

Commuter Student Association holds first meeting of the semester

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“Our mission is to help create a sense of community and friendship among the commuter student population and to provide helpful resources for commuters,” reads the Commuter Student Association (CSA) website. Last Tuesday, September 23, CSA had their first meeting of the semester in Wishnick Hall and had a full house. This was due, most likely, to IIT’s large commuter student population as well as the delicious food, which included a mixed rice dish, fortune cookies, and other Asian culinary dishes in fairly large quantities, and for good reason.

Though Kevin Tapia, the president, would go to lead much of the meeting and speak through the slideshow presentation that was prepared for it, most of the meeting would find Tapia handing off the speaking privileges to the various guests who came to announce specific things to all those in attendance.

Food turned out to be a motif of the meeting and the opening remarks, after an introduction by Tapia, came from Ricky Stevenson as a representative of SGA’s Food Advisory Board. Since food would naturally be a huge part of any student’s life, and commuting students are so often kept out of discussions about campus food because they do not have meal plans, he invited any of the students who wished to participate and be included in that discussion to come to the biweekly Friday meetings at the MTCC Pritzker Club from 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. When asked whether there would be food at any of these meetings, Stevenson declined.

Next came a message from a representative from IIT Campus Sustainability who encouraged everybody who has a bike on campus to come to register it with them at the MTCC South entrance, the exact dates and times being announced on their Facebook page. This process involves getting the bike

tagged in an attempt to prevent it from getting abandoned and stolen and to help with the recovery process of lost and stolen bicycles, and getting it listed with their organization, which, the representative mentioned, would help the organization make the case to the school to, among other things, install more bike racks on campus.

He also provided a few recommendations to the students in protecting their bikes, which included only locking it on a designated IIT bike rack, avoiding chain locks for the stronger and more resilient U-locks, and locking the tire and frame whenever locking a bike on campus. He ended the talk by responding to a question of whether there were any in-

to Career Fair Success,” where students can ask questions and get their resumes reviewed in preparation for the fair.

Tapia then moved on to talking about The Bog, which maintains the commuter students lounge during the day from Monday to Friday. Though neither bowling nor the bar are open during this time, it is still a time for students to come when the ping-pong, billiard tables and the gaming systems are open and where a refrigerator and microwave are available for use. He then spoke on the various Bog events happening that week, which include a dance party that Thursday, from 9 p.m. to 12 a.m.

The next topic of discussion was a



COMMUTER STUDENT ASSOCIATION

Image courtesy of Commuter Student Association

door storage spaces on campus for the storage of bikes either overnight or otherwise. He said that there are currently no indoor spaces where bikes could be stored and that they are not allowed in academic buildings, but finished that this should be encouragement to get everyone’s bike registered.

After that, Tapia spoke about the Career Fair which was taking place that Thursday, September 24. Though there are multiple any given academic year, the fall one was by far the biggest and the best one to go to, and mentioned that Latinos Involved in Further Education (LIFE)—a club Tapia is also the President of—and Hispanic Alliance for Career Enhancement (HACE) were hosting an event titled “Career Essentials: Ultimate Guide

trip that CSA was planning with The Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) and National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) to take to the trampoline park Sky Zone which, in the course of that meeting it was decided, would probably happen at 6 p.m. on Thursday, October 1, and include a cost of about \$5 per student.

Near the end, when Tapia opened the floor for questions or proposals for things the club could do to support commuter students’ interests, someone spoke up about whether they can get lockers for commuter students to store books in. Tapia acknowledged that there are currently lockers available in the MTCC that students can purchase for \$60 a semester, to which the student replied that no one wants

to pay that. Tapia said that they could try to get cheaper or free lockers for commuter students.

The conversation, as expected, once again came back to food when Tapia invited up two students from an IPRO which hosts Eco Eats, which, as their Facebook page reads, “is a platform to connect students cooking their own meals with others who are willing to chip in a small amount of money to join them and share,” for about \$5 as the student said. The first of these meals, which will include chicken teriyaki, potatoes, and peach dumplings with ice cream for dessert, would take place Friday, September 25 in SSV middle at 8 p.m., and more information about future meals and events is available on their Facebook page: facebook.com/ecoatsit.

Then, after the presentation and when everyone was waiting in line for food, a student from SHPE, in the process of normal conversation, was invited by Tapia to talk about the SHPE conferences, which are much larger conferences and are much better at helping engineering students getting jobs and internships, but which take place on the east and west coasts and for which students would have to get their own tickets and transportation.

If you or someone you know is a commuter student looking for a sense of community [or free food], CSA invites you to come to their next meeting, which is scheduled to be taking place on Tuesday, October 20, at 12:50 p.m. It was originally planned to be in a Wishnick Hall (the normal meeting place for the club), but after the turnout to this meeting, Tapia changed the location to the Bog.

To say up-to-date on times commuter and CSA meeting news, I recommend everyone go to the CSA website: iit.edu/~commuter/, and sign up for their mailing list.

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A&E

Ed Sheeran concert: An unforgettable experience

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It is said that unplanned days and spontaneous nights often turn out to make the best memories.

Being a planner by nature, I have always held the opinion that for events and outings to be fun and worthwhile they have to be planned to the minutest details. However last week I was pleasantly surprised to find myself screaming and swaying to songs at an Ed Sheeran concert when I least expected it.

It was Wednesday evening and I was still debating which of the two meetings that I had lined up for that evening I was supposed to attend, when suddenly a friend whom I had hardly spoken to told me he had extra Ed Sheeran concert tickets.

Initially I rejected the offer, deciding to be responsible and stick to the plans I had laid out. However, at the spur of the moment, an hour before it was time to leave, I decided to

ditch both the meetings and attend the concert instead. A decision that I am super ecstatic I made.

As a part of his 2015 world tour, Ed Sheeran performed at the Hollywood Casino Amphitheater in Tinley Park on Wednesday, September 18. The show started at 7 p.m. with special guests Passenger and Christina Perri opening before Ed Sheeran took to the stage. He sang most of his popular numbers including “A-Team,” “Thinking Out Loud,” a mash-up of “Don’t” and “Nina,” “Tenerife Sea,” “You Need Me,” “I’m a Mess,” “One,” “Photograph,” and others.

It was a nerve-racking hour-long drive to Tinley Park from IIT since we got caught in the evening rush hour and hence reached the venue a little late. However, once we got there, we were amazed to see the hoards of people who had gathered to watch this gifted performer perform.

It was amusing to witness thousands of heads eagerly waiting in a tightly-packed

and immensely huge stadium. The fact that so many people had gathered to watch a solo, casually-dressed, 24-year-old performer sing using just a guitar, loop pedal, and a collection of narrative sing-alongs was unbelievable and nothing short of a miracle. The stage set up too was very simple with slightly psychedelic tour screens to match the beat and feel of the songs.

The most unforgettable thing about the concert was its atmosphere. It was surreal to witness super-excited fans crying and screaming when Sheeran graced the stage. The vibe was electrifying and full of excitement as people sang and danced their hearts out, forgetting all the worries in the world for a few moments. The outdoor lawn seats, despite being the cheapest, turned out to be the best due to the pleasant weather and refreshing breeze.

Another essential element for an unforgettable concert experience is great company. Even if just one member of the group is super passionate about the performer or performance it rubs off on the whole group. Had it

not been for my wonderful group of friends, I would have missed out.

Ed Sheeran was a performer I was only vaguely familiar with before the concert, but now I find myself listening to his songs on YouTube for study music all the time. I am glad to have been introduced to such an honest singer who not only has a soothing voice but also writes beautiful heartfelt lyrics, full of pain and passion.

This concert has definitely turned me into one of his biggest admirers. Hence for all the international students out there, even if you are not familiar with a lot of American musicians, attending a concert should definitely be on your bucket list.

Despite not knowing the lyrics and not being able to sing along, my concert experience was an unforgettable one and something that I would love for everyone to experience at least once in their lifetime.

ZBoard electric skateboards offer premium experience

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OPINION EDITOR

When it comes to electric skateboards, innovation comes in the form of optimizing the existing standard. Lighter decks, embedded batteries, hub motors, and the like can all be found on top-of-the-line eboards, but the one company that really sets itself apart is ZBoard.

ZBoard is the only weight-sensing electric skateboard on the market. First brought to the public through a Kickstarter campaign in late February of 2012, ZBoard has established itself as one of the best eboard manufacturers around.

What makes it so interesting is the lack of wireless controller you usually find. To move forward and back, you press on two pads that pop up through the board, somewhat like a sideways Segway. The name ZBoard comes

from the clever system; as the user moves in the X and Y directions, your weight pressing in the Z direction propels you forward.

ZBoard has offered three boards for quite a while now, the cheapest of which clearly shows the age of the company. The weakest offering, the Classic, uses sealed lead acid batteries to propel you five to six miles at 15 mph.

I’ve had the pleasure of getting my hands on a San Francisco Special. This 28-pound monster of a skateboard weighs so much, thanks in no small part to an 18 amp hour lithium ion phosphate battery. To the uninformed, that may sound too heavy and meaningless, but once you feel the rush of 18 mile per hour wind in your face as you hit the top speed, you may change your mind. Couple that with the stated 18 mile range and Lake Shore Path, and you’ll be cruising far past the loop without a care.

In the past week, I’ve ridden around 25 miles on the aging San Francisco Special

ZBoard and I feel comfortable saying this is a huge performance step up over similar boards. I’ve only been able to measure a top speed of 15 mph, but this might be due to a two-year-old battery pack slung under the deck.

I had a friend come with me to compare the style of the ZBoard to something more traditional like the Yuneec. We found that the ZBoard is much better at taking bumps and potholes you find throughout the city. Fair warning, wiping out on the Zboard is more frightening not only because you’re traveling 50 percent faster but also due to the nearly 30-pound rocket that shoots out from under you that you have no control over.

The cons of such a beast of a board don’t stop there. The learning curve of using your weight to carve and to actuate buttons placed much too far apart is a bit steeper. It took around three miles before I was comfortable compared to three blocks with a controller.

This eboard is one that I would no longer consider a skateboard. It’s impossible to push by weight alone and the resistance from the motor is massive. To highlight this with an example, the ZBoard will actually slow to a stop going downhill if you don’t press the accelerator. The weight is an instant hit whenever you need to get off and carry it. Bringing a 9-pound longboard to class will turn some heads, but a 28-pound ZBoard is going to need a desk of its own.

So for all the inconvenience of weight and size, what you get is an overpowered rocket on wheels. And if the top speed and range weren’t enough, both can be improved with urethane wheels with a simple swap.

The ZBoard crew will be releasing the ZBoard 2 soon, which promises the same specs as above, with better ergonomics and only weighing 16 pounds. If you’re looking for a top tier eboarding experience, have a look at ZBoard.