? Take Jamie, for instance. He seems to have no depth. He’s been out with quite a couple of girls and has expressed his attraction to Kelley, but he has noth- ing more to say.

Matt still doesn’t play a pivotal role going into the sixth week, but David has taken the place of Melissa as the problem child. He’s gotten a job as a bartender. A bit hypocritical, since he says that alcohol doesn’t solve anything.

The show they’re producing has had some snafus. Everyone was supposed to be working on the show, and as producer, Kelley was wanting to see David’s work.

He claims he has it, but has no hard data. Tempers flare and expli- cits fly again in the board room when David shuts down everyone’s ideas, but he takes the defensive every time someone mentions his music.

Seems Davey-boy is making friends, though he did win back Melissa when he stripped for her at her birthday party. Exciting, even if Melissa tried to hook up with everyone in the house after her party.

Copenhagen, here I come! Get all the travel facts and Netherland’s nightlife scoop Fall Semester in a continuing column by our very own study abroad correspondent.

Freshman Issue

Catch the first issue of Fall Semester that will give heads-up on programs, special events and goings-on for not just the freshmen.
The agility of Blood Clot, a two-wheeled double wedge painted bright red, came as no surprise. However, its builders, Jason Brown and Kenny McKenny from Chattanooga, had also packed quite a wallop under the hood. The little robot easily fought at close quarters with opponents twice its size, levering itself under their bodywork or slamming hard enough to knock them apart. When the pieces stopped flying, Brown and McKenny had earned the title.

The RoboJackets, Georgia Tech's robotics club, made their debut in the middleweight division with a low-profile rig christened RoboBuzz. Built close to the ground in a four-sided wedge design, the robot was designed to sweep in and knock opponents off balance, then quickly get itself out of harm's way. A combination of equipment breakdowns and women's undergarments would do RoboBuzz in, however. Up against Stealth Wedge, a single large wedge with a pile of panties dumped on top, it fought to a draw in one bout and was pushed out in two others.

After the competition, team captain Kevin Reim said, "Considering all the bad luck and the mishaps we've been having, I think we did pretty well... We didn't get the right parts that we wanted, that needed to be on there, and the speed controllers were kind of cheap and were failing anyway. But at least we were able to get up on stage with all the things that were going wrong." Stealth Wedge, driven by Brian Craig of northeast Atlanta, would go on to win the division championship. Jim Craig, his uncle, later won top honors in the Battle Royal.

The heavyweight fights were all about one thing: doing a lot of damage in the shortest possible time—and Tin Lizzie Borden handled most of that. Locking up with Stingray II in the division's first face-off, Lizzie did an admirable job of ventilating its opponent's bodywork before showing it out of the ring twice to reach the finals.

Across the ring in the day's last head-to-head match was Heap, a big, flat, black monster with a circular saw mounted in front. Cameramen and reporters were cleared out of the area behind the stage for their own protection as the two combatants came out fighting. When their cutting weapons failed, there was nothing for them to do but slug it out at point-blank range. Smoke began to rise from the stage and the carpet blackened as Lizzie gradually pushed Heap over the edge to win the first round. The saw was replaced by a drill for the second, but Lizzie paid no mind and chopped its way to another victory and the division title.
Great advances in musical navigation

By Alan Back

Notepad, camera, laptopghmmmm...

In the world of popular music, few innovations have had more effect than the jam session. Some bands fool around after hours to let off all their musical steam, but they often prefer to do it in front of audiences that appeal to fans of disciplined rock and roll experience. Most expected that only those with exceptional talent do not come around every day. But I can live with the extras I got.

There really are two main reasons why this, there is no major reason to do with their next effort. First of all, it should be noted that, there is no major reason to do with their next effort. Second, there is no major reason to do with their next effort. I do believe that, there is no major reason to do with their next effort. I do believe that, there is no major reason to do with their next effort. I do believe that, there is no major reason to do with their next effort. I do believe that, there is no major reason to do with their next effort. I do believe that, there is no major reason to do with their next effort. I do believe that, there is no major reason to do with their next effort.
Do you ever find that life at Tech gets too stressful? Do you ever have that sinking feeling that your major might not satisfy you or you might not make enough money? Do you ever find that life at Tech gets too stressful? Do you ever have that sinking feeling that your major might not satisfy you or you might not make enough money?

Drifting Through up.

Last month in Raleigh, Drifting Through tried out live in a show in support for Grateful Dead guitarist Bob Weir and his band, Ratdog. The experience was a definite first for them, Kirsch recalled. “It was our first live experience as a group, and it was amazing. We were really nervous, but it turned out to be a great show.”

While they work hard to expand their fan base, their motivation differs from that of most other new artists who see a major-label deal as a trip to the Promised Land. Kirsch described the music business as a disgusting place where one really depends on the market whether one is really better or not. People may get the impression that the second band is the better one, and that’s not necessarily the case all the time.

When you pick a goal, you need to have a convenient deity. Some cult leaders will choose silly names like Dish for their leaders, but the Two Bits Man is far too shrewd for such folly. So, I will choose a strong name for my deity. We will work to put the album into rotation in the near future. The first 2,000 people who buy the album will get a free t-shirt.

You will also need good locations to put your cult attractive to five-star chefs, supermodels, and multibillionaires, if you want to make your cult work. The Two Bits cult leaders will choose silly names like Dish for their leaders, but the Two Bits Man is far too shrewd for such folly, so I will choose a strong name for my deity. We will work to put the album into rotation in the near future. The first 2,000 people who buy the album will get a free t-shirt.

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