

The WHISTLE

The Georgia Institute of Technology

Faculty/Staff Newspaper Volume 23. No. 36

October 11, 1999

Tech cracks down on stealing the 'T'

Hoyt Coffee
Alumni Publications

The Georgia Tech administration is taking a hard line on a questionable and dangerous Tech tradition—stealing the “T” from the Tech Tower.

In a letter recently published on campus, President Wayne Clough points out that stealing the “T” is not the long-standing tradition many believe—having first occurred in 1969—and airs his fear that a student attempting the feat could trigger a tragedy on campus.

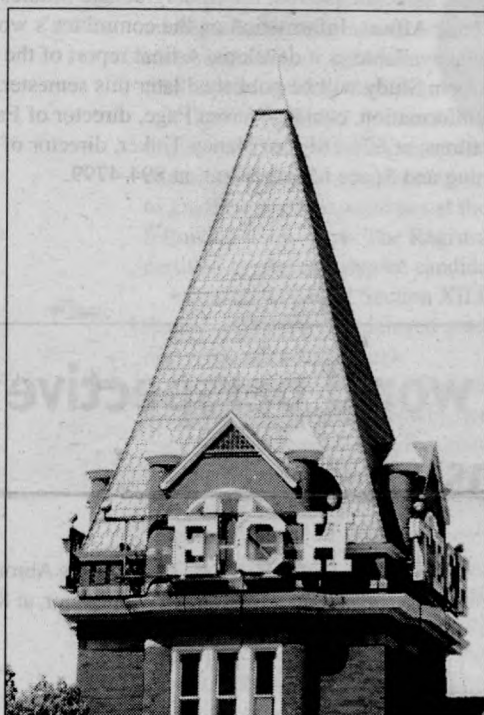
“Like anyone, I appreciate the ingenuity it takes to remove the ‘T,’” Clough wrote. “However, I am deeply concerned about the staggering possibility that a bright young Tech student could easily die or be maimed for life while attempting to scale the Tower.”

“To those who might think my concern is alarmist, I point to the young woman whose life ended tragically only a few months ago when she tried to climb one of our campus buildings.”

In addition to the horror of such a death, Clough notes that Tech could face “incredibly expensive liability litigation.” Likewise, the property damage caused by attempts to steal the “T” has added up to \$13,000 on past occasions.

The letter also spells out the consequences students who ignore the warning could face. Not only would they be subject to criminal prosecution for vandalism, they also would face Institute penalties “up to and including expulsion.”

“We have traditions enough to honor that are safe and serve us well,” he added.



The tradition started in 1969 with the first “T” theft.

History and traditions

The venerable symbol of Georgia Tech—the Tech Tower—is as old as the Institute itself, dating back to 1888. Yet for all its prominence, the story behind its fabled T-E-C-H letters is vague.

Judging from *Blueprint* photographs of the structure, a small, one-piece Tech sign was in place atop the Tower by 1918. An article in the September 22, 1920, edition of the *Technique* credits the class of 1922 with lighting the sign at the end of their freshman year, 1919. According to the article, the class “wanted to give the school something that would always show to visitors and passersby that the spirit of Tech lived and was burning anew in the heart of every Tech man.”

In the class history published in the 1922 yearbook, the same event is described with an additional piece of information that further clouds the issue. It was noted that as freshmen, class members lit the Tech sign “for the first time in years.” Georgia Tech archivist Ruth Hale speculates that the sign may have been wired some years earlier than 1919, but not lit because of wartime conservation measures.

In any case, the class of 1922 had intended that throwing the switch on the Tech sign become a tradition for each new freshman class.

Not until the early '50s was the sign composed of individual letters five feet tall and the lights changed from incandescent bulbs to neon. And from that change grew another tradition—stealing the “T.” The feat has been performed many times over the years. Purloined “T’s” have been presented to Tech presidents, professors, alumni and coaches, most of whom good-naturedly accepted the gift, then returned it to its rightful place.

Source: Alumni Association

TEAM Buzz wants you! Registration deadline this week

Projects are filling up and time is getting short to register for the third annual TEAM Buzz Community Service Day on Oct. 23. Volunteers will fan out among more than 40 projects, including the Atlanta International Museum, Atlanta Ronald McDonald Houses, Center for the Visually Impaired, Dunwoody Nature Center, Park Pride, Project Open Hand, Race for the Cure and Reynoldstown Revitalization.

The registration deadline is Oct. 15. To register, see <http://cyberbuzz.gatech.edu/teambuzz/>. For more information, contact Melissa Matassa, faculty/staff involvement chair, at 206-9063 or gte588e@prism.gatech.edu.

Event schedule:

8:30 – 9 a.m., Breakfast
9 – 9:30 a.m., Kick-off rally (Georgia Tech Plaza)
9:30 – 10 a.m., Travel to projects sites
10 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., Service projects (various sites)
1:30 – 3:30 p.m., Celebration party (Peter's Parking Deck)

Hollywood calls again

Earlier this month producers for the television game show *Hollywood Squares* held auditions at Tech for a college tournament. Now, movie producers are on campus filming *Road Trip*, a comedy about a college freshman on a cross-country trek to visit his longtime girlfriend at another college.

From Oct. 17-25, pedestrian traffic from the library to the Swann Building to the Tech Tower may be temporarily re-routed as exterior scenes are filmed. Passersby are welcome to pause and watch the action.

An open casting call for movie “extras” was held earlier this month, so *Road Trip* may feature a couple of recognizable faces from the Tech community. The film is produced by Montecito Pictures/DreamWorks Productions.



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Thorsen, Hannabach team up to lead retiree campaign



Carolyn Thorsen, former associate director of CEISMC, and John Hannabach, former director of Career Services, are heading up this year's retiree campaign as part of the Georgia Tech Charitable Campaign. At right, Thorsen looks on as Hannabach signs a transparency of the letter that will be sent out to their fellow retirees. The Charitable Campaign runs through October.

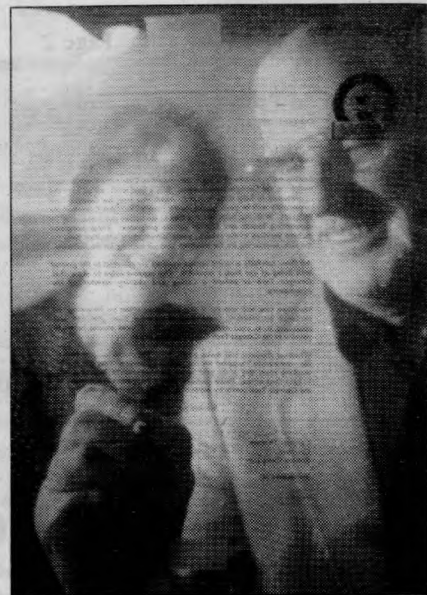


Photo by Stanley Leary, Institute Communications and Public Affairs

Did you know

Improving campus classrooms

As part of an ongoing effort to improve the teaching facilities at Georgia Tech, \$205,000 worth of work was completed on 68 classrooms this summer. Improvements included new paint, lighting upgrades, ceiling and flooring repairs, new blinds, new carpet and drop ceilings. The work represented a joint effort between Facilities Operations, and Capital Planning and Space Management, which recently conducted a Classroom Study that identified rooms in need of improvements. Also part of the effort is a Classroom Advocacy

Committee, to be established under the leadership of Bob McMath, associate provost for Undergraduate Studies and Academic Affairs. Information on the committee's work will be made available as it develops. A final report of the Classroom Study will be published later this semester. For more information, contact Warren Page, director of Facilities Operations, at 894-1613, or Nancy Tinker, director of Capital Planning and Space Management, at 894-4799.

Going global: Students get world perspective with study abroad programs

With a growing number of fields becoming global, study abroad programs offer greater value and more appeal to students who will be working in an increasingly international marketplace. Tech offers almost 40 study abroad and exchange programs, each one giving students a chance to enhance their Tech experience and possibly an edge in the job market. Following are just two examples of Georgia Tech's study abroad programs.

Oxford

After 50 years, the government of the Federal Republic of Germany is returning to Berlin. In June, the Bundestag met in Bonn for the last time, and 122 members of the Georgia Tech Oxford Study Abroad Program were in Berlin when the historical event occurred.

Accompanying the students were Carolyn Wiersen, associate director of the Counseling Center; her husband Phil, a psychologist in private practice; Ron Lewcock, professor, College of Architecture; Steven Broad, Ph.D. music lecturer, Worcester College, Oxford University; Camille Chapman, program coordinator, International Programs; and Gail Palmer, professional communication skills program specialist, School of Electrical and Computer Engineering.

The Oxford Study Abroad Program offered three travel courses this summer, all of which preceded other courses at Oxford University, England. Accompanying students on the Barcelona tour were Miller Templeton, director emeritus of International Student Services; Dorothy Ferguson, an Emory nurse; and Lee Payne and Bill Caldwell, professors in the College of Architecture. From Barcelona, they traveled to Nice, Venice, Heidelberg and Paris. The St. Petersburg group studied culture and politics in St. Petersburg, Stockholm, Helsinki and Gdansk before merging with the group who initiated their studies in Berlin. The combined St. Petersburg-Berlin group focused their studies on modern art, architecture and music.

The Summer 2000 Georgia Tech Oxford Study Abroad Program incorporates one week of classes at Georgia Tech with a three-week tour of Europe and six weeks of classes at Oxford University. Students can choose the Baltic tour, the Mediterranean tour or the Central European tour. Registration is Nov. 15 - March 1.

Students interested in the Summer 2000 program should

contact Art Koblasz, director of the Oxford Study Abroad Program, or Heather Emmert, program coordinator, at 894-1794.

Moscow 2000

International relations between Russian and U.S. students will be strengthened next summer as a group of Tech students embark on the Moscow 2000 Study Abroad Program. The one-month program (May 15 - June 15) is primarily designed for building construction, architecture, civil and other engineering students, although students with other majors may also participate. The program will offer participants the flexibility of studying subjects closely related to their major, while also examining the Russian language and culture.

The building construction classes, taught by a Georgia Tech professor, will be held at the Moscow State University of Civil Engineering. Class assignments will include visits to construction sites, engineering and architectural firms and various notable buildings around Moscow. Participants will receive six semester credit hours in BC 4900 A&B, Special Problems. The program will also include weekend group trips to such famous sites as Red Square and the Kremlin, St. Basil's Cathedral and the Bolshoy Theatre.

"The building construction, architecture and civil engineering fields are quickly becoming global industries," said Roozbeh Kangari, director of the Building Construction Program. "So it is important that students seize the opportunity to study abroad now, giving them an edge as they graduate with greater knowledge and appreciation of other cultures and countries."

Moscow State University of Civil Engineering is Russia's leading school of higher education and research in civil engineering and architecture. With 12 departments, 1,300 faculty members and approximately 9,000 students, the university has graduated more than 80,000 students. Former Russian President Mikhail Gorbachev is one of the university's many notable graduates.

Participants do not have to speak Russian, but will be briefed on the Russian culture and language before the trip. For more information on the Moscow 2000 Study Abroad Program, contact Jenny Troha at 385-0758 or jenny.troha@arch.gatech.edu.

**Georgia
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Whistle

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Policy on final exams up for debate

Student Regulations Committee prepares report; issue on agenda for Academic Senate

The change to the semester system has given rise to new calendar considerations, including the timing of graduation and final exams. Part of that consideration is whether or not students who are graduating in a given semester should continue to be exempt from "finals."

The policy, in Section XII.C. of the Student Rules and Regulations, currently states: A degree candidate will be exempted from examinations during final examination week in the term of graduation. At the request of the Academic Senate, the Student Regulations Committee—composed of faculty members, administrators and students—reviewed the current policy. Committee members considered four options, and the majority determined which one would be submitted to the Academic Senate as the committee's recommendation. The issue will be discussed at the next meeting of the Academic Senate on Nov. 30.

The four options are:

- **Option 1.** Do not repeal Section XII.C.
- **Option 2.** Repeal Section XII.C. Give "blank" diplomas to both undergraduate and graduate degree candidates at the graduation ceremony immediately following finals week. The Registrar's Office will mail diplomas when certified.
- **Option 3.** Revise Section XII.C. to read: "An undergraduate degree candidate will be exempted from examinations during final examination week in the term of graduation." Give "blank" diplomas to graduate degree candidates at the graduation ceremony immediately following finals week. The Registrar's Office will mail diplomas when certified to graduate degree candidates.
- **Option 4.** Repeal Section XII.C. Give certified diplomas to all degree candidates at a delayed graduation ceremony approximately one week after finals week.

The Student Regulations Committee is recommending Option 2 to the Academic Senate. In making its decision, the committee considered comments from various individuals and groups, including the Registrar's Office, Alumni Association, FASET, Institute Communications and Public Affairs, Housing, Cooperative Division, Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, Graduate Committee, Undergraduate Student Council Resolution Committee, Academic Senate and Graduate Student Senate.

The complete report prepared by the Student Regulations Committee is available on the web at www.facultysenate.gatech.edu/notices.html. A summary of opinions from the contributors mentioned above is included in the report as Appendix I.

Following are comments of the Student Regulations Committee that are included in the report:

- In the status quo, which would be continued by Option 1, some professors give examinations during dead week (i.e. the week preceding final exams) to degree candidates. In doing so, violations of the

Student Bill of Rights, and/or the Teaching Guidelines found in the *Faculty Handbook* may occur. In any case, there is no orderly scheduling of these examinations. Unorganized scheduling can be unfair and stressful to both the faculty and students alike. If the exemption is retained, or modified as in Option 3, then the committee should suggest clarifications of terms and rules for exams held during dead week.

- Option 1 is favored by undergraduate students who prefer to use the finals week for job hunting, relocation preparation and hosting family and friends who come to Atlanta for the graduation ceremony. They want the reward of a real diploma and the feeling that they have successfully graduated. They want the graduation ceremony to be meaningful.

- Option 1 is favored by some faculty who think that, in a 15-week semester, undergraduate degree candidates can be fairly evaluated without a special exam in dead week or finals week. Some faculty regard the existing exemption from finals as a nice perk.

- Option 1 is not favored by faculty who: a) find it pedagogically unsound, particularly in a semester system; b) object to master's degree candidates being exempt from finals in roughly half of their courses; c) see a drop in interest in degree candidates after the last hour exam; d) oppose students taking courses out of sequence to leave tough courses until last in an attempt to avoid finals; e) wish to calibrate grades for all students evenly; f) do not want extra work preparing additional final exams during dead week; g) do not like the effect on the non-degree candidates in the class.

- These arguments are countered by undergraduates who say: a, b, c) other countermeasures are available besides a final in finals week; d) in the status quo, some faculty do give special exams to graduating seniors; e) undergraduate classes are composed mostly of degree candidates or have very few candidates, hence, a good calibration is possible, especially in a term of 15 weeks; f) the honor system can be trusted so that exam questions given in dead week to degree candidates can be repeated during finals week in exams for non-degree candidates; g) 2,000 students, mostly non-degree candidates, signed a petition in Spring 1999 against the repeal of Section XII.C.

- Options 2 and 3 are a problem for some international students who must return home with a certified diploma in hand. They may have to arrange for alternate housing and extra expenses while they await their diploma.

- Options 2 and 3 are not favored by the traditionalists who want certified diplomas to be given at a graduating ceremony.

- Option 4 would cause major economic and scheduling problems for the Housing Office and the FASET organizers ... The process of grade appeals, re-examinations, and determination of honors would be impeded or difficult because faculty would be on break. The extra week would be inconvenient and expensive for degree candidates, which would cause participation at graduation to diminish.

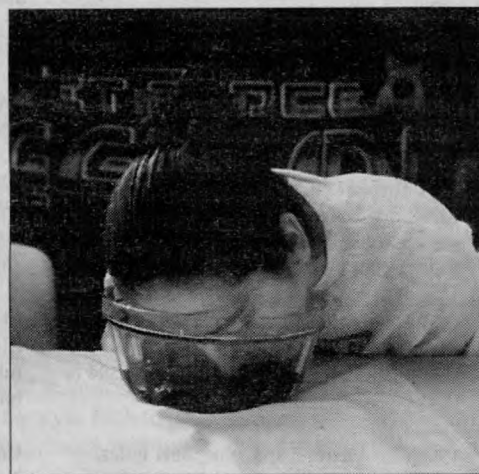
- In Option 4, a graduation ceremony with certified diplomas could be held perhaps as early as the Wednesday after finals week, provided that: 1) the technology required does not crash; 2) grade appeals and re-examinations are not allowed to affect a student's status for graduation in the present term; and 3) the honor status is determined by the student's standing at the end of the previous term.

Slimed: Students get unique study break



Photos by Stanley Leary, Institute Communications and Public Affairs

(Right): Becky Bardwell, a senior in Society, Technology and Culture, shows the technique that won her first place in a goo-eating contest held on the Tech campus last Monday as part of the North American launch of the latest Nintendo videogame, *Jet Force Gemini*. Bardwell was among the many Tech students who competed for Nintendo prizes.



(Left): The Georgia Tech and University of Georgia teams pose for photographers after emerging from a vat containing 1,000 gallons of "alien insect goo." The students, who ventured into the green goo to dive for plastic insects representing characters from the new video game, donated their cash prizes to charity.

Campus EVENTS

Arts/Culture

Oct. 15 - 31

DramaTech presents *Grease: The Musical*. Oct. 15-16, 8 p.m., James E. Dull Theatre; Oct. 20-23, 8 p.m., James E. Dull Theatre; Oct. 29-30, 8 p.m., Robert Ferst Center for the Arts; Oct. 31, 2 p.m., Robert Ferst Center for the Arts. For reservations, call 894-2745.

Oct. 16

Alabama Shakespeare Festival on Tour presents *As You Like It*. 8 p.m., Robert Ferst Center for the Arts. Tickets for faculty/staff: \$35.70, lower level; \$30.60, upper level. Call 894-9600.

Brown Bags/Lectures

Oct. 14

GVU Brown Bag Lecture Series. "Extensible Components—Linking XML and Java," by David Epstein, IBM. Noon, Pettit Building (MiRC), Rm. 102. Contact: 894-4488.

Seminar, "ISR—An Intelligent Service Robot," by Henrik I. Christensen, director, Centre of Autonomous Systems, Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden. 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., MARC, Rm. 201. Contact: arkin@cc.gatech.edu.

Oct. 15

Cognitive Science Colloquium Series, "Culture and Systems of Thought: Holistic vs. Analytic Reasoning in East and West," by Richard Nisbett, University of Michigan. Noon - 1:30 p.m., Student Center Theatre. Contact: susanj@cc.gatech.edu.

"Structure of the Chiexulub Impact Crater," by Dr. Gail Christensen, University of Texas. 3 - 4 p.m., Student Success Center, Clary Theatre. Contact: Susan Ryan, 894-3893.

Oct. 19

"Constructal Tree-Shaped Paths for Conduction and Convection," by Dr. Adrian Bejan, J.A. Jones Professor of Mechanical Engineering, Duke University. 11 a.m. - noon, MRDC Building, Rm. 4211. Refreshments at 10:30 a.m. Contact: Sam Shelton, 894-3289 or sam.shelton@me.gatech.edu.

Oct. 21

Harold W. Gegenheimer Lecture Series on Innovation, featuring Richard F. Teerlink, retired president and CEO of Harley-Davidson Inc. 11 a.m., Van Leer Auditorium. Contact: 894-3200.

Courses/Workshops

Oct. 20

Intro to Data Explorer, a Scientific Visualization Lab (www.scvis.gatech.edu/) seminar to introduce users to a powerful tool for visualization of complex data sets without programming. 4 - 6 p.m., College of Computing, Rm. 259 (GV Center). Register with markus.deshon@oit.gatech.edu.

Faculty Development Program

Oct. 21

"Streaming Media/Content Capture," panel discussion led by Jim McClellan, School of Electrical and Computer Engineering. Open to all faculty. Co-sponsored by CETL, SUCCEED and College of Engineering. 11 a.m. - 1 p.m., College of Management, Rm. 228. Lunch will be served. Contact: Donna Llewellyn, 894-2340 or donna.llewellyn@oars.gatech.edu.

Sports

Oct. 16

Football, Yellow Jackets at Duke, noon. For more information call 894-5447 or see www.ramblingwreck.com.

Miscellaneous

Oct. 14

Techmasters, Georgia Tech's faculty/staff/alumni chapter of Toastmaster's International, meets each Thursday, 7:30 - 9 a.m., Pettit Building (MiRC), Rm. 102. Anyone interested in improving his or her speaking, listening, thinking and leadership skills is encouraged to attend. Contact: Barry Crouse, 894-5735 or barry.crouse@ipst.gatech.edu.

Oct. 18 - 19

Mid-term break.

Editor's Note: Calendar items should be e-mailed to denise.noble@icpa.gatech.edu or faxed to The Whistle at 894-7214 at least 10 days prior to desired publication. For more information, contact 894-8324.

Classifieds

APPLIANCES

Free appliances (remodeling makes them available): Gas stove (gold), refrigerator (18 cu. ft.), dish washer. Call 303-0759.

AUTOMOBILES

1985 Toyota Celica convertible, approx. 127K miles, 5-spd, new black rag top w/ glass rear window, defogger. One owner. \$4,095. Call 320-3296 for appointment.

1989 Honda Civic, hatchback, 92K miles, silver, good condition, 4 new tires, new tune-up, asking \$2,650. Contact 894-3594 or yy18@prism.gatech.edu.

1992 Geo Metro, 5 spd, blue, 86K miles, new battery, good shape. \$1,700 OBO. Contact Amanuel, amanuel@cc.gatech.edu.

1993 Hyundai Excel, white, 2-dr, hatch, standard, 103K miles, \$1,900 OBO. Contact 894-2246, 770-924-1504 (eve/weekends) or jvanhook@cc.gatech.edu.

1994 Buick Century. 4-dr, white, very good condition. \$2,995 OBO. Call 770-459-0259.

1995 Ford Crown Victoria LX. Red w/ gray cloth, am/fm/cass, a/c, ps, pb, pw, pdl, auto,

tilt, ABS, air bags, 105K miles. \$9,800. David, 894-5517, 770-505-0547 (eve), or david.bowman@facilities.gatech.edu.

1996 Ford Aerostar van XLT, green. Am/fm/tape, cruise, tilt, luggage rack, driver's side airbag, 77K miles, extended mile warranty, \$11,200 OBO. Contact 385-3511 (day) or miriam.barron@conted.gatech.edu.

1996 Acura Integra LS, black w/ gray int., 5 spd, 27K miles, pl, pb, ps, pw, a/c, cruise, am/fm/tape, dual airbags, ABS. \$14,200. Contact 770-416-8901 or sham@cc.gatech.edu.

1998 Honda Prelude, auto, 4,000K miles, green exterior, tan interior. Loaded, with extras. Buy or assume lease. Call Stephen, 752-6085.

FURNITURE

Blue (Little Tyke) racecar toddler bed, \$75; full size bed/mattress set (w/ mirrored headboard), \$75. Call Taryn, 770-222-0393.

Crib bedding set: sheet, comforter, dust ruffle, bumpers, all accessories. Jungle animal theme, tropical colors, like new. \$200 for set. Contact Catherine, gholson@cc.gatech.edu or 894-6048.

Children's bunkbed/desk all-in-one set with separate dresser. 2 drawers under bunkbed. White/natural. \$350. Call 894-5696 or 770-975-3794.

Sofa/loveseat in country blue w/ small print. Excellent condition. \$275. Call 770-459-0259.

REAL ESTATE

Apartment available in house, Austell (16 miles from Tech). Carport. Must share kitchen/laundry. Small pet(s) OK. Contact Sarah, 894-1260 or sarah@ptcoe.gatech.edu.

For sale by owner: 2-story home, townhouse-style (attached on 1 side), Decatur. 2 BR, 2.5 BA, fireplace, garage. \$170,000. 20-min from Tech. Contact Richard Catrambone, 894-2682 (w); 377-0056 (h); or rc7@prism.gatech.edu.

For sale by owner: 3BR, 2BA, den w/ fireplace, liv/din room, Florida room, 3 decks, almost 1 acre lot. Approx. 7 miles from Tech. North Buckhead. \$232,000. Call 770-992-1528 or 320-3296 for appointment.

Apt. for rent, Va. Highlands. 1 BR apt. w/ mini-kit. in rear of pvt home. Lease term 3-5 mos. Could be avail. furnished. 2.5 miles from Tech. \$595 (unfurnished) plus 1/3 util. Contact Zena, 894-0953 or zena.rubin@arch.gatech.edu.

SPORTS/FITNESS/RECREATION

NordicTrack Achiever ski machine, like new, incline, LCD display, heart-rate monitor, great fat-burner/cardiovascular workout. \$375 OBO. 894-0750 or shawn.jenkins@alumni.gatech.edu.

Bike: Trek 470, red/silver, 50 cm, 14-spd. Will throw in silver helmet (worth \$65). Asking \$500-ish. Paid \$750 and it's never been ridden. Contact Kim, 352-2010 (w) or 266-0306 (h).

2 new Dunlop Max Superlong 1.5 tennis rackets (4 5/8" grips). \$70 each (much cheaper than sporting goods stores). Contact Richard, rc7@prism.gatech.edu or 894-2682.

Aggressive skates, men's size 6, Salomon ST (best of '98 series). Grinding plates/blocks barely worn. Retail for \$300, will accept \$165. Photos: www.prism.gatech.edu/~np15/forsale. 894-1657 or nick.perez@grc.gatech.edu.

MISCELLANEOUS

Takamine acoustic guitar, black, like new, hard case, \$325. Contact 894-0750 or shawn.jenkins@alumni.gatech.edu.

Memorex hi-fi stereo, 4-head VCR, barely used, remote. Bonus tape rewinder for free. Asking \$75. E-mail lesley.snyder@conted.gatech.edu.

Need 3-4 tickets to GT/UGA game, Nov. 2. Contact Debra, 894-7005 or debra.kelley@ee.gatech.edu.

Wanted: 2 Backstreet Boys tickets for 11/2. 894-6958 or sheila.foster@grc.gatech.edu.

Crib, high chair, infant car seat, toddler car seat, nursery monitor, stroller; all in excellent condition. Call 770-457-7884.

Motocross motorcycle, 1982 Suzuki RM 465. New tires, chain, piston rings, fork seals and grips. Ridden about 20 times since purchased new. \$1,200. Riding gear also for sale. Peter, 651-4987 (day) or dorothy.farina@ipst.edu.

Kramer Focus electric guitar. Includes: case, metal master distortion pedal, stereo chorus effects pedal, cry baby wah wah, chords, small amplifier. Only \$400. Contact Peter, 651-4987 (day) or dorothy.farina@ipst.edu.