

Editorial

Wednesday, May 6, 2015

Summer has arrived

Ah, May; the weather is forecasted to have temperatures in the 80's and plentiful sunshine for the next five days. Lawns everywhere are dotted with people reading a book, tossing a frisbee, or just enjoying the weather. Daylight hours stretch from 5:30 am to 8:30 pm, granting more time to enjoy being outside. As for what to do with this time, here are *The Poly's* recommendations.

Within reach with just your own two feet are a few nice places to relax. Grab some local produce from the Troy Waterfront Farmers' Market and eat it at the Riverfront Park along the shores of the Hudson River. Prospect Park is a great place to take a walk, picnic, and enjoy the stunning views over the valley. Poestenkill Gorge Park has dramatic rock cliffs, an abundance of trees, and some substantial waterfalls, and it's a half-mile walk from campus.

If you're fortunate enough to have a car or know a friend with a car, there are numerous options for day-trips. This weekend, May 9 and 10, Albany will host the annual Tulip Festival in Washington Park. Thatcher State Park's Indian Ladder Trail passes along the top of a 1,300 foot tall cliff face, then plunges down a staircase to the base of a handful of waterfalls. Peeble's Island State Park and Grafton Lakes State Park are great places to bring a group of friends and spend the day either hiking and picnicking (Peeble's and Grafton) or swimming and spending time at the beach (Grafton).

A little farther out are Mt. Greylock State Reservation, Green Mountain National Forest, Lake George, and the Adirondacks in general; all of which boast spectacular mountain terrain and are great places to just get away to for a day. For the less outdoorsy type, there's also options in a day trip to Saratoga Springs or Bennington, or a weekend trip to New York City and Boston.

If you're just looking for a little something to do here on campus in a spare hour, there's the hill next to the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center (there's two sides to it!), the Sage Building Quad, the '86 Field, the area around the Voorhees Computing Center, the Quad Quad, the Union Patio, Freshman Hill, Anderson Field, and all of ECAV. Pick up a frisbee, football, soccer ball, lacrosse stick, rollerblade, tennis racket, tennis ball, running shoes, blanket to eat on, or even nothing at all and have some fun or just relax with your friends. The end of the semester is really stressful, and counterintuitively, spending some time not working will actually improve results on last exams, projects, or finals.

EDITOR'S CORNER

Semester *Poly* updates Website changes, social media usage

NEXT WEEK MARKS THE END OF classes for the semester, and with it, the last issue of *The Poly* for the 2014–2015 academic year. Throughout this past year, we've worked to improve our offerings, both online and offline, and we're planning on continuing this trend into the next semester and beyond.

Over the course of the summer, we will continue work on our new website, so stay tuned for changes on that front. Our current site runs off of WordPress, which is a bit more limiting, as it is meant for more of a blog-style site. The new site will have better front- and back-end systems, which will allow us to provide better integration between stories and tags, for example. In the interim, we are exploring options of using a more up-to-date WordPress theme, which better reflects our status as a media organization.

In this last semester, we've made quite a few changes to

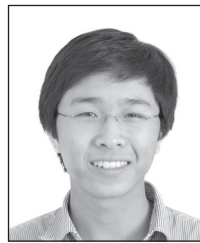
our paper, both visually, and in terms of content. We pioneered a new layout, and started writing some longer, more in-depth articles, and have expanded our online presence. In the last year, we've made increasing usage of our Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram accounts, and have started working with our current website to provide multimedia content and PDFs of issues online.

With the end of the academic year, of course, comes the inevitable exodus of graduates to their respective jobs and future endeavors. I'd like to take a moment to recognize some of our future alumni. Ethan Spitz '15, one of our current contributing editors, has been on *The Poly* since Navigating Rensselaer and Beyond of his freshman year, in the fall of 2011. Since then, he has served as photography editor, copy editor, and web and systems director. Another of our

future alumni is Vicki Lam '15, who joined *The Poly* in the fall of 2011, and has since served as copy editor and business manager. Kirk Smith '15, who also joined in fall of 2011, served as news editor for multiple semesters. All of them have contributed a great deal to make *The Polytechnic* into what it is today.

With the leaving of a number of our editors comes vacancies which we would very much like filled, so if any of you are interested in selling ads, working on business, taking photos, writing news stories or sports articles (you can get free access to games!), or doing graphic design and layout, don't hesitate to drop in or shoot us an email! We're always looking for helping hands (and it's also a great résumé booster).

Looking forwards, we plan on releasing a summer issue mid-July, before we welcome new freshmen in the fall of 2015 with our NRB event, *Poly Press Pass*. I hope you'll stay with us on our journey forward, for many issues to come.



Joseph Shen
Editor in Chief

EDITORIAL NOTEBOOK

Fade filled with dank memes Use RPI Fade purposefully and wittily

STUDENTS OF RPI, IT'S TIME TO TALK. THERE HAS BEEN A serious issue plaguing the students of this great school for several months now. Many of you are probably aware of this atrocity, but it's time we get everyone on the same page. This unfortunate occurrence which I am referring to is the flooding of the RPI Fade page of seemingly nothing but memes.

For those of you that are unaware, Fade is a social media app that, similarly to Yik Yak, allows users to post content anonymously on their phones. People in the surrounding area can then see this content. The main difference between Yik Yak and Fade is that Fade allows for pictures as well as a sentence or two. The point of such an application is to allow those around RPI to post pictures of interesting and funny things that they see around campus. However, due to the "internet" culture that surrounds RPI, people see it fit to post memes and pictures of iFunny posts.

I, for one, enjoy a dank meme, but there is a time and a place. If I wanted to check out funny internet pictures with witty captions, I could go to any of the dozens of websites that literally do nothing but this. If I want to see interesting and funny pictures of things that are going on around RPI, there is only one place for this and that is RPI Fade. This epidemic wouldn't even be that bad if there were the occasional post of a

meme. However, on most days, the page is comprised entirely of internet culture jokes with silly captions! The worst of it all is that most of the meme posts are praised, as they receive a high amount of upvotes.

So this is where I speak to the students of RPI. Please, let RPI Fade be used for its original purpose. It's time that we, as a student body, utilize RPI Fade for its actual purpose. Here are some ideas for things that you can start posting to Fade.

You see someone at the gym repping out 500 pounds like a complete monster? Post it to Fade. See someone using a machine all wrong? Discreetly post it. Perhaps you run across a spontaneous campus happening like the helicopter that landed at East Campus Athletic Village. Snap a picture and let Fade know. If you get a cut-off finger in your Sodexo meal, let the world know how disgusting it is. This kind of stuff is so much more interesting for the average student than a meme that has been downloaded from the internet. Even feel free to throw in a witty caption as long as it's your own content. Together, we can fix this tragedy. We can take advantage of this unique application and make it something that is hilarious and entertaining. We, as a united campus, can fix this! Up with the original RPI content, down with the dank memes!



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**Have an opinion? Send a column
request and samples to
edop@poly.rpi.edu!**

TOP HAT

GM relays personal experience with ALAC

ALAC and CCP prove useful for core courses and communication

Marcus Flowers
Grand Marshal

CLASSES ARE REACHING THEIR FINAL STRETCH, AND STUDENTS are using every tool in their arsenal to tackle their final projects, presentations, and examinations. I'd like to take this chance to talk about some of my favorite resources, the first of which is the Advising & Learning Assistance Center, or ALAC for short.

ALAC offers a variety of tutoring opportunities for students who have difficulties in their courses, or simply want to stay one step ahead of the curve. There are free drop-in tutoring opportunities for many of the classes here, including that pesky IEA class so many of us fight through. Students can also find private tutors through ALAC, as the Center will only recommend students who have shown proficiency in the course they are recommended for. ALAC tutoring was how I survived being a

first semester freshman in a Differential Equations class taught by a professor who had only taught graduate students before. It's how I managed to get through Organic Chemistry I & II without five all-nighters a week, and learned Physics II without reading the textbook a hundred times. Check it out at <http://alac.rpi.edu/>, or ask at their office in Academy Hall.

Another resource I make use of is the Center for Communication Practices, or the CCP to cut down on letters. The CCP is an advising service for students to use for their reports and presentations, helping to ensure that technical reports are detailed yet concise, that presentations are engaging and informative, and improve the overall writing ability of students. Sign up for appointments online at <http://www.ccp.rpi.edu>, or try for a walk-in. They're located on the first floor of the Folsom Library (so you'll go down one flight of stairs from the main desk).

Now onto the business of the Senate for this week: we heard presentations on several petitions, and decided if we should take action, and if so, what sort of action should be taken. These petitions are: "Don't Shut Down RPI's Nuclear Reactor!," "Do NOT Extend Sodexo's Contract," "Install Water Bottle Filling Stations around campus", and "Expanded use of EMPAC." Next week, at our meeting on May 12 in Elsworth, we will be addressing the petitions "Bring Beer Back to GM Week," "Bring big-name concerts back to RPI," and any others that may come up. Check out the current petitions, or post new ones at <http://petitions.rpiwtg.com/>.

Oh, and the best resource that we have for our studies is the person sitting in the seat next to us, who is going through the same challenges, may know a trick to make studying a better experience, and we all learn better when we can help someone else understand it as well.

As always, contact me at gm@rpi.edu for any questions, comments, concerns, or studying tips!

DERBY

Executive Board applications due; weekly events

PU discusses club proposals, E-Board representative composition

Nicholas Dvorak
President of the Union

WHAT'S UP RPI? I HOPE YOU HAVE BEEN enjoying the weather lately. It took a few long nights, but I think I finally have the weather machine in working order again. First order of business is, well, business. In this week's Executive Board meeting, we heard proposals from the Jazz Ensemble for their summer concerts program, UPAC for some budgetary adjustments, and the RPI Bowling Club seeking Rensselaer Union recognition. Unfortunately, due to scheduling, I don't have the results of these presentations as my Derby is due before the meeting. I'll be working to fix this for next semester by moving some things around. However, if you check out the RPI Subreddit (<https://www.reddit.com/r/RPI/>), you'll be able to see an E-Board "Week in Review" post of what's been going on after this week's meeting. I've had a number of clubs and organizations reach out to me as the semester winds down

seeking to come before the board. Time is short, so I encourage any group interested in presenting to speak with their outgoing representative or point of contact to see what the best steps to take are as the new board is selected. I promise we will do our absolute best to ensure all groups are given every chance possible to be heard.

With that said, Wednesday, May 6 is the last day to apply to be on the incoming executive board! In case you lost your application, physical copies are still present on the Union bulletin boards, there is a PDF here: <http://poly.rpi.edu/s/x0m1c/> and a Google Form here: <http://poly.rpi.edu/s/1odcx/>. I have only been in office for a week and change, but I can honestly say that serving in this position has given me a radically different perspective of student government. Serving on the E-Board is a truly invaluable experience, and one that I encourage any student to seek out. By its definition, 12 representatives are chosen by the President of the Union, and three positions are del-

egated. Of the delegated positions, one will represent each of the following areas: the Student Senate, the Graduate Council, and the Undergraduate Council; all of which are appointed by their respective bodies. Among the 12 representatives selected by the President of the Union, there shall be at least one member each from the freshmen, sophomore, junior, senior, and graduate classes. There must also be five representatives who have been members of a club or varsity sport team, and two at-large members representing any membership within the Rensselaer Union. With this diverse structure, students of all experiences are encouraged to apply. This year, we will be taking on many projects that will make a lasting impact on the Rensselaer community for the better, making this an excellent opportunity to give back.

This weekend is packed with events going on around campus, so I hope you all get the chance to get out and enjoy them! I've heard nothing but good things

about The Players' performances of *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, which is showing this Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 8 pm in the Playhouse. This Saturday, the Dance Team is having their Spring Recital, and UPAC is throwing a Field Day with laser tag and yard games on the '86 Field. Men's baseball will be home facing off against Rochester Institute of Technology or Clarkson University in the Liberty Leagues tournament on Friday. Other performances and events are abound! Be sure to check out the Rensselaer Union website and keep your eyes peeled for the details.

As always, if you have questions/comments/concerns, or even a joke you'd like to share, feel free to reach out to be at any time at pu@rpi.edu or swing by my office hours (10 am–12 pm MWR) and Pub Chats (8 pm–9 pm MR). Just remember: One Monday remaining in the semester, *and Clarkson still sucks.*

Have a good one, RPI!

The Polytechnic
will be holding
elections on
Saturday, May 9 at noon in
Mother's Wine Emporium.