Rensselaer Union
Why we love the Rensselaer Union
Serving the Rensselaer community since 1885

inside
Editorial/Opinion ........ 2
Comics .......................... 4
Features ......................... 8

connect
Visit us online at: poly.rpi.edu
Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/thePolytechnic
Follow us on Twitter and Instagram: @PIPoly

Monday, July 11, 2016
Volume CXXXVI, No. 29 • poly.rpi.edu

Features Page 7
Features
DINOSAURS! BATS & GHOSTS! Pokemon come to campus

RPI renovates North and E-Complex
Disused residence halls overhauled to house largest-ever freshman class

Jack Wellhofer
David Raab
Senior Reporters

MUCH NEEDED RENOVATIONS for North and E-Complex Residence Halls are underway this summer, providing additional on-campus housing space for the freshmen class. The newly renovated buildings will house a total of 177 students—170 incoming freshmen and seven residence assistants.

The incoming freshman class is set to be the largest RPI has seen, posing a difficult housing problem for Residence Life.

Discussion between President Shirley Ann Jackson, Vice President for Student Life Dr. Frank E. Ross III, and Vice President for Administration Claude Rouns concluded that renovating the closed residence halls was the best solution to the problem and fitted in with intended repairs for the buildings.

North and E-Complex were closed at the end of the Fall 2014 semester. A previous Poly article cited student complaints about the inconsistency of the water temperatures, poor control of the heating system, and bathroom conditions. The buildings, constructed in the 1930s, had high asbestos removed multiple times. There were also complaints about bugs such as cockroaches and centipedes.

Interim Dean of Residence Life Kathy Shellogg told The Poly that housing freshmen on campus results in higher retention rates. The residence halls grouped on Freshman Hill encourage a community feeling, with the long-term goal of having all residence halls on Freshman Hill house exclusively freshmen.

Sharp and Warren Residence Halls, located on Freshman Hill, will house sophomores during the 2016-2017 academic year. The Quadangle, located across from the Rensselaer Union, will also house 200 freshmen this year to accommodate the Class of 2020.

Shellogg believes that this is “the one year we put first-years [in North and E-Complex],” given that the two are isolated from the other freshmen residence halls. Previously, the residence halls housed upper-class students. “Location, location, location,” said Shellogg, referring to the ideal proximity of upper-class students to both North Lot and common classroom locations like Sage Laboratories.

The Poly also spoke to Rouns about what renovations were occurring to the residence halls. Both residence halls will contain nearly an entire new interior for the incoming freshmen.

Some of the changes include the following: asbestos removal, new vinyl flooring, interior and exterior painting, new exterior lighting, and cameras for improved security.

The bathrooms have also seen upgrades in the form of new ventilation, replacement of fixtures, sinks, and showerheads. The kitchens have been replaced with improved appliance, as have the laundry rooms. The controls for hot water have been improved and a new hot water tank will be installed in North.

With all of the upgrades occurring in both North and E-Complex, Residence Life says it will be able to accommodate all of the incoming students seeking on-campus housing.

OFF-CAMPUS EVENT

Trustee Nancy Mueller hosts Bay Area luncheon

RPI alumni, students, faculty, incoming freshmen look toward future

Rex Hu
Elisabeth Ryan
Senior Reporters

ON SATURDAY, JUNE 4, TRUSTEES member Nancy Mueller opened her home to alumni of Rensselaer, returning students, and accepted incoming freshmen. She hosted this event in her home in Palo Alto, California, in the form of a business casual luncheon. Before the meal was served and the official announcements were made, students and alumni had a chance to mingle and exchange “war stories” of attending RPI. It was also an opportunity for students to network and expand their occupational horizons.

Mueller gave a gracious welcome to her guests and after lunch introduced speaker and Dean of Engineering Professor Shekhar Garde. Garde took this opportunity to update the alumni on all the great things happening on campus. Especially noteworthy, Garde announced that RPI would be anticipating its largest incoming freshman class as well as an applicant pool of over 18,500. He noted the diversity and initiative already present among the Class of 2020’s students.

After a brief and unofficial poll, Garde was able to gauge the female population here at RPI during the ‘60s and ‘70s from the present alumni. It was sparse with classes’ female population peaking under 10. However, as of this summer, there are over a thousand women enrolled in RPI’s undergraduate program, with some 30 percent making up the engineering student body. Garde stressed the significance of this change in balance and said that it would result in a more successful and high quality school.

For the incoming students, Garde expanded on the things students should expect to encounter. The Summer Arch program’s second pilot class year is the Class of 2020. According to Garde, Summer Arch will give students a chance to open up one of their semesters for studying abroad and co-ops by spending a summer semester on campus between sophomore and junior year. According to many alumni Garde interviewed, their co-ops and internships were the most forming and teaching of experiences.

Garde also went into detail about the types of “creativity” taking place on campus. Being a tech school, students are more geared towards science and mathematics. A new program, Art X, is coming to campus soon with the intent of promoting the “exploration of science in art and art in science.” Garde explains that this new boost in creative classes stems from the student body’s culture. He remarks that during his time, students were mostly looking for a good job, and finds many students still have that primary goal. However, he deems this new generation of students more idealistic, motivated by grander ideas to “change the world.”

The event finished off with the incoming freshmen introducing themselves, followed closely behind by the recurring students. As every year, the recurring students offered the incoming a few tips to survive RPI. The vast majority of the advice was to explore beyond the confines of one’s room and one’s routine.

A student of the Class of 2017 advised to “slow down and appreciate every moment; you never know when it could be your last.”

The event finished with a farewell from Mueller and thanks from her guests.

Troy BBQ restaurant receives rave review

Maria Kozdroy
David Raab
Staff Editorial

Why we love the Rensselaer Union

Practical packing pointers for freshmen

Get involved, seize opportunities at RPI

on campus housing.

E-COMPLEX RESIDENCE HALL OVERLOOKS Sage Avenue on the north side of the Troy campus.
Astronomic student-run Union

Hello, freshmen! While the rest of the campus bar- runs on its own opinions about the first year of college, the editorial staff of The Polytechnic want to take a moment to explain to you Rensselaer’s pride: our beloved Student-run Union.

Maybe you’ve heard, but likely you haven’t, because many of you didn’t truly understand until we were well into our time at RPI. Our Union is unique; it’s complete- student run. Students do just about everything around the Union. Yes, we have administrative staff—and we love them for the work they do—but our Executive Board, comprised of four elected leaders, has the ultimate decision making power for Union-related business. We have the power in the Union, and that’s the reason so many of us spend countless hours involved in the place.

Last semester, the administration suggested changes to how our Union operates and those of us close to the Union were frustrated with how the whole operation was run. Unfortunately, if we would lose control of the student run aspect of our student union. In response, we, the students, joined together and asked to be heard; through perseverance and dedicated hours we were heard and decisions were reversed. It is unlikely you would find such a committed, passionate group of students who love their Union as much as RPI and Troy had to offer. Why wait until your second semester when you can take advantage of it now? /n

Proving tips, advice for your eight month vacation

Make a point to attack issues with a fresh mindset

Welcome, freshmen! You’re about to go on an eight month va- cation. Here’s some advice and tips for embarking on your first year. According to how I “vacation” involved in the Student Union. You may be thinking to yourself, you rarely use this stuff at home, but when you do need it, you know where to find it. For, that’s a drawer in my kitchen. I think of this drawer as a “gooby box” that you find yourself rum- maging through a few times a year for that one object. Believe it or not, I’ve used my vacation gooby box way more often than that drawer at home.

The most useful ob- ject among them all is the sewing kit by far. A small rip in your sweater you’ve worn only a few times—piece of cake. My friends even have started coming to me to get their repairs done! As an engineer, I found myself building a neck pillow within the first week of school freshman year. Out of what you may ask? Cotton and a little of the perfect materials—the string and the duct tape. You’re packing for your vacation in a little over a month, don’t forget to bring your own gooby box. Throw in that drawer of assorted things from your kitchen. Throw in more than you think you’ll use, because you never know what will come in handy until that moment when you actually need it. Thanks for reading! And if you have any questions or will like to know an even extended list of items to bring, shoot me an email at edop@poly.rpi.edu.

Have fun, freshmen! /n

Ross welcomes RPI Class of 2020

On behalf of the Division of Student Life, it is with great excitement that I welcome you to Rensselaer and the Class of 2020. You are joining the Rensselaer family as part of the largest and most diverse class in the history of the world. We are very proud of you and the accomplishments that have brought you to RPI, and we expect you will achieve great things during your time here. At Rensselaer, you are entering a supportive community of faculty, staff and students who will guide you and challenge you. We provide a transformative student experience for you at Rensselaer through Clustered Learning, Advisees, and Support for Students, or, CLASS, that will develop you as leaders with the skills to solve complex problems of the world using intellectual agility, multicultural sophistication, and a global perspective.

The university environment is challenging, and very different from high school. Never hesitate to ask for assistance if you need it! There are many people—the faculty teaching your class, tutors, academic advisors, and upper class students who live in your residence hall who are all sources of support. The Advising and Learning Resource Center is located in Cahn Hall and information can be found here.

The Dean of the First Year Experience is a primary source of information, guidance and learning for you as entering students. In addition, you will have an advisor that you meet with weekly. In addition, you will have an academic advisor, and a team of student residents who live in your residence hall and there to provide support during your journey at Rensselaer.

We provide many resources to support student wellness, and medical professionals and counselors are available for you at the Student Health Center, and located in Academy Hall. I encourage you to review the information at rpi.edu/studenthealth.rpi.edu for more information.

See ROSS. Page 3
Rensselaer offers a robust campus life for our students. The Rensselaer Union is a hub for campus activity and provides many opportunities for you to get involved through activities, clubs, recreation and more! Make sure to visit the Union or go to http://www.union.rpi.edu for more information! Also be sure to check out http://www.rpiathletics.com for all the latest information on Rensselaer Athletics.

Expectations for student behavior inside and outside of the classroom are outlined through policies and, as a student, it is important that you read and understand the Rensselaer Handbook for Student Rights and Responsibilities. You can access this electronically at http://doso.rpi.edu, and visit the Dean of Students if you have questions or concerns.

The university offers many, many more resources for you as students. You can find information by visiting the Student Life homepage at http://studentlife.rpi.edu.

Again, welcome to Rensselaer! As the first technological research university in the country, we have great expectations for our students. The Rensselaer Union has for new students.

From Page 2

Welcome activities in the fall!

Look forward to meeting you at student orientation this summer and at the many welcome activities in the fall! ☺

Ross: What resources campus has for new students

TOP HAT

Loads of opportunity for involvement

Paul Ilori
Grand Marshal

I'LL BEGIN WITH THE SAME PHRASE you'll probably hear 200 times over the next few weeks. Welcome to Rensselaer! I am Paul Ilori '17, the 151st Grand Marshal and wearer of headwear that was more fashionable when the Class of 1917 were seniors. The position was created in 1866 to honor Albert Harper, a student from Pittsburgh, PA who returned to graduate after fighting in the Civil War. Over the past century and a half, the role has transformed and has undertaken different roles and symbols. Currently, as GM, I serve as the presiding officer of the Student Senate and an officer of the Rensselaer Union, one of few truly student run student unions in the United States. Our Union gives you the opportunity to explore ourselves outside of the classroom and allows students to explore a wide range of interests, along with providing us with a direct voice in decisions made at RPI as a whole. Our school holds a unique place in history as the oldest technical university in the English speaking world. But with all the information you're having thrown at you right now, that's enough history.

You can stop reading here if you promise to keep an open mind and stay true to yourself. You're already being given a lot of information, some of it useful and some not so much. While your first priority should always be keeping on top of your classes, I'd advise you to check out different things and see what you like and don't like for yourself. Meet the Greeks, the Activities Fair, hockey games, and other events throughout the year will allow you not only to get to know your new classmates better, but also to give you an opportunity to explore yourself. Some of my favorite memories on campus have come from me decid- ing to check out something I thought sounded kind of interesting, or a text from some of my friends asking if I was free to go check out some event.

Clearly, every club, elective class, and opportunity won't be for everyone, but you'll never know if you don't at least go check it out. So grab a few friends, and go! Sign up for that email list for a club you're kind of interested in, you can unsubscribe from all of them, check out BBQ/steak/insert random food rush event here, and stick with what you like. You never really know where you might find a passion that you stick with for the rest of your life. Feel free to say hi to me if you see me around campus, or contact me at gm@rpi.edu if there's anything you think I can help you with. ☺

DERBY

Calming your nerves; support within the Union

Chip Kirchner
President of the Union

It was just Derby Day this year. I want to address our soon-to-be students who are likely, at this moment, feeling that you're not alone. For nearly 200 years, tens of thousands of students have been in the exact same spot in which you currently stand, with the same hesitations. I want to take this opportunity to dispel a few rumors, and provide you with some reassurance and advice, for what it's worth.

While you're talking to your roommates, browsing various social media channels, or trying to get the "inside scoop" from upperclassmen, you will definitely encounter a large amount of cynicism. Although I wish this wasn't the case, I'm sure cynicism is not unique to RPI. As a counter to this sentiment, I want to remind you that cynics are often the loudest voices. Additionally, there's a simple cure for this sort of attitude. At the risk of sounding cliché, the cure is to get involved. We are blessed at this school with nearly 200 clubs and organizations covering virtually every interest, hobby, culture, religion, and area of study. In these clubs, you'll find incredible, creative, interesting groups of people who share your passions, and want to express themselves outside of everyday school. Encourage your classmates to see these people out, as they're the ones who will make your time here enjoyable and rewarding.

I also want to speak to a feeling that may likely creep into the minds of many of you as classes begin: the feeling that you're not good enough for this place, not smart enough, not social enough, not hardworking enough. There are infinite variations of what is essentially the same idea. I can guarantee you that there is not a single person here who has not had that thought at some point during their time here. RPI asks a lot of its students, and in many cases, it asks much more of them than they are used to giving. This transition is going to require you to change the way you attain success, and re-evaluate the way you handle failure. These changes are hard to make, but they aren't impossible, and there are plenty of mechanisms in place to make this transition as smooth as possible. Once again, it's up to you to utilize them.

If myself or anyone in the Union can be of any assistance, do not hesitate to reach out to me or any of the staff and students that make up the Rensselaer Union. ☺

Student Health Center

Healthcare – Counseling – Health Promotion
Health Insurance – Disability Services

Requirements for New Students:

Immunizations: Paper form, completed by physicians office

On-line Portal Forms:
4 forms on your password protected site
Change is on your S5 account: Waive or Enroll via portal form - deadline is 9/15

Health Insurance:
1st year and Transfer students only
2 programs: Aetna and Haven; 2 parts each

Disability Services – includes assistance with gaining equal access to academic programs, co-curricular activities and physical facilities. Accommodations considered upon registration with the disabilities services office and provision of necessary documentation

Serving the Rensselaer community since 1885
TOP TEN LIST

Reasons to Join The Poly

10. Learn to write good
9. We have awards from the 60s
8. Make a résumé in InDesign
7. Tabloids are fun!
6. We say “goodbe!”
5. Our server is new
4. We used to relevant
3. Free printing!
2. Our office is sweet
1. We control the Union

WORDFIND by David Raab

Words can be found forwards, backwards, up, down, and in both diagonals.

Unique Colors

Charcoal  Goldenrod  Navy
Chartreuse  Indigo  Opaque
Coquelicot  Jade  Rose
Coral  Lavender  Rust
Crimson  Mauve  Teal
Fulvous  Mikado  Turquoise

Guardians of the Galaxy

Saturday • July 16, 2016
6 pm, 8:30 pm • DCC 308 • FREE

E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial

Saturday • July 22, 2016
6 pm, 8:30 pm • DCC 308 • FREE

Do you like drawing comics? Draw comics for The Poly!
Email us at comics@poly.rpi.edu
COLLEGE

There's no better time to take a

RISK

and create your own

JOB
Pokémon GO: Dream adventure for everyone

From Page 7

Justin Etzin
Senior Reviewer

Less than a year after its announcement in September 2015, Pokémon GO has hit the App Store and Android Market and has seemingly suddenly taken the world by storm. A collaboration between The Pokémon Company and Niantic Labs, a game design studio formerly part of Google, Pokémon GO allows users to “experience” Pokémon in the real world, using augmented reality and global positioning to simulate what being a Pokémon Trainer might be like in the real world.

This isn’t Niantic’s first rodeo with video games that use the player’s physical movement as the primary control. In November 2012, Niantic introduced Ingress, where players competed globally on two teams to collect “portals” which coincided with real-world landmarks—from the opposing team. Pokémon GO borrows a number of mechanics from Ingress. After given an introductory message from Professor Willow, the player is given the chance to catch a Pokémon. The player can create a map on their mobile devices, with their avatar displayed at their GPS location. As the player moves, the map and list of nearby Pokémon is updated.

When a player is in range of a Pokémon, the character appears on the map. When trying to catch a Pokémon, the player swings around on a PokéBall to “throw” it at the Pokémon, which has been rendered as either a simulated grassy plain or, if the player allows, directly augmented onto whatever is behind their phones. The classic suspense of capturing a Pokémon in the real world is updated. When you are younger, and this game gets me as close as possible to fulfilling that dream. However, on both the feature and release standpoints, I am underwhelmed. Server issues aside, the game definitely could be more filled with features. Granted, the augmented reality functionality is definitely groundbreaking, but I would have been more happy with a later launch that included more functionality overall. However, the nostalgia and game experience are already worth playing, and I can see why the game has already been so successful.

Get out there and catch some Pokémon! ✨

Blood and Wine: Fitting conclusion to Witcher

From Page 7

Toussaint is breathtaking. Never have I seen such a vivid and appealing land in a video game. Modeled after southern France, the duchy certainly looks it with its numerous vineyards, knightly tournaments, and signature architecture. The skies are kissed with turquoise blue and massive snowcapped mountains serve as the backdrop. Even the rivers are dyed a marine blue so crisp they look like they were carved today. Unbeknownst against this landscape is the capitol city of Beauclair, nestled orange roofs atop colorful townhouses and the ivory-white Beauclair Palace.

After spending hundreds of hours adventuring across Temeria’s dark northern realms and the bucolic countryside of Novigrad, I was stunned when Geralt first rode into Toussaint on horseback. Joined by two knights and their steeds—both clad in armor—the witcher sees the region again for the first time in many, many years.

As the camera pans to reveal Beauclair, Baron Palmerin de Laaufint introduces Toussaint as “the land of love and wine,” to which Geralt responds, “Exactly how I remembered it.” This is possible foreshadowing, as he encounters many people from his past, good and bad. For example, he finds his old friend Emiel Regis Rohellec-Terizzief-Godefroy (or just Regis), a more than 400 year old powerful higher vampire. Another that he meets is The Lady of the Lake, the goddess of chivalry who blessed him with Aerondight, a legendary silver sword, nearly a decade prior. Unbeknownst to him, Blood and Wine is the White Wolf’s final foray on The Path. During the first few quests of the expansion, Geralt is gifted the spawning vineyard estate Corvo Bianco, with a few unexpected features and loyal majordomo Bambas-Basul Foutly. Corvo Bianco is a fantastic place to call home; when fully furnished, the vineyard feels comforting and personal. I’ve lined the inside of the villa with Geralt’s grandmaster witcher armors whose diagrams I found all across Toussaint, and hung swords acquired from friends and foes alike. As nice as a beautiful estate is itself, it can always use company. And by the end of the game, you’re joined by someone you care deeply about (I’m a sucker for Yennifer). Blood and Wine serves as a fitting conclusion for Geralt of Rivia. Through hundreds of hours, we have followed him through heartbreak and betrayal; bouts of compassion and euphoria. We have slayed the King of the Wild Hunt, parlayed with the Emperor of Nilfgaard, and even bested the Man of Glass, also known as evil incarnate. The witcher has loved many, fought many, and saved many. And now, he finally gets to live his life in rest and relaxation. I love this expansion: the backdrop, the adventure, the ending; all of it. In this way, we give our dearest character a tear-eyed farewell into retirement.

Buz Aldrin: 13 lessons in No Dream Is Too Big

From Page 7

The text is set up very nicely: many anecdotes followed with his main take-away and how this story applies to all readers. One of my favorite passages is found at the end of the chapter “Keep a Young Mind-set at Every Age,” in which Buzz states, “Okay, so you are getting older. So what? It beats being alternatives!” If you giggled when reading that, then this book is perfect for you.

Prior to this reading endeavor, I hadn’t quite realized Buzz was the second man on the moon; he uses that to his humorous advantage all throughout the book. Buzz says if he could step foot to the moon he would use that fact to his humorous advantage all throughout the book. He finds that a bit too much, yet it did not detract from the main points of the book.

Additionally, he mentions his education and his decision-making frequently, which is pertinent to all college students, especially junior and graduating students. I think the section of new books—you never know what you might find!

Buzz Aldrin: 13 lessons in No Dream Is Too Big

is it Greek to You?
The Alumni InterGreek Council, Office of Greek Life Commons, and Interfraternity and Panhellenic Councils welcome the incoming class of 2020 members to R.P.I.

From Page 7

Here is a chart featuring the trailer songs, from the city of Beauclair, nestling orange roofs atop colorful townhouses and the ivory-white Beauclair Palace. Come visit us with our information table and presentations during the SO Resource Center Day. Then, in the first few weeks of the fall, check out all of our Chapters during our formal Recruitment/Rush period and discover why almost 30% of RPI students become members of fraternities and sororities — or in other words, “Go Greek.”
MOVIE REVIEW

**Voltron tells a science fiction with humor and twists**

Elisabeth Ryan
Senior Reviewer

For those of you who enjoyed watching Transformers or Power Rangers as kids, this reboot of the 1980’s cartoon series Voltron: Defender of the Universe is for you. Produced by DreamWorks Animation Television and World Events Productions, the series was distributed by Netflix and animated by Studio Mir (a rather familiar name for those Avatar: The Last Airbender and Legend of Korra fans out there). And, in a fit of boredom one Saturday afternoon, I watched the entire series straight.

The plot centers around the intergalactic threat the Galra Empire and its leader Zarkon who goes about spreading misery and oppression throughout the known universe. The only thing strong enough to defeat such an evil force would be Voltron (defender of the universe). Voltron is not a person, however, but rather five separate robotic lions capable of interstellar flight, manned by pilots, known as Paladins, with whom they share a special bond.

Yes, it’s nothing new. Once again, there’s a powerful and corrupt force itching to take over the Universe, and only five, unsuspecting humans and their lions start changing shape and attaching to one another, all the while music that can only be classified as “space music” is playing.

Voltron: Legendary Defender brings a new vitality to this worn genre. Takashi Shirogane, referred to in the series as Shiro, is the sound leader of the Paladins and pilot of the black lion. He is considerably older than the teens that man the other lions, and they look to him for guidance. Keith, pilot of the red lion, is a temperamental individual who relies on his instincts and personal feeling to guide his decision making. Lance, pilot of the blue lion, is a wanton flirt and only five, unsuspecting humans and pilot of the black lion. He is considerably older than the teens that man the other lions, and they look to him for guidance. Keith, pilot of the red lion, is a temperamental individual who relies on his instincts and personal feeling to guide his decision making. Lance, pilot of the blue lion, is a wanton flirt and

GAME REVIEW

**Addictive Pokémon GO takes over hearts of fans**

Chris Leong
Senior Reviewer

Pokémon GO utilities augmented reality to add Pokémon to the real world. Using GPS signal, players can adventure around their town collecting Pokémon from the wild. Pokémon GO has reached the Rensselaer campus, with many opportunities for players.

BOOK REVIEW

**Surprise enjoyment in new book**

Buzz Aldrin turns reviewer’s summer read to enjoyment

Maria Kozdroy
Senior Reviewer

SUMMER READING: I’VE BEEN DREAMING OF IT EVER SINCE ELEMENTARY school. However, after recently visiting my local library I came across a book in the New Book section titled No Dream Is Too High: Life Lessons From a Man Who Walked on the Moon by Buzz Aldrin. I flipped through the pages to get an idea of it, noticing each chapter had a witty title. For example, as chapter one: “The Sky is Not the Limit… There are Footprints on the Moon!” Before even beginning to read this 219-page autobiography, I could tell Buzz is a funny guy.

BLOOD AND WINE

**Blood and Wine has beauty, adventure**

Chris Leong
Senior Reviewer

Blood and Wine, released on May 31, 2016, signals the last adventure of protagonist Geralt of Rivia. As the second and last expansion of The Witcher 3, the 50 hour downloadable content journey brings the famous witcher to Toussaint. Vibrantly colored with an almost fairy tale-like atmosphere, Toussaint provides a stark contrast to the murky swamplands of Velen in the base game. The White Wolf makes his way to this land of chivalry and knights to hunt a mysterious beast, on the request of its esteemed duchess.

SUMMER READING: I’VE BEEN DREAMING OF IT EVER SINCE ELEMENTARY school. However, after recently visiting my local library I came across a book in the New Book section titled No Dream Is Too High: Life Lessons From a Man Who Walked on the Moon by Buzz Aldrin. I flipped through the pages to get an idea of it, noticing each chapter had a witty title. For example, as chapter one: “The Sky is Not the Limit… There are Footprints on the Moon!” Before even beginning to read this 219-page autobiography, I could tell Buzz is a funny guy.
I had my first experience at Dinosaur BBQ earlier this summer. I am surprised that my friends and I have never discovered such great barbeque in our exploration of Troy. Sitting right next to Hudson River, the restaurant has two parts—one is under AC with band performances on Wednesday nights; the other side is outdoor, exposed to river breeze and the sunset.

When I went there two weeks ago with my Introduction to Engineering Design group members to celebrate our success in final project demonstration, the restaurant was packed with people: young couples, families, friend groups, et cetera. Noise became one of our sides. However, those loud jokes, greetings, and laughter didn’t bother us at all; it offered a more relaxing meal experience and a harmonious atmosphere at our table. We talked about the huge amount work we put into our project, we joked and made fun of each other, and we also exchanged our feelings and thoughts. Looking outside, we saw the entire sunset and were obsessed with the golden river surface as well as passing boats. We even waved hello to passengers. The restaurant has a certain magic to cheer you up and make you laugh about everything, no matter bitter or sweet, which is why I was so impressed with the atmosphere and have to recommend Dinosaur here.

I only ordered a small solo sampler that time, as I wasn’t too confident in the taste of the food there. However, that was such a fake assumption! A sampler includes a spicy shrimp boil, chicken wings, fried green tomatoes and deviled eggs. The spicy shrimp have a fresh as well as firm mouthfeel; the chicken wing taste tender and juicy. The deviled eggs are my favorite in the restaurant so far—the amazing mixture of the great texture of the egg white and the rich taste of mayonnaise, yolk, and other ingredients. The fried green tomatoes, however, didn’t leave me too much of an impression. Seeing other friends having ribs, which is Dinosaur’s featured dish, I was eager to come and try it again.

I didn’t wait too long for my second experience with Dinosaur. Last weekend, my mom and I went there again after hanging out in downtown Troy. This time, we ordered salad and Jumbo chicken wings of Devil’s Duel flavor and customized combo of St. Louis ribs, pulled pork, and smoked “hot link” homemade sausage. The Devil’s Duel chicken wings were so hot that my mouth is still watering as I am writing this sentence. But, the hot taste doesn’t cover its tasty flavor. We ordered another three as soon as we finished the plate. After the spicy devil wings, I had my meat combo. They were great. But, instead of the ribs, I love the pork most. The pork has a really loose texture, not in a bad way. I literally felt the meat melting in my mouth, with a strong authentic pork taste all over. The sausage is crispy and juicy. Finally, the ribs. Maybe because of the heightened expectation, the ribs don’t qualify for the high compliments of my friends. It is for sure a nice barbeque dish, but it’s relatively ordinary with comparison to some other shiny dishes in the restaurant.

I regard myself a very picky meat gourmet. However, you can have your own evaluation after a try. So definitely go and have your own experience. You will have a real Troy taste and see what an energetic and cheerful place it is!