North Avenue Construction Rolls On

AMELIA PAVLIK
COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

If you frequent North Avenue, you’ll soon notice amped up construction efforts on the north side of the street.

The Facilities Department has been given the green light—in the form of a permit from the Georgia Department of Transportation—to begin the next phase of a plan to renovate North Avenue. “Our goal is to make the street as safe as we can for pedestrians,” said Frank Lamia, associate director of construction services. “The end result will transform North Avenue into a more pedestrian-friendly, enjoyable area for everyone.”

Starting next week, the north sidewalk of North Avenue will be closed from Williams Street to the Carnegie Building parking lot (E45). Later in the summer, the sidewalk between the Carnegie lot and Tech Parkway will also be closed. Improvements to the area will include the following:

• Sidewalks will be widened to provide a larger buffer between pedestrians and cars, and brought up to campus standards.
• All utilities will be moved underground.
• New street and pedestrian lighting will be installed that is in keeping with campus standards.

During the day, construction crews will

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New Clicker System Launches This Fall

COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

Fall semester will bring the opening of the G. Wayne Clough Undergraduate Learning Commons, the promise of a new football season and a new clicker system for faculty and students.

"It was time to make the switch because the vendor of the prior clicker—PRS—discontinued the product," said Clay Fenlason, director of educational technology. "We also learned that the PRS clicker wouldn't work with more recent versions of Microsoft Office, so an alternative needed to be found in fairly short order."

Clickers are devices that allow faculty members to gauge student knowledge and engagement during class. For example, a professor might ask a question, students would respond by pressing a button on their device and the professor could measure response.

At Tech, clickers are used primarily in chemistry, physics, biology, math, computing and management courses, with around 3,000 students using them each semester, Fenlason said.

A faculty-led task force was organized to review four products based on features, support, pricing, technical reliability and T-Square integration. In the end, the unanimous choice

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Bicycle Improvements Enhance Campus Commuter Culture

KRISTEN SHAW
COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

Whether you use four wheels, two wheels or two feet to get to Tech each day, you may start to notice some changes for bicycles around campus. It’s not the ghost of Sideways installing bike racks or painting bike lanes; it’s the collaboration of students and staff on the Bicycle Infrastructure Improvement Committee (BIIC).

Formed in January, the group plans to improve the quality of bicycle infrastructure for the Georgia Tech community, making it safer and easier to bike for pleasure, health and commute.

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For years, the relationship between Internet service provider (ISPs) and home user has been a simple, all-you-can-surf model: Pay a flat monthly fee and enjoy all the broadband you want, every byte of which streams at those fantastic speeds the ISPs advertise. Right?

Kermit was developed by Beiki Grinter, an associate professor in the School of Interactive Computing, Marshini Chetty (above), a Ph.D. candidate, and others.

“Maybe, maybe not. Now, as the nation’s largest providers prepare to implement usage-based pricing plans, a tool created by Georgia Tech researchers could empower consumers to ensure they are getting the service they are paying for.”

Developed by Beiki Grinter, an associate professor in the School of Interactive Computing, and her team, Kermit is an easy-to-use application that allows users to monitor and control network usage within their home environment, including measuring the actual network speed made available by their ISPs and tracking bandwidth usage over time.

“I think it’s widely recognized now, and the FCC is [aware], that people are not getting the speeds that are sometimes advertised,” Chetty said. “So, by the end of the study, they started to question: ‘Am I getting what I paid for?’ Or they knew a little bit more about it and realized, yes, they were actually getting what they paid for. I think Kermit was successful in actually making them more informed about these issues, which is one of our goals.”

For the next study, the researchers plan to implement some of the suggestions participants made, such as the ability to cut off specific users’ access completely.

They also plan to develop more tools to help users track and monitor their bandwidth usage – a feature that is increasingly more important as ISPs introduce data caps on home Internet connections.

The library will offer training on Dreamweaver CSS basics from 3 to 4:30 p.m. in the Homer Rice Center. In this workshop, students will learn about the software interface and discuss basic features, including a brief overview of HTML/CSS basics and their role in this latest version.

www.library.gatech.edu

www.library.gatech.edu
While some guys buy Porsches to remedy their midlife crises, Fletcher Moore prefers to flirt with the chance of getting sunstroke while cycling along the length of the Mississippi in July.

“Most of the time, I like to have a couple of large-scale projects on my radar to give me a sense of purpose beyond the quotidian grind,” said Moore, a senior web developer in Communications and Marketing at Tech. “Most of these are cerebral, and as I’m naturally inclined to sloth, I felt it was time to challenge my body as well.”

The BikeTwain project, as Moore is calling his 30-day, 1,800-plus-mile bike ride, following the Mississippi River from Minnesota to Louisiana, will be a greenlined, documentary-making trip, meaning that sustainability will be key.

Moore will be regularly updating his website and living day-to-day life with whatever fits in a small trailer attached to the bike and using solar energy to power a bike-mounted generator.

With help from a Kodak camera, a laptop, an iPhone and wireless technology, Moore will stock his website with interviews, photos, minidocumentaries, essays and the occasional rant.

Initially, Moore toyed with the idea of riding cross-country — until he realized how long it would take. Then, it dawned on him that there was more than one way to cross the country.

“The Mississippi has all of these marvelous resonances in American life. It flows through our history and culture, just as it flows through our geography,” he said.

After settling on the route, the project name fell into place. Mark Twain is the quintessential American writer and his connection to the river is so natural, Moore said.

“I think of him as the patron saint of the project, and his magnificent book, ‘Life on the Mississippi,’ is a text for the video documentary I’ll be creating,” he added.

Starting on July 1, Moore will bike an average of 60 miles per day — slightly more than the eight he usually does biking to work each day. He has “faith” that his body will respond.

“Especially if I have no choice, and I don’t, because I’m already burning up all of the vacation time I’ve hoarded,” Moore said.

He’ll pass the days listening to music and a few audiobooks, thanks to a small crank-up radio and 3G access, letting each day’s plan develop organically as he meanders along the river.

“But there are certain places that I don’t want to miss, such as Hannibal, Mo., and Vicksburg, Miss., and I’d like to visit at least one minor league baseball park,” Moore said.

Most nights, he will rely on his trusty tent for shelter, although Moore is hopeful that he might enjoy the comfort of the occasional bed.

“In terms of food, I’ll be carrying plenty of ramen noodles, just in case, but generally, a little grocery store or greasy spoon should always be within 20 miles of wherever I am,” he said.

And as for company on the ride, Moore will be joined by his father, who is also a bit of an adventurer — one of the oldest finishers of the last several Colorado River 100-mile Marathon Canoe Races, for a few days during the Tennessee stretch, but the bulk of the ride will be solo.

“In the end, it would be great to know that through this trip I’d inspired someone to say, ride a bike to the corner store instead of driving,” he said. “Or, maybe I can educate a few people who are interested in getting into solar energy.”

If you’d like to learn more about the project or follow along as the trip along the Mississippi unfolds, visit the BikeTwain website.

http://biketwain.com

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**CONSTRUCTION, continued from page 1**

work on the sidewalks, so car lane closures are also likely, Lamia said. All pedestrian traffic will be initially routed to the south sidewalk.

Georgia Power will work on transitioning the utilities at night. Work will also continue on the Wardlaw Center, which should be completed in August.

The goal is to complete the north sidewalk improvements by the beginning of football season and then make the same improvements to the south sidewalk — from Luckie Street to Centennial Olympic Park Drive — shortly after, said David Bowman, an architect in Facilities.

In other construction news, a portion of Skiles Walkway will reopen between the Skiles Building and the Student Center on May 31. Visit the following website for more information: http://tinyurl.com/3ujq7r6.

Also, be prepared for lane and sidewalk closures around Peters Parking Deck, which is across from Bobby Dodd Stadium. The timber retaining walls next to the deck will be replaced with granite walls that meet campus standards.

In addition, seating is being added to this area of Bobby Dodd Way, as well as new landscaping. The sidewalks along Fowler Street and Britain Drive will also be widened from Bobby Dodd Way to the pedestrian entrances of the deck.

The construction around the deck is anticipated to be completed by the end of August.

For more information, email Lamia at frank.lamia@facilities.gatech.edu or Bowman at david.bowman@facilities.gatech.edu.

www.facilities.gatech.edu

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**CLICKERS, continued from page 1**

was the TurningPoint system.

Benefits of the new system include the following:

- Instructors aren’t limited to using PowerPoint to design clicker polls.
- The device is smaller, simpler, more responsive and less prone to interference than its predecessor.
- Student rosters can be imported from T-Square and grades can be easily uploaded back to T-Square.
- Laptop and mobile devices can be used as virtual clickers.

“A couple of classes are piloting the new clickers this summer to help pave the way and identify last-minute issues,” Fenlason said.

“The bookstore should begin to stock the new clickers later this summer, and they should be the sole, supported clicker beginning in the fall.”

Faculty will receive a free instructor kit, which includes a receiver and a clicker, and the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning (CELTL) will offer training on the devices for faculty and teaching assistants at the beginning of each semester.

Online tutorials are also available at www.turningtechnologies.com/responsesystemsupport/producttraining.

The price that students will pay has yet to be determined by Barnes & Noble @ Georgia Tech, which will sell the devices.

Contact Chaohua Ou in CELTL at ouc@gatech.edu to obtain your system and to learn more about training opportunities.

www.cetl.gatech.edu/it/clicker.htm
There’s one thing that Steven Spielberg, Al Pacino, Oprah and
members of the Georgia Tech community all have in common — Alex Gutierrez has played a role in ensuring their safety.

“Years ago, I provided executive protection for everyone from royalty to countries that I had no idea still had royal families, three U.S. presidents and many other celebrities,” said Gutierrez, who is a crime prevention officer in the Tech Police Department. “I had a blast working in that industry.”

About seven years ago, Gutierrez made the move from New York City to Atlanta to be closer to his now-wife, Alba. He spent five years as a patrol officer at Tech, where he became interested in searching for, deactivating and cleaning up graffiti on campus. This work with graffiti led to Gutierrez’s current work in crime prevention.

Recently, The Whistle sat down with Gutierrez to learn more about him and his time at Tech. Here’s what we learned.

What does your job entail? What is something you don’t know about your job that you’d like to share?

I spend my days responding to inquiries about safety and security at Tech and presenting on topics ranging from crime prevention to drug awareness. My presentations aren’t mandatory, so a lot of students and employees don’t get a chance to hear what I have to say about safety and security. I want people to know that anyone can contact me to set up a presentation — I even tailor the topic to your needs.

What do you enjoy most and least about your job?

I enjoy meeting new people almost every day. The worst part is to find out that folks aren’t practicing safety precautions and are making it easy for criminals to target them. So, every time I meet an individual I see it as an opportunity to educate them about safety.

What is the one piece of technology you couldn’t live without?

My Droid phone.

What are three things that everyone should do while working at Tech?

Register your bicycle and/or laptop with the Tech Police Department (if you have one), visit our website and Facebook page, and always report suspicious activity.

Where is the best place to grab lunch?

It was Junior’s Grill, and I’d get a cheeseburger and fries. I was sad to see them close.

What are a few nonwork-related accomplishments that you’re most proud of?

Getting married, completing the New York City Marathon and being a mentor to young adults.

Tell us more about your mentoring work.

In partnership with Wheeler High School in Marietta, I became a mentor to a senior for a semester. It was really rewarding to show him the reality of the job.

Tell us something unusual about yourself.

I’m shy. Also, I’ve worked in jobs ranging from being a mortician’s assistant to doing Cirque de Soleil. From being a mortician’s assistant to doing Cirque de Soleil. From being a mortician’s assistant to doing Cirque de Soleil. From being a mortician’s assistant to doing Cirque de Soleil.

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