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Mixed responses to election

By Lauren Blais
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Staff Writer

Gainesville State College students have diverse reasons for voting for – or against – a presidential candidate. While using their family’s values as a starting point, students show a willingness to jump from the familiar platform and adopt their own views.

Lillian Otieno’s family has been following President-elect Barack Obama’s progress since 2004. His election as Illinois senator created quite a stir in the family when they discovered that his father was from the same Kenyan tribe as Otieno’s father. But when Obama announced his candidacy for the presidency, there was just one problem. Otieno’s family is Republican.

“He’s not a socialist, but a step in that direction,” said Otieno.

Yet she found herself leaning toward the Democrat when she learned his plan for the economy was viewed in favorable light by The Economist magazine.

“That’s what started me saying ‘Hmm...’” said Otieno. She also appreciated his “refresher” image.

In the end though, Otieno did not vote for Obama.

“I just couldn’t vote for him,” she said, citing Obama’s pro-abortion platform as the main reason.

Josh Brandsma did not vote for Obama either, though he comes from a family of Democrats. He said that once he began working he changed his party preference.

“I started using my own brain instead of looking to my parents,” Brandsma said.

He supports tax breaks for more wealthy citizens, like the ones given during the Bush administration. “If my employer is taxed heavily, I don’t get that raise,” he said.

Brandsma initially supported Mike Huckabee’s fair tax. When Huckabee ceased to be an option Brandsma became a Sen. John McCain supporter. He didn’t agree with everything on McCain’s platform, however.

“Both candidates were horrible,” he said. “You had to pick the better (one) of two evils.”

A mock election jointly sponsored by the GSC Oconee Young Democrats and College Republicans appeared on the main page of the college’s website in the form of an online poll. While state-wide the vote was close with McCain carrying 52 percent of votes and Obama taking 47 percent, at GSC students favored McCain to Obama 2-1.

In order to win the support of those who did not vote for him, Brandsma said Obama will have to provide an immediate solution for the economic troubles facing the country today.

“He’s either going to make it or break it,” Brandsma said.

Jacob Davis, who voted for Obama, believes that it’s more a matter of clearing things up for the president-elect to garner the support of other voters.

“I think he’s got to clarify that he’s not going to raise taxes, that he’s not a socialist, or an atheist, or anything non-Christian,” Davis said.

Davis’ family uses faith as a tool for selecting the candidates they will vote for. “If they satisfy the religious litmus test then it goes to other issues.”

Please see “Mixed responses” on page 3.

GSC mock election was not a good prediction of real election

By Leah Perdue
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Campus Life/Op Ed Editor

John McCain won by a landslide.

Or, at least, he did in Gainesville State College’s mock election.

GSC faculty, staff and students voted in an online election hosted by GSC’s Young Democrats. The mock election was available in the student portal.

Republicans McCain and Sarah Palin took 60 percent of the 663 votes cast. Democrats Barack Obama and Joe Biden received 35 percent. Libertarian candidates Bob Barr and Wayne Root took 4 percent.

The numbers are almost a direct reversal of how the 18-29 demographic voted on Election Day. According to CNN exit polls, the 18-29-year-olds comprised about 18 percent of voters. Obama and Biden were the top pick in this age range, with 66 percent of the vote. McCain and Palin took only 32 percent and Barr and Root managed 2 percent.

Even young Georgia voters voiced opinions that were quite different than those stated here at GSC. 18-29 demographic voters in Georgia comprised 14 percent of the turnout.

The race was much closer among those voters. McCain still had a strong following with 51 percent. However, the race was much tighter with Obama netting 48 percent. Barr took 1 percent.

So, what demographic voted most like GSC? Georgia voters who were 65 years old and older gave McCain the nod 54 percent of the time. Obama took only 46 percent in that demographic.

However, in one area, GSC voters were representative of the nation. The mock election also featured a question about what the most important issue was to voters. Of participants, 58 percent believed the economy was the most pressing. CNN exit polls show that 60 percent of those polled believed that the economy was the “hot” issue this election.
Mixed responses, continued from page 1

Though he respects and carries some of his family’s religious values as well as their unorthodox pro-abort

Davis believes that of President-elect Obama’s priorities, ending the war in Iraq is the most likely to be real-

Davis points to what may be Obama’s greatest tool: his ability to inspire.

People can relate to Barack Obama. He can inspire people, call them to fight poverty, oppression.

This ability has led Obama to move even those who did not vote for him, like Otieno, who was pleased with the results on Election Day.

"It was like a dream that couldn’t be true," she said.

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CAMEO ALTERNATIVE MANAGEMENT
The proposal that has never been implemented

By Edward Hooper
Staff Writer
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Reaching the Bowl Championship Series (BCS) is the goal for every college football team when they open camp in the middle of August. Of the 119 teams that are in Division I college football (FBS), only 67 play in a conference that qualifies for an automatic BCS berths.

The six conferences that automatically get bids to play in the BCS are the Pac-10, Big 12, Big 10, Big East, SEC, and ACC. The winners of those respected conferences automatically earn a bid. The other BCS spots are given to at-large teams.

At-large bids are determined by the BCS computer rankings. The teams that usually receive at-large bids are teams that are ranked high in the BCS standings and did not win their conferences.

Many factors determine how high a team is ranked in the BCS standings, including the votes of the USA Today/Coaches poll, how impressive the team wins each game and the level of competition the team plays every week.

The teams that play in impressive conferences like the SEC are usually given higher rankings, even if they have one loss, than a team that is undefeated but plays in a non-BCS conference. An example is the Mountain-West conference, which has one undefeated team and that is threatening to make it into the BCS this year.

"If they go undefeated in their conference and win all their games then I think they should get respect," said University of Georgia defensive lineman Geno Atkins. "Look at what happened a few years ago with Boise State in the Fiesta Bowl when they played Oklahoma and beat them. That was a surprise and they earned massive respect for the non-BCS schools."

Many proposals have been made for ways to fix the playoff system for college football. However, none have ever been implemented.

The most frequently proposed playoff scheme is to have an eight-team playoff to end the season.

By Tyler Hernandez
Sports Writer
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Recently there has been much speculation if college football is going to continue with the current BCS system, or change to a playoff. Most of this speculation comes from an odd source as well.

President-elect Barack Obama stated that he thinks that a playoff should instituted in college football. That raises a big question: Will this actually happen now that he has been elected? I hope that this does not happen. I know the BCS has problems, but a playoff system will just cause more.

First, one of the main problems of the BCS is that some teams get left out of the equation at the end of the year. There may be three undefeated teams at the end of the year and with the BCS system only two get to play in the national championship game.

That is unfortunate, but not everyone is going to get his way. In a playoff system, teams will still be left out and this will upset many more teams than does the BCS. This system will be an eight-team playoff, and I guarantee that there will be at least four teams a year that will be upset that they were not included in those top eight spots.

Also, college football bowl season is one of the most exciting times of the year for any fan. If the switch is made to a playoff system, the bowls will most likely be phased out.

"That would be a bad situation for fans and for the colleges, since the revenue that the colleges receive from the bowl games will no longer be available."

With the BCS system, the whole season feels like a playoff atmosphere. College football is so exciting because of the fact that every single game matters, and each game could end up costing your team a shot at the title. Sometimes we look at the flaws of the system and think it will be better with another system. That logic may be true sometimes, but in this case I think the BCS is just fine.

Obama’s playoff idea is not necessary

The proposal that has never been implemented

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Here’s hoping Obama can get us a playoff

By Joe Patrick
Sports Editor
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No matter your race, religion, or political background, most people in this country will side with Barack Obama on one of his stances: The BCS needs a playoff.

In a recent interview that aired the night before Election Day, Barack Obama may have earned himself a vote or two. ESPN’s Chris Berman asked then-presidential candidate Obama what would be one thing he would change in sports.

Obama quickly replied, "I think it is about time we have playoffs in college football."

I happen to agree with him. Just like President-elect Obama, I am fed up with computer rankings, voters, and all of these other artificial things that determine who is the best team in the country. Last time I checked, the best team in any sport is determined by who wins the game, so why would a sport as widely enjoyed as college football be left up to such debate year after year?

Perhaps the higher-ups in college football like the debate, and it keeps the sport on the forefront of the fans for a longer portion of the year. Perhaps the sports talk show fodder is just music to the NCAA’s ears. One thing is certain, the complaints of their fans about the system are worrisome and the NCAA will have to change at some point. It would be unfair to put all the blame on the NCAA. After all, they do have college football playoffs in all of the lower divisions. Much of the blame needs to be put on the university presidents who are also holding strong against the resistance. They want to ensure the student athletes are preparing sufficiently for their final exams, but they are still practicing 20 hours a week like they normally would.

Another excuse the presidents use is that the season would drag too far along the calendar. However, when the BCS National Championship is being played over a week after the New Year, a four-week void exists in the college football schedule between the conference championships and the final game of the season. This leaves more than enough time to implement a four- or eight-team playoff to replace the current bowl structure.

Now it is time for Barack Obama to make his dreams come true.

Voice your opinion at www.gsccompass.com!
Ice skating and ice skating are yearly sports that are done during the winter months. They are both fun because I have done both of them. To me one is a little harder than the other.

When you want to go ice skating you will need to either rent or buy ice skates that is the most important. What should you wear to go ice skating, wear something warm because it will be cold.

Some dangers in ice skating and that would be falling on the ice. If you were to go to a pond that is frozen over it is even more dangerous because you could completely fall through that ice and into the water. So if you choose to go ice skating this winter be careful.

There are many ways that you can do ice skating. You can do ice hockey, figure skating and speed skating. Those are the most popular ways to ice skate.

When snow skiing you will need to get skis and make sure that you wear warm clothes because you will be outside more likely than inside.

There are also dangers for snow skiing when you go. Those are falling, avalanches, fogged, ignoring the signs and watching out for others.

Types of snow skiing that can be found are alpine skiing, nordic skiing and jumping and kite skiing and para-skiing are just some.

Most people are suckers for those mocha sandwich cookies, double chocolate peanut butter graham and chocolate chip cookies.

However, a lot of people don’t want to become fast junkies of those treats.

“The average American gains approximately seven to 10 pounds between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day,” said betterhealthusa.com.

Between Thanksgiving pies, Christmas cinnamon rolls and New Year’s hors d’oeuvres, the holiday season can be the hardest time of year to maintain a sleek figure.

One way gives us the opportunity to do something our parents always told us not to: “Don’t feel obliged to clear your plate. When you feel full, stop eating. Simple,” said betterhealthusa.com.

Aside from the internet help, many major food companies are now coming out with healthier options.

Candie Cochran, a chef at Riverside Elementary School, says obesity isn’t a major problem for those children.

“Though the holidays are upon us we don’t feed the children unhealthy foods,” said Cochran, “and we try to get the parents involved by sending home letters with great information on how to find some less fattening foods that kids will love.”

For on-the-go college students, Cochran endorses exercise and eating plenty of fruit and vegetables.

“Also, sleep right and drinking plenty of fluids, not soda, such as fruit juice, water and hot teas.”

Cochran said it is easy to eat healthy when it becomes a priority in people’s lives.

“You have to be able to make time to sit down and eat at least one healthy meal a day or more. Try some fruit smoothies for breakfast and a mid-afternoon snack. Also fruit as an evening snack, but not before bed.”

At holiday parties, choose the smarter of the smorgasbord made available, such as low fat cheeses, wheat crackers and fruit.

“And for meals at your own home,” said Cochran, “go to Kraft.com for some great dinner ideas that are cheap and easy.”

The key to enjoying sweets is moderation.

“You can eat anything you want, as long as you do so in moderation,” said Cochran. “Sweets are great and I eat them myself, but in moderation.”

Get out and enjoy the cold weather

By Lindsey Blalock
Asst. News Editor
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Snow skiing and ice skating are yearly sports that are done during the winter months. They are both so fun because I have done both of them. To me one is a little harder than the other.

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The fan’s guide to buying a jersey

By Mitch Blomert
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Every sports fan has a jersey or some sort of apparel hanging in their closets. Yes, I do, too. My most prized possession is a 1995 Winnipeg Jets jersey, professionally stitched with NHL legend Teemu Selanne’s name on it. Unless you buy a “re-made” version online (or actually go to Winnipeg), it’s hard to find one just like it.

Among others, I also have jerseys worn by the Colorado Avalanche, the Anaheim Ducks, the Calgary Flames, the Boston Red Sox, the Seattle Mariners, and of course, some autographed Atlanta Thrashers threads. I even have that red and blue Tennessee Titans jersey that, sadly, never graced the field.

I guess you could say collecting different teams’ uniforms was my hobby for a while, but I don’t have the time (or money) to collect them anymore.

Other people do though. In fact, the fan apparel industry isn’t fading by any means. From die-hard fans to rappers to little kids dressed head-to-toe in their parents’ favorite team’s colors, it’s no surprise to see recognizable jerseys from teams in every league all over the country wherever you go.

And while a simple t-shirt with a player’s name on it may satisfy one fan, the other wants the real deal; the exact same thing that the players wear on the field, called “authentic” jerseys, or something very similar to it and cheaper, known better as “replicas.”

Picking a jersey to buy is a fun process for die-hard sports fans. Some of them pay close attention to details, including the stitching, the patches, the logos, whether or not they want a player’s name on their jersey, and so forth. There’s even a blog that keeps track of every detail for the fans: www.uni-watchblog.com.

Are they obsessed? Maybe. But those who are, aren’t alone.

There’s a process involved when it comes to finding the perfect jersey for your fanaticism. It all begins with how much you want to spend. If you want the real thing, or the “authentic” jersey, get ready to drop some major coin, because it won’t be cheap. Currently, an Atlanta Falcons authentic home jersey with Michael Turner’s name and number stitched on it will put you back $260 if you buy from the NFL’s official shop (Or hey, you can get a DeAngelo Hall authentic for a discounted $125 and pretend he still plays for Atlanta).

Digging the jersey, but not the price tag? Try the replica jersey. It looks just like an authentic and has the same design, but lacks the stitching, the official patches, and as some fans would tell you, that “real” feel. Remember that $260 Michael Turner jersey? Its replica counterpart is only $80 (And yes, you can still get a discounted DeAngelo Hall replica for a mere 30 bucks). That comes out to a savings of $180, and you still get to show off your team pride – just not in a “real” kind of way.

Authentic and replica jerseys are made for virtually every professional sport, and the option to customize your jersey is always out there, too. And that’s where you hit another fork in the road – what’s going on the back of your jersey? Do you want to be like everyone else and get a Jeff Francoeur Braves jersey? Do you want to put your name and favorite number on it, and escape your boring part-time job to live out your dream? Or do you crave attention, and want to put something completely absurd and possibly inappropriate on your back?

Regardless of what you choose, be ready to pay an extra $30-50 to add numbers and letters (and the captain’s “C” patch, if you’re bold enough) if your jersey doesn’t already have them.

Another big thing to keep in mind if you’re concerned about the authenticity of your jersey is that only professional leagues are allowed to market their teams’ uniforms. That’s why you’ll never see a college football jersey with a name on it. I bet you’ve seen that black Georgia jersey with the number 24 on it. I can also bet you’ve never seen one that actually had Knowshon Moreno’s name on it. And if you have, did it actually look real?

For some fans, having the right jersey, or expanding their jersey collection is a hobby taken seriously and is worth dropping a few hundred dollars for that cherished hard-to-find vintage throwback alternate only-worn-once-in-team-history jersey. For others, a simple replica to show team pride is good enough.

Whatever the case, a jersey is what you make it, whether it’s only brought out on game day, or worn to campus every day of the week. y

But I’d still like to see another 1995 Winnipeg Jets professionally stitched Teemu Selanne jersey.

Canadian sport is a good way to enjoy winter

By Caitlin O’Dell
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It’s easy to imagine a few burly guys huddled around a fire in Canada thinking of creative ways to beat the snot out of each other.

Around 1800, those guys took a stick (called a “hurley” then) and a square wooden block inspired by the Irish game of hurling.

Thus, hockey. Boys from King’s College School played the first game in Windsor, Nova Scotia on a frozen pond. Students from McGill University in Montreal set rules in 1879 and amateur teams formed in Canada in the late 1880s.

Mike Lancaster, for an article published on Athletic-Scholarships.net, wrote that the first game of hockey was played in the United States in 1893.

From there hockey evolved into what fans see today in many cities around the world. In the US alone, there are 24 teams. Around here, there are the Atlanta Thrashers based out of Atlanta and the Gwinnett Gladiators based out of Gwinnett County.

The Thrashers are a professional team, so tickets may be more expensive and harder to come by than the Gladiators, who are the Thrashers’ primary ECHL, formerly the East Coast Hockey League, affiliate.

A hockey game can be a fun cheap date. Just remember to bring your scarves and jackets – the ice is cold.
Mr. Bubbles makes art with his bare hands

By Michelle Bennett
Features Editor
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Most of us played with bubbles at some time during our childhood.

After several years of bubble experiments, 19-year-old Zachary Richard rediscovered his childhood affection for bubbling.

"I played with bubbles as a child to an extent but not as much as I have in the past year," said Zachary.

Zachary doesn't just play with bubbles; he is a master over them. Zachary's bubble tricks are not limited to "… the carousel, bubble chains, the chain caterpillar, stretching bubbles and splitting and combining bubbles."

The best part is that he can do all of this with his bare hands.

While the typical child plays with some rendition of "Mr. Bubbles" bubble solution, Zachary uses a slightly different solution in order to do the tricks with his hands.

"I read a book about bubbles as a child," said Zachary. "Later I expanded on the tricks in the book with dish soap at work in Texas where I worked as a dishwasher."

Zachary said that long hours of washing dishes and an already-existing love for bubbles is a match made in heaven. The rest is history.

"When asked if his talent has helped him meet women he said, "Not at all, but it is very useful for having something impressively entertaining to do when you're bored, alone or with anyone."

Zachary encourages as many people as he can to develop a love for playing with bubbles like he has. He said that in the summer he likes to get his friends together and mix an expansive bucket of bubbles and make bubble chains.

Zachary was born in Tampa, Fla. "I've spent roughly nine years in Georgia and also a few in both Texas and California," said Zachary. "When I'm not working I write, paint and play music."

He is enrolled for the upcoming spring 2009 semester at Georgia Gwinnett College and hopes to major in English.

Zachary has a way of sparking an interest in bubble tricks in others and encourages all his audiences to get their feet - or hands, rather - wet.

"If you look up in the light you can see all the colors associated with this," said Zachary after launching an expansive bubble up into the air. "It's really miraculous."

How to: Prevent an alien invasion

By Caitlin O'Dell
Editor-in-Chief
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Pending an alien invasion, the military is quick to devise a cover-up in the movie "Close Encounters of the Third Kind." Of course, as is always the case, the civilians are much smarter and wittier than the government and figure out how to save the earth.

To help prevent an alien invasion of earth, it is important that civilians know what to do to save our precious planet. Books and movies are a good place to start in the search for knowledge.

In "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," the average people (Roy Neary) are the ones who know and learn to circumvent the aliens and the government. The lesson from this movie: pay attention to guys who build strange mounds with their mashed potatoes. Also, hone your musical and light-flashing skills. If there is someone willing to be sacrificed, send him in to the aliens. This may provide a distraction to the aliens while the government scrambles to find a new diversion.

If there happens to be a small alien lost in a field, do not form a close bond with it. In the movie "E.T.," Elliot almost dies because he and the alien become friends. Should you take in a stray alien, do not leave it at home alone – your refrigerator will get destroyed. Be careful about letting it play with Earthing technology and communications. It may nearly kill itself. And don't forget the signs from household plants.

Should a large meteorite-like object crash into the middle of a large city, do not push anyone – no matter how insignificant he may be – into the hole. This will, as evidenced in "War of the Worlds" (the book), spur the aliens to not only create an underground network and easily take over the city, but begin coming out of their holes. This is especially dangerous if the aliens have landed in several cities on several continents.

As usual, distrust of the military is imperative. Of course the military would never have anything under control or care about the cities and people they are charged to protect.

The main thing that H. G. Wells can teach us, above all, is to trust earth and the natural balance of things. After all, it was a common bacterium we humans are immune to that destroyed the advanced Martians.

First and foremost, learn to play chess. For non-chess-players, listen to strange men who do play chess, such as Jeff Goldblum in "Independence Day."

Escape on Air Force One with the president and always trust Will Smith to take care of killing things and bringing back specimens in large parachutes.

"Now we get to the really icky part. " Remember Area 51 is a cover-up in the movie "Close Encounter of the First Kind – Sighting of a UFO. Close Encounter of the Second Kind – Physical Evidence. Close Encounter of the Third Kind – Contact. WE ARE NOT ALONE."

To prevent an alien invasion of earth, it is important that civilians know what to do to save our precious planet. Books and movies are a good place to start in the search for knowledge. In "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," the average people (Roy Neary) are the ones who know and learn to circumvent the aliens and the government. The lesson from this movie: pay attention to guys who build strange mounds with their mashed potatoes. Also, hone your musical and light-flashing skills. If there is someone willing to be sacrificed, send him in to the aliens. This may provide a distraction to the aliens while the government scrambles to find a new diversion.

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"Now we get to the really icky part. " Remember Area 51 is not quite normal, and neither are the scientists who work there. Computers – no matter how old they are – are all the same in every universe, so don't be afraid to make a computer virus that will kill the alien menace.

Finally, the Men in Black reveal a valuable piece of information: It doesn't matter how big the gun is, just how you use it.
Evergreens symbolize life, protection

By Katie Martin and Caitlin O’Dell
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Any variety of evergreen trees are common in households this time of year.

Taken out of context, cutting down plants and erecting them inside houses seems odd. Not to mention placing wrapped presents under the boughs and using the boughs to hang glass, porcelain or hand-knit ornaments.

With the holiday season fast approaching many Gainesville State College students are excited about decorating for Christmas.

It seems most students lean toward the more traditional decorations rather than the contemporary-themed trees.

“We still use the same ornaments we did when I was a kid,” said Erica Spencer, a student at GSC. She said her family chooses to keep it simple when it comes to decorations.

“We do a few things outside but mostly limit the decorations to the living room,” she said. “The tree goes up right after Thanksgiving.”

Leighann Cox says her family chooses to keep it simple when it comes to decorations.

“We like to use a lot of color on the tree, we always use small colored lights,” said Spencer.

Leighann Cox says her family chooses to keep it simple when it comes to decorations.

“We do a few things outside but mostly limit the decorations to the living room,” she said. “The tree goes up right after Thanksgiving.”

Cox also says that her family uses traditional ornaments, many of which her family has had for years.

But behind all the tangled lights and ornaments, the Christmas tree has an ancient history.

Egyptians come from a long line of evergreen tree-worshipers. They would bring in green date palm leaves, wrote David Robson for The Christmas Tree Farm Network. The greenery symbolized life’s triumph over death during the winter solstice.

Romans also celebrated the winter solstice. To celebrate, they decorated their houses with greenery and lights. Gifts included coins for prosperity, pastries for happiness and lamps to light life’s journey.

In Great Britain, priests of the woods called Druids used holly and mistletoe as symbols of eternal life in their winter solstice celebrations. To ward off evil spirits, they hung evergreen branches over doorways.

In the Middle Ages, Germans (from whom Americans derive many customs and traditions) and Scandinavians placed evergreen trees inside or just outside their homes to symbolize a hope in the coming spring.

According to legend, Martin Luther (the leader of the Protestant Reformation) is responsible for decorating evergreens to celebrate Christmas. Around 1500, he was walking through snowy woods and was amazed by the beauty of a small group of evergreens. In the moonlight, their snow-laden branches shimmered.

Luther set up a little fir tree to share the joy with his children. To honor Christ’s birth, he decorated the tree with lit candles.

The tradition of Christmas trees in America most likely came over with Hessian troops during the American Revolution or with German immigrants.

However romantic and sweet the story is, the joy did not spread quickly. At first, Puritans banned Christmas in New England. In Boston, children went to school on Christmas Day until 1870. Sometimes, schools would expel those students who didn’t attend.

In 1851, Catskill farmer Mark Carr kickstarted the Christmas tree market. He hauled trees into New York City and sold them all. Twenty years later, nearly every American family joined in the new tradition.

Similar to now, Christmas tree farms did a lot of business during the Great Depression when farmers were unable to sell their trees for landscaping.

Trends have changed over the years. For example, in the 1960s many families favored colored aluminum trees with matching ornaments.

With trees now ranging in color from black to pink to white this season, it seems the trend may repeat itself.

For many like Spencer it’s tradition that makes the holiday season special.

“I like using the same decorations,” said Cox. “It reminds me of Christmas as a child.”

Of all Christmas trees, Scotch Pine is the most popular, accounting for 40 percent of the market. The second most popular is the Douglas fir (35 percent), followed by noble fir, white pine, balsam fir and white spruce.

Birds and pigs eaten in historical celebrations

By Brigitte Autran
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As with most traditions, turkey eating hasn’t been questioned by many people who willingly stuff themselves annually with the bird. Turkeys were once a contender for the bird of America.

Benjamin Franklin was an advocate of putting the turkey on the American flag.

“I wish the eagle had not been chosen as the representative of our country,” said Franklin. “He is a bird of bad moral character... the turkey is a much more respectable bird, and withal a true original native of America.”

The turkey was always a favored symbol by pilgrims. They were fresh and big enough to feed a crowd.

“In the past, Americans preferred large poultry for celebrations because the birds could be slaughtered without a huge economic sacrifice,” said articlebase.com.

“Cows were more useful alive than dead and commercial beef wasn’t widely available until the late 19th century,” said articlebase.com. “Chicken was more highly regarded than it is today but rooster meat was tough, and hens were valuable as long as they laid eggs. Venison would have been another option, especially during the 17th and 18th centuries, though it would have required extensive hunting.”

Supposedly we eat turkey for Thanksgiving because the pilgrims ate it when they first arrived here in America.

“Although it is uncertain whether or not the pilgrims actually ate turkey, it is known that whatever meat they were eating during their meal was some sort of bird,” wrote Michelle Tsai at Slate.com. “Since that time, turkeys have been extensively raised because of the excellent quality of their meat and eggs.”

“Since the days of men like Edward Winslow, the turkey has become a popular symbol of Thanksgiving Day,” wrote Tsai.

“The popularity of ham at Christmas is second only to the turkey at Thanksgiving,” according to articlebase.com.

For many, Christmas wouldn’t be complete without a nice, big ham adorning the dinner table.

“It has become as much a part of the Yule Boar celebration today as it was to the ancients,” said Yaim.org.

In Sweden and Denmark it is custom to bake a loaf in the form of a boar-pig. They call this the Yule Boar and feel it insures a good harvest for the next year.

“A real boar was formerly sacrificed at Christmas among the Scandinavians,” according to Yahweh’s Assembly.

On Christmas day, the Saxons offered a boar in sacrifice to the Sun to propitiate it.

“That boar will make you a good Saturnalia,” said Yahweh’s Assembly from Yaim.org.

“The boar’s head is still a popular dish in England at the Christmas dinner and is usually served with an apple or pomegranate in its mouth.”
Hanukkah is more than eight crazy nights

By Leah Perdue
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The Festival of Lights, The Feast of Dedication, The Feast of the Macabees and even Eight Crazy Nights are all names for an ancient Hebrew holiday that few outside of the Jewish community know much about.

Hanukkah is much more than "that other winter holiday." It is age-old festival that celebrates the reclamation of the Temple of Jerusalem in 165 B.C. Hanukkah is the modern celebration of Judas Macabbee's redemption of the temple after it had been profaned by the king of Syria, according to History.com

The word Hanukkah means "dedication." The followers of Macabee first celebrated the holiday for eight days and nights, the length of Sukkot.

Today the Jewish community celebrates Hanukkah in many ways. MyJewishLearning.com describes the holiday as one of "praise and thanksgiving" and states that it is celebrated with festive songs, games and food.

The central focus of Hanukkah is the lighting of the hanukkiyrah, an eight-branched candelabrum. The lights are lit one night at a time. The candles being lit symbolize the Hebrew concept of "lo moridim ba-kodesh," which means "one does not decrease in holiness."

Hanukkah celebrations revolve around family, festivity and food, much like other winter holidays.

Traditional verses are recited and Jews of European descent sing hymns.

The aroma and texture of oil permeate the foods of Hanukkah, like potato latkes and sufganiyot, to remind celebrants of the miracle of the cruse of oil.

The Talmud recounts a miracle of a single day's worth of oil burning for eight nights, said MyJewishLearning.com. The foods are cooked in oil to remind Jews of this miracle.

The concept of gift-giving during Hanukkah is a later addition to the holiday. According to History.com, many scholars speculate that the tradition arose as Christmas gained popularity and gifts were exchanged.

The traditions and history of Hanukkah are compelling. Adding a bit of this ancient festival into holiday celebrations could bring a little taste of age-old cultural into life.

X in Xmas keeps original intent

By Caitlin O'Dell
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As the "politically correct" try to secularize holidays to promote tolerance and unity among the religious and non-religious, the Christians have managed to circumvent them - without even knowing it.

"Many Christians do not understand their own iconography and symbolism," wrote Dennis Bratcher for the CRI/Voice Institute.

"The fact that the use of Xmas can be associated so easily with crass commercialization rather than locating it within the Christian tradition itself reveals a lack of understanding of heritage and history."

Substituting "X" for "Christ" in the word "Christmas" can be traced to Johannes Gutenberg who invented the printing press in 1436. While he is not credited with inventing the substitution, he did facilitate its more widespread use.

Before modern machines and technological advances, the movable type had to be hand-set, requiring a lot of time and expenses. To help, printers started using abbreviations. The church used C to substitute for "Christ" and soon "Xmas" was accepted as "Christmas." "Xian" for Christian and "Xianity" for "Christianity."

The "X" comes from the Greek word for Christ, which is "Xristos." The symbol "X" (which was a letter) was representative of "Chi" or "Khi" and became representative of Christ as abbreviations became more widespread and accepted.

"History tells us that Emperor Constantine's conversion to Christianity was influenced by a vision," wrote N.S. Gill. In his vision, Constantine saw the Greek letters "Chi" and "Rho" intertwined. "Chi" is written as "X" and "Rho" is written as "P."

These are the first two letters of the Greek words "Christ savior" and the reason for those funny elongated Ps with Xs across the tails that decorate some Christmas trees.

Now, of course, with the government and most public entities scrambling to become "politically correct," a lot of Christians take it to heart and feel that they are being marginalized.

"Among religious folks, the objection to Xmas is usually along the line that people have taken Christ out of Christmas and replaced him with an unknown (since the Greek letter chi ... looks like the English letter x, the symbol for an unknown quantity in mathematics)," wrote Bratcher.

"It is the glib way people substitute Christ with this anonymous X," said Deputy Editor of the Church of England's C Magazine for the Diocese of Southwell Jane Wyles for an article published by BBC News. "It's all a part of the PC picture - Christianity gets squashed into a smaller and smaller corner."

"Understanding this use of Christian symbolism," Bratcher wrote, "might help us modern day Xians focus on more important issues ... and bring a little more peace to the Xmas Season."

Kwanzaa based on 7 principles

By Jarvis Johnson
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This December you will either be decorating the halls with boughs of holly, spinning a dreidel and eating potato cakes or just getting drunk while watching "The Grinch." However, not many of us will be celebrating African heritage by lighting the Kinara in observance of Kwanzaa.

"What is Kwanzaa?" asked Gainesville State College student Sara Knight.

"It is a holiday for a specific African culture," said Carolyn Labella, a pharmacy major at GSC.

Kwanzaa is "a unique African American celebration with focus on the traditional African values of family, community, responsibility, commerce, and self-improvement" said tike.com. The website also explains that "Kwanzaa is neither political nor religious and is not a substitute for Christmas."

Kwanzaa was created by scholar Maulana Karenga in 1966. On the official Kwanzaa website, Karenga said that Kwanzaa "was chosen to give a Black alternative to the existing holiday and give Blacks an opportunity to celebrate themselves and history, rather than simply imitate the practice of the dominant society."

"I think it is cool, Kwanzaa gives people an opportunity to celebrate something different," said Mike Green, a sociology major at GSC.

The holiday is based on the seven principles of Kwanzaa: Unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economic, purpose, creativity and faith.

While Kwanzaa celebrates African culture, it is not limited to only African participation.

"Like Cinco de Mayo and Chinese New Year, anybody can celebrate Kwanzaa, not just Africans," said M.K. Asante Jr., film director.

"I actually know one or two people who celebrate Kwanzaa," said Marc McDonnell, a student at GSC.

"We should really make people aware of Kwanzaa around campus," said Kiara Smith, an English major at GSC.
The year of the rabbit had its share of phenomenal pop acts as well as sinister tragedies. Aside from the Columbine Massacre, the worst tragedy among Falcon fans was Atlanta losing to Denver in Super bowl XXXIII. No one could stay mad at Jamal Anderson and the boys for long, after all Cher made us believe in Life after Love. Many may remember 1999 as a Limp Bizkit bumping, Eminem reciting, Britney Spears idolizing, NFL 2k playing, Napster downloading, Backstreet Boys gawking, Beanie Baby owning, American Pie laughing, Fubu wearing, The Rock praising, Bill Clinton bashing and Playstation 2 anticipating year.

• Christina Aguilera - Genie in a bottle
• Sega Dreamcast
• Fight Club
• NATO Yugoslavia Peace Treaty

• Furby
• N Sync
• MTV VMAs
• Blair Witch Project
• The Box Music Channel

• Columbine Massacre
• Oklahoma Tornado

• Woodstock 99
• 98 Degrees (Nick Lachey)
• George W. Bush seeks nomination

By Jarvis Johnson
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Features

Party like it’s 1999

The Awesome

The Good

The Bad

The Jokes
get one trip-up and you’re out. It’s tough and if everyone is thinking National Championship or bust then you have to look at team like Southern Cal, they have one little slip up and they’re out, maybe.”

With all the positives a playoff system would bring to college football, there are some negatives as well.

With a weak economy, it may not be easy for television networks to pay more money to cover the extended playoffs.

Also, college football playoffs would interfere with the National Football League playoffs. Some say would this take attention away from the NFL, which pays a lot to market their playoffs in January.

For college football to change to a playoff system, said Richt, it would come down to the president of college football to vote and finalize the change. The coaches, players, fans and media have no say in making the decision in changing college football.

Teacher Feature: Gina Reed

By Michelle Bennett
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Compass: How long have you been teaching at Gainesville State College?
Reed: I began teaching in June 1990.

Compass: What is your title here?
Reed: Professor of mathematics.

Compass: Where did you go to college?
Reed: I went to Appalachian State University in Boone, N.C., where I received a master’s degree in math education. I also went to Pennsylvania State, where I received a master’s degree in statistics.

Compass: When did you become interested in mathematics?
Reed: In undergraduate school when I took an intro statistics class.

Compass: Have you ever taught any other subjects than Statistics?
Reed: I have taught MATH 97 and 99, College Algebra, Pre-calculus, Calculus 1 and Discrete Math.

Compass: What kind of student were you in high school and college?
Reed: I was very studious. I have always wanted to do well and learn as much as I can.

Compass: What was your first job?
Reed: I worked in a tobacco factory in the summer. After college I taught business statistics at ASU for a year.

Compass: What were some of your favorite experiences in college?
Reed: At Pennsylvania State, we always went out after we finished doing homework and studying together. There were lots of great places to hear new bands and lots of great restaurants.

Compass: Tell us something about yourself that we wouldn’t expect.
Reed: In college, I had the N.C. state record in the bench-press (a power lifting event).

Compass: Are you married?
Reed: Yes, my husband is in the GIS program at GSC.

Compass: What is his name?
Reed: Johnny Reed. We met in high school, dated, and married while in college.

Compass: Do you have kids?
Reed: We have a son, Michael, who attends West Hall High School.

Compass: Do you have any pets?
Reed: Yes, we have a dog and a cat.

Compass: What is your favorite food?
Reed: Chocolate ice cream.

Compass: What is your favorite over-21 beverage?
Reed: In college, Alabama Slammers.

Compass: What is your favorite winter hobby?
Reed: Walking outside (it clears my mind) and reading.

Compass: Would you share a piece of advice for GSC students?
Reed: I read this somewhere and loved it so it is not original. Work hard. Be prepared. Luck is when opportunity meets preparation.

Proposal, continued from page 4

International students sample American holidays

By Brian Revels
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With the semester winding down, every college student loves the idea of the break for the holidays. While Thanksgiving is traditionally an American holiday commemorating the settling of new lands, people all over the world find joy in the season.

“Thanksgiving is not an official holiday for Czech people,” says Marek Fikejz, 19, of Gainesville State College. “However, there is a traditional celebration, sort of like Mardi Gras, in the Czech Republic. My family generally celebrates it the ‘Americanized’ way.”

Christmas takes on different forms for people of every cultural background. Fikejz’s family has a specific tradition as well.

“We do most of the celebrating on what is considered Christmas Eve, December 24th,” Fikejz says. “The traditional meal is carp and potato salad and other sides. We usually bake cookies, 16 kinds, actually, because the number 16 holds significance for the Czech Christmas tradition.”

“We never eat turkey for Thanksgiving,” says Jose Loyola, 22, also of Gainesville State College. His family is Peruvian. “We either have chicken or pork. We usually just sit together after dinner and drink coffee or hot chocolate and talk. Generally, the conversation is about the upcoming year.”

Christmas has its own characteristics for Loyola’s family.

“We don’t put presents under the tree,” he says. “Instead, we usually just take the children to the toy store around Christmas time. On Christmas Day, it is tradition to celebrate all night until we can’t help falling asleep.”

Despite their traditions and backgrounds, students all over Gainesville’s campus are looking forward to the brief transition from classes, grades, and schedules to family, friends and dinner.

Do you or someone you know play an unusual sport? Let us know, and we’ll feature you! Email Joe Patrick at 924202892@gsc.edu.
New game room will ease student boredom

By Andrew Woodrum
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Men shouting "Oh yeah!" Balls flying all over the place. Joysticks being toggled with. All while some groovy jam pumps from the jukebox. This is the game room GSC gamers have missed.

When the student center closed for remodeling many of the students in the game room were sad and bored. We all had nowhere to go to hang out.

But now that the student center is back in business. The new game room is open, and it's better than ever.

All students were invited Nov. 4 to attend the game room setup event. This event marked a new beginning to our beloved game room.

According to attendees, many changes are planned for the GSC game room. It is going to be bigger and better than the game room students loved before.

A couple of new additions are going to be added as the years go on. There has been talk of buying a Playstation 3, a Nintendo Wii, more arcade machines, a new 9-foot pool table and additional ping pong tables.

The additions would be a great thing for all game room lovers to have. Especially since many students look at the 8-foot table as the "kiddy" table.

A sad change that is that our old game room manager Jasun Pina, left his position to continue his education full-time. However, there is a new manager, Scott Allen, who started Dec. 1. Welcome, Scott!

GSC ID cards save money on food

By Paul Holley
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Because Gainesville State College does not currently have any kind of food service available on campus, students have to either bring their own lunch or travel to one of the many nearby restaurants for a meal.

Eating "out" can add up to be expensive if it is a regular habit. Even spending just $5 on a meal can add up to be a couple hundred dollars over a semester.

However, many students don't know that a majority of the restaurants around Oakwood give some kind of discount if you show your GSC student identification card.

What are some of the more popular restaurants around Oakwood that do give a discount?

Dairy Queen, Cool Beans, Zaxby's, Burger King, Taco Bell and Kentucky Fried Chicken all give a 10 percent discount when you show your student I.D.

Restaurants that do not give a discount include McDonalds, Chick-fil-a, Pizza Hut, Arby's, Sonny's Bar-B-Q and Loretta's.

Moe's Southwest Grill gives a great discount to students with their GSC I.D. Students can purchase a $5 Joey combo. That is a burrito, a side of guacamole or queso, chips and a drink for $5.

Barberitos also has a really good discount. Students who show their GSC I.D. will get a free drink with the purchase of a meal.

Some of these establishments mentioned slow business due to the ongoing construction on I-985 and Highway 53 and that they would be thrilled to let college students know about their discount with the hopes of obtaining more customers.
Opinions

Obama wins: Race no longer an issue

By Ian Bowling
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No matter how our views differ from person to person, we can agree that we witnessed a change in history happen on election night. Not only did we watch our first president with African roots elected but we saw the rebirth of voter confidence, as it was shown to voters that their votes did count.

The results of this election show that any educated person of African descent has the potential to become president. Every American will surely remember where they were this past election night.

Over the course of this election we saw dirty strategies from both campaigns, especially from the McCain campaign. Sen. McCain's concession speech showed his true maverick attitude, however.

While both candidates were clearly qualified for the job as commander-in-chief, America felt that Barack Obama had more potential to bring change about from the past eight years. As we've seen since the election, President-elect Obama has already been surrounding himself with an array of potential cabinet members with views both agreeing and opposing.

As he has been compared to Lincoln, Kennedy and FDR, we can only hope that in four years things really will get better.

As we come to the day of President-elect Obama's inauguration, we will witness the remainder of President Bush's second term. We will also witness our economy's continued rocking up and down, which will become scary at some points, especially with the Christmas season being in full swing.

However, we cannot let this destroy our hope.

Respect Obama's authority, but question his politics

By Paul Holley
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The most recent Presidential election has sent shockwaves coursing through this nation.

Barack Obama, president elect, deserves our respect. He has made history as the first African American man to be elected president of the United States. Congratulations to him for that.

But while every one should respect him for the man he is, his policies have raised some concern.

Reading some articles on republicansforobama.com, I found some interesting views on Obama and what he needs to do as the next president.

Obama's campaign preached diligently that he was "The candidate of change." According to several writers on this blog stated many of his characteristics of change were more personality related rather than policy related.

"I personally admire John McCain, but I simply cannot see him inspiring the nation and our world economic partners to work together and solve our very daunting problems," said Joel Haugen, who lost an election bid as a Republican candidate in Oregon's first Congressional district.

"Obama is right to want to change Bush's way of doing things, but it will do no good if the only change is from Republican ultra-partisanship to Democratic ultra-partisanship," said Bruce Bartlett, who worked on the White House staff during the Regan administration.

While working together is all well and good, we've all seen politics get in the way of politicians making promises.

Obama does have a chance to unite Republicans and Democrats, but even after the Bush years, his policies will still make it difficult to do so.

Obama's website outlines his plan for taxes, which fall nothing short of cutting taxes for everybody and still lowering the national budget deficit, a bold promise that will be interesting to watch.

He plans to put 1 million hybrid cars on the roads and make sure those cars are made in America, another bold promise seeing as how the top carmakers in America are applying for federal monetary aid.

While these promises come with every new president, Barack Obama has a lot riding on his shoulders. He has created history. He will accept a floundering economy as his responsibility. And he will become commander-in-chief of a military that is fighting a war in two places.

Welcome to the White House, Mr. Obama. We hope you enjoy your stay.

Slumping economy forces students to reconsider majors

By David Hulbert
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Staff Writer

Okay, so the market is in shambles and professionals are losing their jobs, so what? Why would we, as college students, care about these old people? They had their chance, right? As soon as we get our chance at the real world we will show them how it should be done.

This brings back the question, "What are you going to be doing when you grow up?"

We held an anonymous poll of 100 random students here on the GSC campus.

Thirty percent are majoring in a medical/pharmaceutical field.

Forty-seven percent are majoring in education.

Eleven percent are majoring in an Art of some kind.

Two percent are majoring in Psychology/Social Sciences

Ten percent are majoring in General Studies.

According to EconEdLink.org, "The number of unemployed persons in the U.S. rose by 592,000 to 9.4 million in August, and the unemployment rate increased by 0.4 percentage point to 6.1 percent."

Over the past 12 months, the number of unemployed persons has increased by 2.2 million and the unemployment rate has risen by 1.4 percentage points, with most of the increase occurring over the past four months."

More and more unemployed professionals have been given no choice but to start over in entry-level positions that would normally be occupied by students entering the work force.

This need to start over is delaying and eliminating the availability of these jobs for many who need the experience to move on in their career.

Employers are realizing that this is their time to pick and choose the best of the best and

The democratic music revolution

By Andrew Stern
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In a time when democracy has been on the front page of every newspaper, what could be better than a democratic music revolution? I think a lot of you can relate to the old model of the record industry being outdated and needing an overhaul. This is your chance to be a part of the movement.

I run cherrypeel.com, a music website that helps bring artists and listeners together.

Up until now, major labels, radio stations, and TV channels have been the only ones with the power to decide which artists and genres get heard. We are trying to democratize music by giving the listeners a voice. To do this we give each listener the right to vote on the songs they want others to hear and we give new artists a platform to get their music heard.

In addition to the website itself being of interest, it would also be a good tool to find new music to review. You can read more about the site and how we are trying to change the industry here: http://cherrypeel.com/philosophy and how the site works here: http://cherrypeel.com/ link/votesharediscover.jsp. Let me know if you have any questions: Andrew Stern andrew@cherrypeel.com.
Thank you, GSC student life

We just want to say thanks.
Thanks so much to the Student Life office here at Gainesville State College and to the students whose activities fees have built the amazing new Student Center.
The Compass, like many on-campus clubs and organizations, has long been packed into a tiny office that shared walls with restrooms and classrooms. As discussions frequently got spirited in our old office, irate professors would send students to remind us that we were way too loud.
But with one look at our office in the new student center we immediately realized that we would have room to move around and could allow ourselves to discuss controversial or popular ideas more freely.
The most amazing part of the new student center is the amount of cooperation that students have had from the student life staff. The workers in student life have worked very hard to make the transition to the new facilities smooth.
So we at The Compass want to say thank you to all students whose student activity fees helped to build the amazing new building that all benefit from.
And, of course, thank you to the staff of the Office of Student Life. The efforts of the workers have made the Student Center a place all students can enjoy.

Politicking is over

Americans, get back to work

The election is over and we couldn't be happier.
Not that we all agree on the results. Here in the Compass office there is just as much political division as throughout the rest of the country.
We're just glad that the campaigning and back-and-forth bickering are finally over.
But is it?
The nation still seems pretty divided between those who are thrilled to see Barack Obama in office and those who think that the country is headed straight for a catastrophe at his hands.
But, like the staff at here at The Compass, the country needs to come together.
The decision has been made. Obviously not every American is happy with that decision, but that's one of the shortcomings of a democracy.
The great thing about our government is that the people can be involved.
If you are frightened or unsure about the upcoming administration, then take charge. Start a grassroots movement to focus on the issue that you are passionate about. Organize town hall meetings to call politicians' attention to social injustices. Responsible citizens don't wait for Election Day to make a change.
The most important thing that Americans can do to ensure that our government is for the people is to become a part of it.
If we unite to make the changes that need to be made, then who got the nod on Election Day isn't as important as the people's voice.
If you are a staunch supporter of Obama, then it is your duty to hold him accountable for the promises and policies that got him into office.
Some of us think that Obama was the best choice, others are terrified about his leadership, but if we all can look past political pandering and begin to work together on the policies or issues that are important to us, then we can shape the next four years and beyond.
If this election has made anything clear, it is that history can be made even in this jaded day and age. While it may sound naive, even delusional, that Americans could step up on a massive scale and change politics as usual, this year has proven that just such a thing is possible.
It is our duty to step up and make the next four years accountable to the citizenry and not the politicians.
Andre Cheek leaves GSC a better place

By Jarvis Johnson
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First Louis Negron and now Andre Cheek will depart from Gainesville State College leaving behind the Minority Affairs office and many supportive students.

“This is definitely a loss to GSC,” said Amon Kirk, a sociology major at GSC. “Not only did she serve as an adviser, she was like a mother figure to a lot of people. She’s tackled very important and controversial issues. She embraced everybody regardless of race.”

Cheek has prided herself as being a student advocate and a positive role model for everyone: “I feel like my real job was to impact the lives of everyone that I touch. No matter if it was the president of the college a visiting speaker, parents, student or child,” said Cheek.

After dedicating seven years to GSC, Andre Cheek will be pursuing other career opportunities.

“I’ll be working with Atlanta public schools and the Project GRAD office in downtown Atlanta,” said Cheek.

Cheek will be part of a developing college readiness program in Atlanta high schools that will implement during the summer on different college campuses.

“If the students attend two consecutive summers, they will receive a scholarship,” said Cheek.

Cheek is the adviser for the Black Student Association and has been a leader for many campus events and the African Male Initiative Program.

“My best memories are probably seeing so many first-generation students graduate from GSC, transfer to four-year institutions and become successful,” said Cheek.

Cheek’s new beginning in Atlanta will start soon. For now students and faculty have to deal with her sudden decision to leave. It is apparent that Cheek will leave big shoes to fill.

“We’re going to expect her replacement to be as good as Ms. Cheek, and if they’re not like her we’re going to be reluctant to trust them,” said Kevana Wiggins, psychology major.

“I feel like Ms. Cheek is the life of this office and without her it’s going to be dead,” said Britany Perry, pharmacy major.

“I’m going to cry,” said Jaleesa Lott, an education major.

Cheek offered advice for her successor. “It’s going to be important that the individual take risk and have a voice. Let their voice be heard and be a constant student advocate. Also remember to do their research before they act.”

“I’m happy for her,” said Mike Session.

Andre Cheek is leaving GSC after seven years. She will be missed.

Keep your ^%@*& correctness out of my Christmas

By Caitlin O’Dell
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It’s the “holiday” season. Which means that once Halloween costumes are put in the back of closets around the country and all the sugar has been consumed, it’s a Santa Claus explosion in America!

Two days after Halloween, there were Christmas wreaths on the posts of the local grocery store in tiny Flowery Branch. There is Christmas music playing in most department stores. Santa’s little village is all set up in the Mall of Georgia.

Yet no one can say “Merry Christmas.”

Well, yes, I know there are other holidays. Chanukah and Kwanzaa among others. Still, why will they stop us from wishing others a Merry Christmas?

Although Christmas is a predominately Christian holiday (hence the Christ in the name), many non-Christians celebrate. Religion is not to blame for this - consumerism is. With a non-religious tone, Christmas can be celebrated by anyone who wants to spend a pretty penny and help inflate the estate of Sam Walton, Wal-Mart and Sam’s club founder.

I personally have no problem sharing my Christmas or my Christ with others. Different religions, races, genders ... the more the merrier. Still, we cannot be politically incorrect by saying which holiday we’re celebrating.

Honestly, is there anyone offended by a specific religion celebrating their Messiah’s birth? Who are Christians hurting by saying two words? Not only Christians, but anyone who wants to use the holiday’s proper name is shushed. Yes, using X in place of Christ in the name is shorter and allows for bigger font in ads. If Christians look at the X-symbol in a historical context, they’ll see it is nothing offensive at all, but actually quite perfect.

Printing “Xmas” rather than “Christmas” does save room ... but “happy holidays!” The amount of letters are the same in both “happy holidays” and “Merry Christmas.”

How about those holiday trees? We started seeing those more and more in store ads last year around this time. I was tempted to go into those stores and ask for a “holiday tree” in July, since the Fourth of July is a holiday, too.

Speaking of the Fourth, shouldn’t that be called something else? “Independence Day” implies that we Americans were once dependent. Not only that, the day is symbolic of our break with Great Britain. Shouldn’t the Brits be offended by that? What could we call it instead?

Of course, Native Americans should take umbrage to Thanksgiving, because Thanksgiving symbolizes the time when colonists came over to the “new world” and brought “peaceful” religions and diseases. It signifies the downfall of Native Americans to our pompous European ancestors’ egos and (gasp) intolerance.

The American government isn’t doing anything for them.

If we Americans are planning on truly embracing all religions and making no difference or preference to any of them, we really should publicize and sell things for the other religious holidays represented here in the States.

Got an opinion?
Make it known on our website, www.gsccompass.com, or write a letter to Editor in Chief Caitlin O’Dell at 924170651@gsc.edu.
Recipes: White Chocolate Brownies, Pumpkin Streusel Pie

**White Chocolate Brownies**

1/2 cup of margarine
1 10 oz bag of vanilla baking morsels (1 1/2 3/4 cup all purpose flour
3/4 granulated sugar
1 teaspoon all natural vanilla flavoring
1/4 teaspoon of salt
3 large eggs

(OPTIONAL: 1/2 cup chopped nuts)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour a 13x9 inch pan. Mix together flour, sugar, vanilla flavoring, salt, and eggs in a large bowl.

In a 2 quart saucepan, heat butter and baking chips of a low flame, be sure not to scorch them! Stir frequently, just until melted. They may be chunky and curdled but that is to expected. Remove from heat.

Mix together 2 and 3 quickly to avoid sticking. Spread evenly into pan.

Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Also, for extra flair sprinkle left over baking. Cool pie while it is still hot so you take it out for the first time. But as a concept, the songs don’t flow another paean to Southern California, “a tune that looks back fondly of “This Old World” and “Hey Marilyn” is much more intriguing than the rest of the album.

In fact, the six songs that close the album are Wilson’s best, most consistent work since his Beach Boys heyday. “Midnight is Another Day” is a beautiful ballad that segues perfectly into “That Lucky Old Sun,” the old Louis Armstrong song serves as the frame for the various movements of the album, and is followed by “I’m Coming Home,” a rocker reminiscent of “This Old World” and “Hey Marilyn.” The capstone is “Southern California,” a tune that looks back fondly at his Beach Boy roots.

What trumps the album’s flaws is, of course, the music itself. Even if he isn’t applying an obsessive compulsive effort to his compositions these days, Wilson still offers more compelling, intricate music than probably anyone else in the business. His voice has aged with time, yet his falsetto remains mostly intact, and he sings with more panache than in any of his previous solo efforts, including “SMiLE.” And his band, made up mostly of the former Beach Boys tribute band the Wondermints, has never sounded better. Musically, there is little this group cannot accomplish, and the decade long collaboration with their musical idol continues to reap rewards. And not even the Beach Boys themselves can match the soaring harmonies of Wilson’s new band.

By itself, “That Lucky Old Sun” continues to show Wilson’s incremental improvement as a solo artist, not including the brilliant “SMiLE,” an anomaly of sorts in that the majority of that record was written nearly forty years before Wilson found the courage to complete it. In the annals of rock history, however, the album is a gift to Wilson fans, as nearly any recording the troubled composer can compile makes us the lucky ones, for each new effort moves us farther away from defining the old Beach Boy as a wasted talent and more toward a recovered boy wonder who still offers flashes of that old brilliance.

**Pumpkin Streusel Pie**

1 deep dish pie shell
1/2 cup of margarine
1 10 oz bag of vanilla baking morsels (1 1/2 1/4 cup all purpose flour
3/4 granulated sugar
1 teaspoon all natural vanilla flavoring
1/4 teaspoon of salt
3 large eggs

(OPTIONAL: 1/2 cup chopped nuts)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour a 13x9 inch pan. Mix together flour, sugar, vanilla flavoring, salt, and eggs in a large bowl.

In a 2 quart saucepan, heat butter and baking chips of a low flame, be sure not to scorch them! Stir frequently, just until melted. They may be chunky and curdled but that is to expected. Remove from heat.

Mix together 2 and 3 quickly to avoid sticking. Spread evenly into pan.

Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Also, for extra flair sprinkle left over baking chips over top while it is still hot so there’s some extra melty goodness!

In a mixing bowl, combine the pumpkin, sweetened condensed milk, eggs, 1 teaspoon of cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, and salt.

Pour batter into the pie shell. Bake in oven for about 15 minutes. Reduce oven to 350 degrees once you take it out for the first time. In a small bowl, combine brown sugar, flour, and remaining 1/2 teaspoon of cinnamon. Cut in the butter until the mixture is crumbly. Stir in nuts. Sprinkle mixture evenly over the pie. Bake pie for 40 minutes. Cool pie completely before cutting. Refrigerate any leftovers!
Restaurant review: 2 Dog café

By Michelle Bennett
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You know what they say about a dog being a man’s best friend.

Gainesville State College student Jon Whitaker visited 2 Dog café in Gainesville for the first time recently and left deeming 2 Dog café man’s new best friend.

“They have something for everyone,” said Whitaker. “It’s a bistro-meets-a-wine-bar-meets-a-contemporary-coffee-shop. I will definitely go back.”

2 Dog café is located at 317 Spring St. in Gainesville. Owner and Chef Tim Roberts calls 2 Dog “A local, independent restaurant.”

Roberts describes the atmosphere of 2 Dog as “casual and easy-going but not ‘down-home.’”

When asked what sparked his passion for the business Roberts said, “It’s all I’ve ever really done.”

Roberts’ passion for the restaurant business didn’t start with 2 Dog. He said that he started his first restaurant in North Carolina when he was 27 years old.

“We’ve been in Gainesville for 11 years now,” he said.

Roberts’ dedication to the establishment shows through the food. “There is very little that we do that you’re going to be able to find in a grocery store,” said Roberts.

They even make their own bread, catsup and mustard.

Whitaker describes the food as “high-quality cuisine.”

When asked what he saw on the menu Whitaker said, “Ribs, quesadillas, salads … every kind of cuisine.”

Jon visited 2 Dog for dinner and also saw entrees like blackened portabella, the 2 Dog burger, stuffed flour- dent and lasagna. Tim Robert’s said, “Right now I like the lamb.”

New diners shouldn’t be confused, however. 2 Dog does not just specialize in dinner. It also has an extensive lunch menu.

“Lunch and dinner are two very different animals,” said Roberts.

Roberts and his staff at 2 Dog keep in mind during lunch hour that the majority of the people who come in are taking just a short break.

“We know these people are in and out,” said Roberts.

Their lunch menu clearly reflects that. Currently on the menu are things like soup, salad, veggie sandwiches and the 2 Dog club.

Roberts and Whitaker agree that 2 Dog has a unique style and atmosphere.

“We pride ourselves at the fact that we are who we are. We like that fact. We’re comfortable with that,” said Roberts.

2 Dog café is open Monday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. for lunch and Wednesday through Saturday 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. for dinner.

Jaguar is no longer a rich old man’s car, hopefully

By Caitlin O’Dell
Editor-in-Chief
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Since Ford bought Jaguar in 1989, few people have been completely happy with what happened to the old cats.

“I hate what Ford did to Jaguar,” said Jacob Davis, a sophomore political science major at GSC.

“80s jags were really cute,” Davis said. “Under Ford, Jaguars always seemed dirty … they just seemed cheap.”

“They are a little bit cooler just because you have the old factor in there,” said Brandon Carey, a junior early childhood education major at GSC.

“We’ve been in Gainesville for 11 years now,” he said.

Roberts’ dedication to the establishment shows through the food. “There is very little that we do that you’re going to be able to find in a grocery store,” said Roberts.

They even make their own bread, catsup and mustard.

“It’s beautiful, expensive and I’ll never own one,” said Anita Turlington, assistant professor of English at GSC.

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Indeed, the XFs start at $50,000. These are powered by a 4.2 liter V-8 engine with 300-horsepower.

The top model, which uses the supercharged version of the same engine as the base model with 120 more horsepower, costs $63,000.

The favorite feature – so far – of this new XF is the rotary shift knob. Creatively named the JaguarDrive Selector, this knob rises out of the transmission tunnel upon pressing the glowing red keyless start/ stop button.

As an appreciator of classic jag sedans, I miss the snarling jaguar that leaps from the bonnet at anything threatening to slow down its speed. If the XF were sleeker, like the 60s E-types, I could understand removing the cat for aerodynamics. Without the ornament, the XF looks more like its competition – Audi’s A6, BMW’s 550i, Mercedes-Benz’s E550, Cadillac’s STS and Lexus’s GS 460.

As a college student, I am not in the age bracket the new XF is marketed toward nor could I afford it.

Maybe James Bond will pick it as his next car.
When we talk about the music scene here in Georgia, you typically hear about Athens, Atlanta, Macon and Savannah, but what about Gainesville State? Athens claims R.E.M., Widespread Panic, and the B-52s, while Atlanta claims Sevendust and possibly the biggest rap scene in the world. Macon had the Allman Brothers and Savannah has Kylesa and Passafire.

Believe it or not, GSC has plenty of bands looking to soon join those ranks. One such band is the "socially aware" punk rock group, So It Goes. Though they were formed in nearby Cumming, So It Goes features GSC's own Taylor Lanham and Jonathan Brown.

Both Brown and Lanham are members of the Students for a Progressive Society. Brown is the president and Lanham is the treasurer.

"We are incredibly happy about having a president who represents more progressive values," said Lanham, about President-elect Barack Obama.

They have already opened for Fighting Records’ Whole Wheat Bread, as well as Victory Records’ Catch-22. On December 6, So it Goes will be opening for Murphy’s Law, considered by many to be legends in the punk world.

"I am very excited to be able to open for so many talented bands like Murphy’s Law, Catch 22, and World/Inferno," said Brown, "It is really great to play with bands you admire and respect."

The band is heavily influenced by punk and ska bands including: Operation Ivy, Rancid, Bad Brains, Anti-Flag, and Flogging Molly.

So It Goes has already released one EP earlier this year titled "Long Road Home." In January, the group plans to release a new EP featuring eight songs, but they have yet to come up with a title.

New songs will include "52," a song which compares the economy to a deck of cards, and "Una EternidadSENTI," which is sung completely in Spanish.

If punk is not your style, then maybe party metal is.

The Buford-based band Attila considers themselves to be party metal, or a blend of hardcore and death metal. The band also features drummer and GSC student, Sean Heenan.

Numerous bands have influenced Attila ranging from Pantera and Meshuggah to Killswitch Engage and As I Lay Dying. Living life and partying have also influenced the band.

Attila has shared the stage with many bands including Born of Osiris and The Chariot, which features former Norma Jean front man Josh Scogin.

The band had a CD release party in Loganville on November 21. The new album, "Soundtrack to a Party," was highly anticipated by their fan base.

Heenan said that the CD will be available at Hot Topic, Best Buy and FYE upon request.

Whether you are just bored of the mainstream, or looking for something new to listen to, Gainesville State has a variety of music to listen to. Support your local music scene, and show some love for these up-and-coming artists.

For more information, visit www.myspace.com/soitgoes1 and www.myspace.com/attilaga.

GSC has something to offer the music scene here

By Wil Petty
Staff Writer
924183283@gsc.edu

When people talk about the music scene here in Georgia, you typically hear about Athens, Atlanta, Macon and Savannah, but what about Gainesville State? Athens claims R.E.M., Widespread Panic, and the B-52s, while Atlanta claims Sevendust and possibly the biggest rap scene in the world. Macon had the Allman Brothers and Savannah has Kylesa and Passafire.

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GTA presents ‘Thoroughly Modern Millie’

By Andrew Woodrum
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A young lady who lives in Kansas sets out an adventure to see the world in the 1920s. Sound like Wizard of Oz? Well, think again!

Thoroughly Modern Millie is a Tony Award-winning play that Gainesville Theatre Alliance has reproduced.

For those who do not know, the Gainesville State College theater program is a 29-year collaboration between Gainesville State College, Brenau University, and the Northeast Georgia community, and guest professionals who help out!

The story itself is set in 1922, but was written and produced as a film in the 1960s. After a wonderful reception, it was then turned to a Broadway musical in 2001, mere months after 9/11.

John B. Hammond, theater program director said, "We turn to musical theater when we need a laugh, when we need to take ourselves a little less seriously, and when we need to believe that tomorrow is going to be better than today."

"I don't ever think I have been more excited about a show, because we have a perfect casting pool for this," he said.

The stage is set for a young girl with dreams of stardom shining in her eyes. She has such dreams of success when she is mugged shortly after arriving in the big city: losing many of her belongings, including her purse.

Jimmy Smith, a fabulous man-about-town character, advises Millie to go back to Kansas where she belongs. This strengthens Millie’s resolve to make it big, though the acting gigs are not as plentiful as she had hoped.

So It Goes and Attila can be found online at www.myspace.com/soitgoes1 and www.myspace.com/attilaga.
SEA seeks volunteers for Elachee

by Jaime Munoz
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The Students for Environmental Awareness club at Gainesville State College is seeking student volunteers to participate at Elachee Nature Science Center’s Winter in the Woods festival.

The Winter in the Woods annual kid’s festival will be held on Saturday, Dec. 13, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The festival events and activities are geared more toward school children of all ages, and is the perfect opportunity for students to volunteer a few hours of their time, especially if they love working with children.

GSC student and SEA member Michelle Cash is organizing and coordinating the volunteering between the college and Elachee.

“We are looking for mostly GSC students,” Cash said. “With many Americans trying to become more healthy and eco-friendly, what better way than to spend your Saturday volunteering at Elachee? You can unplug electronics, keep your electricity off longer, work off Thanksgiving food, get some fresh air and volunteer at Elachee Nature Center that is unknown to many.”

Student volunteers will be assigned either to instruct children how to create natural and kid’s crafts, lead children through the Elachee museum on a candy cane scavenger hunt, help create holiday cookie treats, or participate as tour guides for the children on an outdoor scavenger hunt to spot local wildlife.

For student volunteers who are actually interested in getting a little dirty, there will be the perfect opportunity after the fest as Elachee will be doing some hands-on work on the trails.

“After the Festival, volunteers will be working in the picnic area, re-mulching and maybe cutting back some weeds. We would also like to just hike a trail and clean up any trash we see along to trail,” said Cash.

Besides hosting the annual winter festival, the Elachee Nature Science Center, located inside of the 1,500-acre Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve, also have bikes trails, a golf course and hiking trails.

Elachee also has a live animal room with native animals to Georgia, which is open to the public.

“It would be a unique opportunity and a great way to spend some time outside. It’s a great way to give back to your community and with the “Green” kick why not join in and help out at a nature center,” said Cash.

For those of you who are interested in volunteering or have any questions regarding the Winter Woods festival at Elachee Nature Science Center, you can contact Michelle Cash at 924194383@gsc.edu. Directions to the facility from GSC can also be found at www.elachee.org.

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SGA improves campus

By Jarvis Johnson
News Editor
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The Gainesville State College Debate Club will be bringing the competition to Hall County on Jan. 16, 2009. The tournament, entitled “The Chicken or the Egg”, will be held on the GSC campus and will have debate and individual speaking competition.

“It's a two-day event and 15 schools have already committed to attending,” said Tom Preston, Debate Club adviser and tournament organizer.

A few schools that have already committed to attending the tournament are the University of Alabama, Carson-Newman College, Southern Poly Tech University, Volunteer State Community College, Piedmont College and South Georgia College.

“Everybody's been working so hard,” Preston said. “To go from four people two years ago to now hold our own tournament, that just blows my mind. It’s inspirational, too. We've grown from last year.

“We're just going to do our own thing and still win.”

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GSC Debate Club plans tournament

By David Parchert
SGA member
924204018@gsc.edu

You might be thinking what the Student Government Association does for you? SGA implemented the “Right Choice for a Healthier You” program.

You might be thinking what the Student Government Association does for you? SGA implemented the “Right Choice for a Healthier You” program. Check out the right side of the vending machines, look for the apple sticker, and you are on your way to enjoying a healthier snack!

SGA has also drafted a security proposal to add lighting on campus. Be on the lookout, night students, for LED flash light key-chains to help keep you safe!

Do you want a voice in what goes on at Gainesville State College? Come to any and all SGA meetings at 1 p.m. on Fridays in meeting room 4 of the student commons. Can’t come to a meeting? E-mail SGA at sgagainesville@gsc.edu with any concerns or ideas!

SGA President Katie Taylor encourages students to contact them at sgagainesville@gsc.edu with any questions, comments, or concerns which they may be having with student life at the GSC campus.

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PROMOTE YOUR CLUB
ADVERTISE IN THE COMPASS

SGA President Katie Taylor encourages students to contact them at sgagainesville@gsc.edu with any questions, comments, or concerns which they may be having with student life at the GSC campus.
Film Club produced first film this fall

By Michelle Bennett
Features Editor
924186957@gsc.edu

You’ve passed the posters and maybe even glanced up at the sign on the hallway in the Academic II building. For most of us, free movies and popcorn on Friday afternoons are the only things that we’ve heard about the Film Club.

However, that is about to change. The film club has started to produce its first film.

David Dorcas, president of the film club, and members William Davis and David Hulbert have rallied together to shoot a horror film.

The filming started a week before Halloween and will continue through the end of November.

The screenplay, written by Dorcas, is about a group of friends that come to a misfortune because of a few bad decisions.

In addition to his role as president of the film club, Dorcas is also directing the movie.

David Dorcas was accepted into the Georgia State University film production program and will be transferring in the spring.

William Davis and David Hulbert plan to take over the film club when Dorcas transfers to GSU. Davis and Hulbert will also be working with professors David Smith and Jeff Marker to continue the program’s growth.

Hulbert is both producer and editor of the film.

“I own a small production company with my friend and business partner, Paulo Diaz,” says Hulbert. “I also work with Leah Perdue and Brigitte Autran to produce the GSC Gainesville Campus’ first news reel.”

“My character is not the most ethical or moral of all beings,” says Davis. “But he is a lovable guy named ‘Stoney’ and from the name you can kind of get an idea of exactly who he is.”

Davis says he models the character on the late Jim Morrison, lead singer of the 60s group the Doors, and also cites the film Apocalypse Now as an influence.

“The film... stared three students from GSC and three others from the community,” says Hulbert.

“Jenny Strickland, a nursing major, played Christine, a not-so-friendly, yuppie girl,” says Hulbert. “David Dorcas played Mike, who is kind of the jock over-confident type.”

The film club hopes that this horror film is just the beginning of a tradition of filming at least one project each semester.

The members of the Film Club encourage all GSC students to contribute to any of the film projects and will be looking for actors for future projects.

Students who don’t necessarily want to act are also encouraged to contribute ideas.

Those interested in set design, acting, producing, editing, cinematography, directing, writing, lighting, costume design, storyboarding or any other facet of film making are encouraged to join the film club.

The finished film will be shown before the end of the semester in the Academic II building.

“In the course of life, you only have so long on this earth and if you have a dream of being an actor, writer, director, do it!” says Davis.

For more information on joining the Film Club contact dsmith@gsc.edu.

GSC students make skateboarding video

By Ben White
Staff Writer
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One of the most frequently encountered problems for mankind, “What do I do in the meanwhile, between here and there?”

GSC student Candler Woods and a few of his friends answered the age-old question by making a skate video titled, “Meanwhile.”

The video will premiere on December 3 at Eastside Lounge in Atlanta.

As for the motivation behind “Meanwhile,” Woods said it was “mostly about having fun.”

“It was largely a collaborative effort between friends,” he said. “A majority of the footage came from just wanting to get out and skate together.”

They simply skate for the satisfaction and enjoyment they get from it, Woods said.

The line-up for the video consists of well-known skaters from in and around Atlanta, most of whom have been featured in films before. Of these skaters are Rhett Freeman, Ryan Fitch, Steven Criger, Candler Woods, Aaron Brown, and Ryan O’Connor.

For those of you who want to sneak an early peek, search for “meanwhile” on www.skateboarding.transworld.net, as well as www.youtube.com.

The trailer sets a good tone for the video. The song, Broken Social Scene’s “KC Accidental,” really complements that tone. The video, like the song, starts off slow. It’s a montage of clips of them cruising the streets of Atlanta. Shortly afterwards, it delves into the hammers: buttery blunt slides, solid 360 flips, and creative gaps, all of which were executed smoothly and stylishly.