By Marina Huzar

Joe Ramilo, a physical therapy major, found himself last year with seven withdrawals on his transcript -- all in the same trimester.

Ramilo's reason for dropping the classes was perfectly honorable. He came into the program with a graduate degree in computer science, but with no medical background. It took him awhile to realize this would cause him too heavy a struggle with a full load of classes.

He was stunned to find that, although he dropped these courses (three of them labs) a month and a half into the term, he would be getting a refund. He was truly grateful to belong to a university with a generous withdrawal policy.

But that's all about to change.

Apparently, far too many students have sought to exploit that generous system -- sometimes blocking other students who genuinely need or want a "full to capacity" class from being able to enroll in it.

With recent budget cuts having impacted how often some classes can be offered, "ghost students" who remain on class rosters, only to drop at the eleventh hour, have been coming to have a serious impact on other students.

Some of these students even disappeared from campus altogether for the term in which they had registered. What was the root of the problem?

A Retention Committee was formed last summer to address these (and other) issues, says Linda Buyer, committee chairperson. Faculty members, advisors, and a student representative comprise the committee.

Their first obvious conclusion: a multitude of students wait too far into the trimester to withdraw from courses, presumably because of a lack of consequences.

"Ghost students" have especially posed a problem over the past three years because of 18 percent in budget cuts. The consequences have been fewer available seats to those students who are committed to completing their course of study. Ghost students have especially ruined it for students like her with legitimate reasons.

What precautions do you take against identity theft?

See story on page 6

I'm probably not as protective as I should be. I live in a really good neighborhood, and I didn't think about my mailbox being a threat. Now I'll take my bill payments right over to the post office instead. And I won't use my first initial on checks.

Danny Young, undergrad
Secondary English

A cashier copied my sister's credit card number and went shopping. So I'm always careful.

Freda Williams, undergrad
Health Administration

To understand students' reasons for waiting so long to drop courses, eight members of the Retention Committee were chosen, each to call 10 students at random.

They expected to hear a variety of problems -- ranging from individual circumstances to possible disenchantment with the courses or programs.

But in fact, 85 percent of those they contacted said there was no problem. According to Buyer, they fully intended to return to GSU.

Indeed, the students seemed disturbingly casual about the deed. Their answers ranged from wanting to make it their "vacation term," to securing a full load so they can decide which ones they really want later.

One can hardly blame them for the latter. Students worry about missing out on certain classes because, who knows when they'll be offered again?

Karmen Steel, Early Education major, is disappointed to see the current policy go.

Last year she had to withdraw from a course halfway through the term. She realized that she erroneously enrolled in it and it would be of no use to her. She believes that some devil-may-care students are ruining it for students like her with legitimate reasons.

Budget cuts have impacted course offerings.

The committee believes it is important to have seats available to those students who are committed to completing their course of study. Ghost students have especially posed a problem over the past three years because of 18 percent in budget cuts. The consequences have been fewer or less frequent course offerings, says Buyer.

By the Spring/Summer Trimester, this will change, and GSU will get on par with other universities' stricter withdrawal policies.

By the Spring/Summer Trimester, this will change, and GSU will get on par with other universities' stricter withdrawal policies.

Since September, the Retention Committee has been meeting once a week in collaboration with Financial Aid, the Registrar's and Business offices, and Information Technology to hammer out a solution.

Here's the provisions of the new policy:

Early enrollment phase -- Students who register between the first day of registration and April 6 must make payment of at least 25 percent by April 6 or they risk being dropped from all courses. Financial Aid or payment arrangements must be in place by this date, as well.

Anyone who gets bumped from a class as a result of non-payment (or arrangement), can subsequently attempt to re-enroll, provided there's still a seat in that class.

Regular enrollment phase -- For students who enroll in classes between April 7 and April 27, the same rules apply, with payment of at least 50 percent or arrangement due by April 27. Again, the student may attempt to re-enroll during the Late enrollment phase -- after April 27. In this case, students must make full payment by 5 p.m. the next business day after April 28.

Financial Aid & Tuition Waiver students take note:

It is very important that students file their financial aid applications EARLY. If they get them in before the early registration deadline (the first tuition deadline listed in the timetable), the financial aid office will ensure that their applications will be handled by that deadline.

The final decision with regard to financial aid is that "eligible" for financial aid means that students have been "awarded" (i.e., their application is completely processed and the University knows how much aid they will be receiving).

If a student has not been awarded financial aid before their tuition deadline comes around, they will have to make payment plan arrangements (similar to those any student who doesn't want to pay his/her tuition all at once can opt for now) if they want to hold their seats.

The same basic procedure will be in place for tuition waiver students. If a student has been awarded a waiver before the deadline, the student needs take no additional action. If the waivers haven't been awarded before the deadline, the student needs to either pay or opt for the payment plan in order to reserve his or her seat.

What precautions do you take against identity theft?

See story on page 6

I'm probably not as protective as I should be. I live in a really good neighborhood, and I didn't think about my mailbox being a threat. Now I'll take my bill payments right over to the post office instead. And I won't use my first initial on checks.

Danny Young, undergrad
Secondary English

A cashier copied my sister's credit card number and went shopping. So I'm always careful.

Freda Williams, undergrad
Health Administration

As a student, it's a lot cheaper to make book purchases on line. But I make sure it's a reputable site. And I always shred all my credit card info.

Melissa Mollett, undergrad
Business Administration
(Finance)

I save my receipts and check all my stuff to verify purchases. I don't worry... but when it happens to you, that's when you worry!

Gayle Jonkman, undergrad
Business Management

I just tear up all my receipts.

Julie Ashley
Assistant Manager, Cafeteria
Opinions

Could we get decent drinking water at GSU?

I am encouraging the university to make an all-out effort to improve the quality of potable water available in this institution.

This is no small matter. As the university expands, this issue will surface as a safety and health issue, and at the very least, an aesthetic issue. It is important to undergraduates, graduates, faculty, staff, and visitors.

Let's improve the university's image in all areas, but in this one for sure!

Kevin Anthony Ford
Graduate student
Communications & Training

Life in 2010: With eyes opened along the way

What will 2010 be like? Very much like today. Except for the victims of wars or great natural disasters like the tsunami, life doesn't change much in only five years.

We will still be living in the same houses, driving the same (or very similar) cars, buying the same foods at the same grocery stores, etc. -- all with perhaps minor, but not substantial, changes. We may buy less butter and more olive oil. New cars may get a bit larger or smaller.

Our manners, mores, and morals -- our values -- won't change much either. Pornography and borderline porn (like Janet Jackson's "wardrobe malfunction" and "Desperate Housewives") will still be condemned, but viewed, rented, and purchased in huge quantities.

There will still be violence in many schools. Women will still be striving for equality -- and not quite getting it. Most young couples will marry, though some will co-habit, and many will do both (one after the other).

And most students will continue to view college as PRIMARILY a trade school, though they may appreciate having their eyes opened to classical art, music, literature, and philosophy along the way.

Carl Stover
Univ. Professor
Business & Public Admin.

Trees graced GSU Hall of Governors with special life and spark; Now gone

If a tree falls in the middle of the night, does anyone hear the noise?

At Governors State, the answer to that question is: not until the next morning, when students and faculty see the aftereffects of chain saws and hand saws.

The university is mourning the loss of the glorious trees that graced the Hall of Governors since the building was opened.

As biased as I am, even I have to admit the reasons for cutting the trees down were sound:

1) One tree fell. Any of the other trees could have fallen at any time -- including during hours of operation -- putting students and staff at risk.

2) The trees were originally only supposed to reach a height of fifteen feet or fewer.

3) The basins in which the trees were planted were only 2.5 feet deep, leaving the trees top heavy.

4) The trees were all leaning at precarious angles.

Nevertheless, what I and other students would like to see is another grove of trees or live foliage planted in the same area. I enjoyed walking onto campus during the holidays and seeing petite white lights adorning the branches. And I would swear to anyone, looking up to the glorious caps and exclaiming, "Mommy, those are really big trees!"

My daughter always enjoyed skipping in between the trunks, looking up to the glorious caps and exclaiming, "Mommy, those are really big trees!"

Please, bring the magic back for everyone.

Lisa Lenberg, Undergraduate
Secondary Education (English)

The Phoenix is Governors State University's student newspaper. It is published twice monthly during the fall and winter terms, and monthly during spring-summer.

We welcome articles, suggestions, photos, commentary, cartoons, and letters to the editor on issues that concern the greater GSU population.

If you have a question about university policy or events, please send it to us, and we will attempt to obtain an answer for you. Literary, and other artistic works are also considered.

We reserve the right to edit submissions for brevity, clarity, appropriateness, legality, and interest to our overall GSU readership.

All submissions should be signed, and include the student, faculty, or staff member's name, ID number, department, and phone number.

The Phoenix
Governors State University
1 University Parkway
University Park, IL 60464

Editor: Nancy LaLuntas
Assistant Editor: Anaya Hughes
Assistant Editor: Marina Huizar
Assistant Editor: Amya Hughes
Assistant Editor: Marsha Huizar
Assistant Editor: Dan Barkman
Ad sales/Business manager: Karin Williams

Technical Coordinator:
Billy Montgomery
Facuity Advisor:
Emmanuel C. Alozie, Ph.D.

Phoenix Student Newspaper
Governors State University
1 University Parkway
University Park, IL 60464

Editorial: (708) 534-4517
Phoenix@govst.edu
Advertising: (708) 534-3068
phoenix@govst.edu

We are located in Room E-1500.
Identity theft: Casual prevention efforts lead to casualties

By Larry Szulczewski

I want to download a virus onto my computer that infects all the applications and causes the whole system to crash. I also want to import a program that will relay my personal data, such as credit card information, to some unknown party out there. To have my identity for all the purchases using the victims’ credit card. “Freaky deeky” was the catch phrase for one of the spots.

You have seen the ads on TV wishing for those bad things to happen, while touting software to help protect your computer from a hack job, or worse. Then there are the award-winning ads for Citibank that had victims of credit card theft in voice-over “talking” about their recent purchases using the victims’ credit card. “Freaky deeky” was the catch phrase for one of the spots.

Those commercials may be humorous and clever ways to get us to buy their products, but what’s really “freaky” is the skyrocketing number of identity theft complaints. Over 10 million Americans, and more than 11,000 Illinois residents were victims of identity theft last year, according to a recent report released by the Federal Trade Commission. Illinois had the 10th highest rate of identity theft reported nationwide in 2004.

By making the state community aware of the epidemic proportion of identity theft, the university, in conjunction with the Illinois Attorney General’s office, sponsored a two-session identity theft workshop last month.

“IT’s a boiling crime,” says Steve Wrone, consumer policy advisor for the attorney general, and keynote speaker for the workshop. “And the numbers are growing every year.” The FTC reported nearly a 15 percent rise over the last year, with 246,570 complaints, compared to 214,905 in 2003. Illinois rates were consistent with the rational trend.

What exactly is “identity theft?” It’s more than someone stealing your credit card and making illegal charges on it. The attorney general defines identity theft as “unlawfully obtaining, possessing, using, or attempting to use, another person’s identifying information without consent and with the intent to harm or defraud another.”

“This information may be as simple as name, address, and date of birth; or as detailed as bank account numbers, mother’s maiden name, or — the ‘holy grail for identity pirates’ — the Social Security number,” said Wrone. Thieves use this information to open credit card accounts, obtain loans, drain bank accounts, and much more.

How pervasive is identity theft? TransUnion, one of the three credit reporting bureaus, received more than 1 million reports alleging identity theft in 2002. That’s more than 35 times the thefts reported 10 years ago. The Secret Service estimates that identity theft costs consumers more than $1 billion annually. That’s billion, with a “b.”

A Florida grand jury estimated that the average identity theft crime costs the business community about $17,000 per victim. A quick calculation of $17,000, multiplied by the 246,570 complaints listed in the FTC report equals nearly $4.2 billion stolen. And that’s a conservative guess. One report estimates the annual cost of identity fraud at $52.6 billion.

How does identity theft affect victims? By Larry Szulczewski

A person victimized by these criminals can spend more than 175 hours and $1,000 in out-of-pocket costs to clear up the problems caused by the crime. That’s roughly equivalent to an eight-hour workday for a little over a month. “It’s like a second job,” Wrone says.

The immediate impact is on your purchasing power. People who find themselves in the wake of a credit mailstorm can see their hard-earned credit history ruined. Difficulty in obtaining credit, employment, and housing result from a poor credit rating.

How do the fraudsters get their hands on personal information? They steal our mail, looking for documents containing personal information, like credit card or bank statements. Sadly, some thieves are the postal workers themselves. Others go through trash cans, searching for discarded credit card receipts, cancelled checks, or “junk mail” containing pre-approved credit card offers.

Lost or stolen wallets are paydirt identity thieves.

How do the fraudsters get their hands on personal information? They steal our mail, looking for documents containing personal information, like credit card or bank statements. Sadly, some thieves are the postal workers themselves. Others go through trash cans, searching for discarded credit card receipts, cancelled checks, or “junk mail” containing pre-approved credit card offers.

Lost or stolen wallets are paydirt identity thieves.

How does identity theft affect victims? By Larry Szulczewski

A person victimized by these criminals can spend more than 175 hours and $1,000 in out-of-pocket costs to clear up the problems caused by the crime. That’s roughly equivalent to an eight-hour workday for a little over a month. “It’s like a second job,” Wrone says.

The immediate impact is on your purchasing power. People who find themselves in the wake of a credit mailstorm can see their hard-earned credit history ruined. Difficulty in obtaining credit, employment, and housing result from a poor credit rating.

How do the fraudsters get their hands on personal information? They steal our mail, looking for documents containing personal information, like credit card or bank statements. Sadly, some thieves are the postal workers themselves. Others go through trash cans, searching for discarded credit card receipts, cancelled checks, or “junk mail” containing pre-approved credit card offers.

Lost or stolen wallets are paydirt identity thieves.

How does identity theft affect victims? By Larry Szulczewski

A person victimized by these criminals can spend more than 175 hours and $1,000 in out-of-pocket costs to clear up the problems caused by the crime. That’s roughly equivalent to an eight-hour workday for a little over a month. “It’s like a second job,” Wrone says.

The immediate impact is on your purchasing power. People who find themselves in the wake of a credit mailstorm can see their hard-earned credit history ruined. Difficulty in obtaining credit, employment, and housing result from a poor credit rating.

How do the fraudsters get their hands on personal information? They steal our mail, looking for documents containing personal information, like credit card or bank statements. Sadly, some thieves are the postal workers themselves. Others go through trash cans, searching for discarded credit card receipts, cancelled checks, or “junk mail” containing pre-approved credit card offers.

Lost or stolen wallets are paydirt identity thieves.

How does identity theft affect victims? By Larry Szulczewski

A person victimized by these criminals can spend more than 175 hours and $1,000 in out-of-pocket costs to clear up the problems caused by the crime. That’s roughly equivalent to an eight-hour workday for a little over a month. “It’s like a second job,” Wrone says.

The immediate impact is on your purchasing power. People who find themselves in the wake of a credit mailstorm can see their hard-earned credit history ruined. Difficulty in obtaining credit, employment, and housing result from a poor credit rating.

How do the fraudsters get their hands on personal information? They steal our mail, looking for documents containing personal information, like credit card or bank statements. Sadly, some thieves are the postal workers themselves. Others go through trash cans, searching for discarded credit card receipts, cancelled checks, or “junk mail” containing pre-approved credit card offers.

Lost or stolen wallets are paydirt identity thieves.

How does identity theft affect victims? By Larry Szulczewski

A person victimized by these criminals can spend more than 175 hours and $1,000 in out-of-pocket costs to clear up the problems caused by the crime. That’s roughly equivalent to an eight-hour workday for a little over a month. “It’s like a second job,” Wrone says.

The immediate impact is on your purchasing power. People who find themselves in the wake of a credit mailstorm can see their hard-earned credit history ruined. Difficulty in obtaining credit, employment, and housing result from a poor credit rating.

How do the fraudsters get their hands on personal information? They steal our mail, looking for documents containing personal information, like credit card or bank statements. Sadly, some thieves are the postal workers themselves. Others go through trash cans, searching for discarded credit card receipts, cancelled checks, or “junk mail” containing pre-approved credit card offers.

Lost or stolen wallets are paydirt identity thieves.

How does identity theft affect victims? By Larry Szulczewski

A person victimized by these criminals can spend more than 175 hours and $1,000 in out-of-pocket costs to clear up the problems caused by the crime. That’s roughly equivalent to an eight-hour workday for a little over a month. “It’s like a second job,” Wrone says.

The immediate impact is on your purchasing power. People who find themselves in the wake of a credit mailstorm can see their hard-earned credit history ruined. Difficulty in obtaining credit, employment, and housing result from a poor credit rating.

How do the fraudsters get their hands on personal information? They steal our mail, looking for documents containing personal information, like credit card or bank statements. Sadly, some thieves are the postal workers themselves. Others go through trash cans, searching for discarded credit card receipts, cancelled checks, or “junk mail” containing pre-approved credit card offers.

Lost or stolen wallets are paydirt identity thieves.

How does identity theft affect victims? By Larry Szulczewski

A person victimized by these criminals can spend more than 175 hours and $1,000 in out-of-pocket costs to clear up the problems caused by the crime. That’s roughly equivalent to an eight-hour workday for a little over a month. “It’s like a second job,” Wrone says.

The immediate impact is on your purchasing power. People who find themselves in the wake of a credit mailstorm can see their hard-earned credit history ruined. Difficulty in obtaining credit, employment, and housing result from a poor credit rating.

How do the fraudsters get their hands on personal information? They steal our mail, looking for documents containing personal information, like credit card or bank statements. Sadly, some thieves are the postal workers themselves. Others go through trash cans, searching for discarded credit card receipts, cancelled checks, or “junk mail” containing pre-approved credit card offers.

Lost or stolen wallets are paydirt identity thieves.
Int’l students face new challenges to study in US

By Marina Huizar

Vijay Prakash Garapati and Preethi Mohan, both from India and majoring in computer science, cringe at the mention of student visas. But they are the lucky ones. Their entry into the U.S. was relatively seamless, albeit long and drawn out.

Garapati’s traveling companion was told he couldn’t come through simply because he “looked like a terrorist.” He was clean-shaven.

But overall, they say they can’t complain, especially in light of the tales they hear from their friends on how stringent the whole process has become since the 9/11 attacks.

Garapati and Mohan feel the extra security measures are a necessary evil. Terrorists have used the student bias system as a way to gain entry into the country.

Mohan herself was accused of not actually being a student. She had to wait while customs officials contacted GSU to verify her student status.

For U.S. students, gaining acceptance at the university of their choice is sometimes a struggle. But for non-U.S. citizens seeking an American education, that’s only half the battle.

Foreign nationals potentially face additional rejection when they petition for student visas. They must petition directly to the U.S. Embassy in their countries by presenting a letter of acceptance from an American university. A personal interview may or may not be conducted, depending on the country. They must also show proof that they intend to return to their country of origin when studies are completed.

If a passport is returned to them, stamped rejected, subsequent submissions stand a poor chance of approval.

GSU, the whole process has become since the 9/11 attacks. Mendoza, coordinator of GSU’s Office of International Services, says the U.S. continues to be the most popular destination for international students because they feel this country has more quality programs to offer. But many international students increasingly are forced to explore other options. They look to countries like Spain, England, or Canada, where there aren’t so many restrictions.

New since 9/11 is the creation of nationwide database called SEVIS (Student Exchange Visitor Information System). The system requires schools to confirm foreign students’ arrival and attendance. It also tracks whether they are enrolled in the education program for which they were approved -- so they don’t switch to, say -- a flight course.

Mendoza believes the SEVIS will ultimately be a good thing, once the kinks are worked out of the system. She’ll be able to remind students of things like when their passports or “duration of study” forms are due to expire.

“These students must stay on top of their documentation to minimize problems, especially if they intend to travel,” she says.

She notes that international enrollments at GSU have actually gone up slightly, despite fears that the events of September 11 would have a negative impact. She attributes the rise in enrollments here to word-of-mouth endorsement of the university.

Mendoza often asks new students how they heard about GSU, and they generally reply, “from a friend back in my country.” GSU has not implemented any special overseas recruitment efforts. But competitive tuition rates certainly play a role, given the steep rise in higher education costs across the nation over the past few years.

Many international students want to work in the U.S., after they graduate, to gain practical experience. With an student (F-1) visa, they can work full-time for one year after graduation. It’s considered part of their practical training.

But if they want to work in the U.S. beyond that, they must find an employer to sponsor them. It’s a cumbersome process few employers want to bother with because it involves petitioning the U.S. government to get the student a new type (H-1B) of visa. Potential employers must undergo scrutiny, hire a lawyer, attest to conditions, and incur fees.

For this reason, international graduates of U.S. universities sometimes resort to fraudulent marriages as a means to remain in this country. These “marriages” are treated as mere business transactions.

The deals can be very lucrative, with offers starting at $5,000. However, they are illegal for both the foreign national and his or her American partner in crime. Likelihood of being caught has increased since 9/11, and as the government cracks down on all forms of immigration violations.

But international students at GSU they know they can count on the gentle guidance of Vrini Mendoza to keep their experience here problem-free.

“I was once an international student myself, and I know how hard it can be,” says Mendoza. “It’s all so large and so strange and overwhelming.”

“If we can help them along, then we’ve done our job.”

Preethi Mohan (left)

and Vijay Prakash Garapati, both from India, had relatively smooth sailing into the U.S. on their student visas. Others haven’t been so fortunate.

University Golf Course offers great breakfast, lunch, and dinner in landmark: “The House”

By Dan Barkman

Looking for a change of pace from the old-fashioned cafeteria break? Maybe you’d like a quiet place to dine alone, or with your study mates? How about a glass of cheer after that tough exam?

“The House” across the road is definitely worth a try! No doubt you’ve seen the recently added sign flashing for the University Golf Club on your many treks to and from school. But did you know they operate a full service restaurant?

And as luck would have it, this cozy gourmet find is just “up the road a piece” on Crawford Road.

“The House” can provide a refreshing change of pace from the menu served in our bustling cafeteria on campus. They’re open seven days a week from 7 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Whether it’s for breakfast, lunch, or a fine dinner, “The House” is sure to have you coming back for more.

Perhaps you’re in the mood for a thick, juicy 14 oz. New York Strip Steak, seared to order and served with maitre d’ butter and sautéed mushrooms.

Or for a light touch, try the delicious crab cakes -- freshformed of nearly pure lump crab meat - not bready at all. And they’re beautifully presented atop a bed of the chef’s own special sauce, along with artful and delicious vegetable garnish, and topped with a jumbo fried shrimp.

If you’re in the mood for pasta, “The House” offers a fine spinach fettuccine served with the chef’s own secret Alfredo sauce, or the house special marinara sauce.

Their fine dining menu even suggests great wines to accompany the entire fare of your choice.

Choose the freshly prepared soup of the day or a wonderfully flavorful chili – not too hot, but richly seasoned. Sandwiches range from the marinated chicken breast “grilled to perfection,” to burgers and clubs and, of course, the infamous Chicago dawg or bratwurst.

“The House” is a nice treat for a couple’s special night out, but can accommodate parties of up to 35 with prior reservation, 708-747-0306 or www.universitygolfclub.com.

But feel free to stop in anytime, with or without calling first. Either way, they’ll treat you like you’re right at home.
**WHAT'S HAPPENING**

**Thursday Feb. 24**

**International students: U.S. Job search**
Career Services offers a "How to search for jobs in the U.S." workshop for international students at 3:30 p.m. Thursday Feb. 24 in Room B-1215. 708-235-3974.

**Tuesday Feb. 22**

**College of Business & Public Administration Accreditation team visit with students**
Students are invited to learn about the accreditation process and interact with the ACBSP site visit team from 4 to 5 p.m. in the Hall of Honors. Refreshments will be served.

**Tuesday Feb. 22**

**Transformations Film Series**
A New England couple's college-aged son dates an older woman with two small children and an unwelcome ex-husband. Then something terrible occurs in this wrenching, emotional drama. This Transformations Film Series workshop begins with a screening at 4:30 in Englebretson Hall, followed by a discussion of existentialist and post-modernist feminism, led by Dr. Becky Nugent. Film is rated R.

**Friday Feb. 25**

**Comicapalooza II and After Party**
NBC "Comedy Central: Last Comic Standing" star Corey Holcomb (AKA Ghetto Dr. Phil) headlines this hilarious review. Hosted by Power 92.3 radio Morning Show's Leon Rogers. 8 p.m. at the Center for Performing Arts. Ages 18 and over. $12. Box office: 708-235-2222. Stay for the after party from 10 p.m. to midnight for just three bucks!

**Saturday March 5**

**The Irish Rovers**
Start your St. Patrick's Day festivities early with these international ambassadors of Irish music at 8 p.m. at The Center for Performing Arts. Tickets are $33-42. Box office 708-235-2222.

**Saturday March 5**

**Victory Gardens Theater's "Shoes"**
In this gospel flavored fantasia, fourteen year old Carol is overjoyed when she receives her first pair of high heels, but devastated when she discovers herself at the gates of heaven — barefoot and perplexed. Determined to repossess her newly acquired symbol of womanhood, Carol journeys a life and an afterlife with humor and courage. Inspired by the tragic 1963 Birmingham church bombing in which four young girls were killed. Tony Award-winning Victory Gardens Theater returns to The Center for Performing Arts at 4 p.m. Tickets are $28-37. Box office 708-235-2222.

**Beginning Saturday March 5**

**GMAT Prep: 6-workshop series**
College of Business and Public Administration conducts a GMAT preparation workshop series spanning six consecutive Saturdays: March 5, 12, 19, 26, and April 2 and 9. Registration is $300. BPA-INFOServ@gsu.edu.

**Wednesday Feb. 23 thru March 10**

**Todd Reed Masters' Art Exhibit**
"I like to think of my paintings as visual toys rather than pieces of high art." View Master's art student Todd Reed's paintings Feb. 23 thru March 10 in the University Art Gallery (E-1565). Opening reception from 6 to 8 p.m. on Wednesday Feb. 23.
It's we vs. they in the battle against identity theft

(Continued from page 3)

Are academic records safe?

GSU is very protective of students' academic records. They are kept under lock and key with the Registrar, and only authorized personnel can access the files. Moreover, they must sign out for the files taken. Faculty advisors may request student files, but are not allowed to take the files with them.

Can an outside agency, like a bank, a mortgage company, an employer, or the police request a student's file? "FERPA supercedes their request," says Deirdre Webb, transcript coordinator for the Registrar's office, "and that includes the FBI."

FERPA is the acronym for the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. It is a federal law that grants rights to students and sets restrictions on how schools may handle academic records.

The law requires that schools obtain written permission from students before releasing their records. However, in certain well-defined circumstances, like a court order for example, information may be released without the student's permission.

Businesses are another avenue that thieves can use to steal personal information. A clerk in a store, or a server in a restaurant, takes your credit card to pay the bill you owe. After the transaction, and you have left the premises, the thief then runs the transaction, voids the error, and resubmits the corrected transaction. A considerate employee, and you are grateful when your statement arrives with the corrected amount.

However, as easily as that considerate employee was able to pull up that transaction, with your full 16-digit account number gleaming like a ripe LED plum, a snake of a clerk could just as easily copy the number and go on a shopping spree.

These are meant to trick you into divulging personal information or passwords, and they can even latch onto your computer to track your online movements.

A phisher could use this technique to get your Internet service provider's account info from you. They use your account to distribute their garbage -- that is, until your provider shuts down your account for distributing obscene material.

Pretexters are getting personal information under false pretenses, using a variety of tactics. Pretexters may, for example, call and claim they are from a survey firm, and ask you a few questions. When the pretexter has the information he wants, he uses it to call your bank and pretends to be you. He might claim that he's forgotten his check book and needs information about "his" account. After combining such ruses, eventually, he has all the personal information he needs, including the existence and size of your savings and investment portfolio.

Phishing is a scam that uses spam or pop-up messages to trick you into disclosing your credit card numbers, bank account information, Social Security number, passwords, or other vital information. Phishers send emails or pop-ups, masquerading as your credit card company, bank, or Internet service provider. The message looks real enough, including company names in the subject line. The message usually says that you must "update" or "validate" your account information, and directs you to a website, containing some consequence if you do not respond. The website looks exactly like the real thing, to include layout design and corporate logos.

Theft is a problem, but adding software and fingerprint readers to your home computer can increase protection against cyber-criminals. But there are a couple of scams out there that are slick enough to cause helpless victims to willingly hand over personal information. The scams are known as "pretexting" and "phishing."

Pretexters are getting personal information under false pretenses, using a variety of tactics. Pretexters may, for example, call and claim they are from a survey firm, and ask you a few questions. When the pretexter has the information he wants, he uses it to call your bank and pretends to be you. He might claim that he's forgotten his check book and needs information about "his" account. After combining such ruses, eventually, he has all the personal information he needs, including the existence and size of your savings and investment portfolio.

However, as easily as that considerate employee was able to pull up that transaction, with your full 16-digit account number gleaming like a ripe LED plum, a snake of a clerk could just as easily copy the number and go on a shopping spree.

However, as easily as that considerate employee was able to pull up that transaction, with your full 16-digit account number gleaming like a ripe LED plum, a snake of a clerk could just as easily copy the number and go on a shopping spree.

These are meant to trick you into divulging personal information or passwords, and they can even latch onto your computer to track your online movements.

A phisher could use this technique to get your Internet service provider's account info from you. They use your account to distribute their garbage -- that is, until your provider shuts down your account for distributing obscene material.

If this porn jerk masquerading as you should send something much nastier than everyday trash -- like child pornography -- through your account, you could be in major trouble. Distributing porn is a federal crime and you could go to jail.

Be wary of any unsolicited message that asks for personal information. Legitimate companies don't ask for this information through email. Notify the true company about the scam and delete the original message. Do not click and paste thephony link to your message to the company.

To safeguard your computer, you should update your virus protection software regularly, and install a firewall. To guard the safety of your online transactions, make sure you're using a secure browser by checking for the padlock or key image on the status bar. And the URL should begin with "https", indicating it's a secure connection.

Try not to store financial information on your computer, unless absolutely necessary. If you do use a strong password that combines letters (upper and lower case), numbers, and symbols. Hackers use programs that will run the logical sequence of letter- or number-only passwords in lightning time. But using a combination of letters, numbers, and symbols almost infinitely extends the sequence. Never use birthdays or mother's maiden names.

Burn personal information on a disk or CD, and delete the information from your computer. Use a "wipe" program before you dispose, sell, or give away your computer. These programs make the files unrecoverable that mouse clicking to delete would miss.

Avoid using the automatic login feature that saves your user name and password, and always log off when you're finished. If your laptop is stolen, the thief will have a hard time accessing sensitive information.

If you fall victim to identity theft, there are several things the FTC and the Attorney General's office recommends you must do. Speed is of the essence. Follow up all calls in writing; and send letters by certified mail, return receipt requested, so you can document what company received and when. Keep copies for your files.

If your card was stolen or used without your authorization, immediately contact the credit card company, and then one of the three credit reporting bureaus. They are legally obligated to notify the other two bureaus after you make the first call.

Equifax - 800-525-6285
Experian - 888-397-3742
TransUnion - 800-680-7289

Ask them to place a fraud alert on your credit report. This prevents an identity thief from opening accounts in your name. Request a copy of your credit report. Look for inquiries you did not initiate, accounts you did not open, and any unauthorized debts. Make sure all the information on the report is correct.

On March 1, 2005, a law takes effect that all the credit bureaus must provide, upon request, one free report per year. However, you should continue to check your reports periodically, especially in the first year after a theft, to be sure no new fraudulent activity occurred.

File a report with the Illinois Attorney General and the Federal Trade Commission. These agencies maintain databases of identity theft cases to help police track thieves. Notify your local police. Some companies require police reports to process claims of fraud. If you're on vacation and your wallet is lost or stolen, file a report with the police name and return and then take the report to your hometown police. Police will conduct an investigation, and contact various law enforcement agencies to assist. "People need to take the time out to protect themselves," says Tony Martin, University Park deputy police chief.

Martin wants people to be proactive when they are protecting their identity and their good name. The police department now has an important cog in the identity theft investigation machinery.

Should the unfortunate day happen if you refuse to give it to you? Offer a different identifying number.

Nothing works better than more than one head working on a problem," Martin adds.

There are far too many creeps out there willing to prove the adage about a fool and his money being soon parted. Be alert. Be aware. Be proactive. And don't be foolish.
Students elect senators and reps for 2005-6 school year

Student Senate general elections were held on Feb. 8 and 9. Two student senators were elected from each of the four colleges, and 10 senators were chosen from the students at large.

Four write-in candidates won seats as senators and positions remains vacant. Any currently senators were elected from each of the students at large.

Following is a list of those students elected to positions for the 2005-2006 school year.

**STUDENT SENATORS**

**Board of Governors**
Barbara O’Kennard
(vacant)

**College of Arts and Sciences**
Anthony DeLaPena
William Jewell

**College of Business and Public Administration**
Toure Peck
Dexter Simms

**College of Education**
Randy Coley
Derek Stevenson

**College of Health Professionals**
George Ashford
Jeanne Hendrickson

---

Health Professions gets $1mil to help southland adolescents avoid high-risk lifestyle choices

The College of Health Professions has received a $1 million federal grant for substance abuse prevention programs targeted toward high-risk middle school students in the southland region.

Grant monies, to be administered over four years, are for the Saving Kids Through Integrated Prevention Planning (SKIPP) program.

The dollars come from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

"Our youth face extreme pressures in school," said Michelle Champagne, the college’s coordinator for grants and project development.

"Middle-school children are particularly vulnerable to influences that are ultimately destructive," she said.

Dugs, sex, gang involvement, violent behavior and all of the attendant risks, including HIV infection, are prevalent in middle-schools attended by underserved populations within the southland region.

"This destructiveness doesn’t just tear children and families apart," Champagne said. "It increases risks to entire communities and the region at large."

The projects it funds will be comprehensive, starting with programs that deal with fundamental emotional issues and build self-esteem in children before they become vulnerable.

Projects will also teach parents and children to communicate effectively within family groups, to set goals, and encourage children to achieve academically.

"Long term, we want to see these kids in college instead of on the streets," Champagne said.

The SKIPP grant is part of an overarching strategy the college has for supporting prevention programs within the region.

---

**King Crossword**

ACROSS
1 Stem disciplinarian?
4 Prohibit
7 Settle a debt
12 "Euroka"
13 Shock’s partner
14 Obliterate
16 Balloons
18 Fill to the brim
20 Centesimi
21 Cistern
22 Cill quinquated
23 Broadway debase
25 Pump purchase
26 Apiece
27 Xing
30 Handle
33 "Go, team!"
34 "-to the Church on Time"
35 "Attraction"
38 Show gump
39 " `- the Prohib"
40 Handle
44 " `- the Church on Time"
52 Resume
53 " `- the Church on Time"
54 " `- the Church on Time"
55 " `- the Church on Time"
56 " `- the Church on Time"
57 Nevada town
58 Turn red?
59 MacDonald
60 Indivisible
61 " `- the Church on Time"
62 " `- the Church on Time"
63 " `- the Church on Time"
64 " `- the Church on Time"
65 " `- the Church on Time"
66 " `- the Church on Time"
67 " `- the Church on Time"
68 " `- the Church on Time"
69 " `- the Church on Time"
70 " `- the Church on Time"
71 " `- the Church on Time"
72 " `- the Church on Time"
73 " `- the Church on Time"
74 " `- the Church on Time"
75 " `- the Church on Time"
76 " `- the Church on Time"
77 " `- the Church on Time"
78 " `- the Church on Time"
79 " `- the Church on Time"
80 " `- the Church on Time"
81 " `- the Church on Time"
82 " `- the Church on Time"
83 " `- the Church on Time"
84 " `- the Church on Time"
85 " `- the Church on Time"
86 " `- the Church on Time"
87 " `- the Church on Time"
88 " `- the Church on Time"
89 " `- the Church on Time"
90 " `- the Church on Time"
91 " `- the Church on Time"
92 " `- the Church on Time"
93 " `- the Church on Time"
94 " `- the Church on Time"
95 " `- the Church on Time"
96 " `- the Church on Time"
97 " `- the Church on Time"
98 " `- the Church on Time"
99 " `- the Church on Time"
100 " `- the Church on Time"
101 " `- the Church on Time"

DOWN
1 " `- the Church on Time"
2 Daytime
3 Artic
4 Mexican
5 Edgar and Hugo
6 Altered
7 Look-alikes
8 " `- the Church on Time"
9 Tie up the provider
10 Handle
11 " `- the Church on Time"
12 " `- the Church on Time"
13 " `- the Church on Time"
14 " `- the Church on Time"
15 " `- the Church on Time"
16 " `- the Church on Time"
17 " `- the Church on Time"
18 " `- the Church on Time"
19 " `- the Church on Time"
20 " `- the Church on Time"
21 " `- the Church on Time"
22 " `- the Church on Time"
23 " `- the Church on Time"
24 " `- the Church on Time"
25 " `- the Church on Time"
26 " `- the Church on Time"
27 " `- the Church on Time"
28 " `- the Church on Time"
29 " `- the Church on Time"
30 " `- the Church on Time"
31 " `- the Church on Time"
32 " `- the Church on Time"
33 " `- the Church on Time"
34 " `- the Church on Time"
35 " `- the Church on Time"
36 " `- the Church on Time"
37 " `- the Church on Time"
38 " `- the Church on Time"
39 " `- the Church on Time"
40 " `- the Church on Time"
41 " `- the Church on Time"
42 " `- the Church on Time"
43 " `- the Church on Time"
44 " `- the Church on Time"
45 " `- the Church on Time"
46 " `- the Church on Time"
47 " `- the Church on Time"
48 " `- the Church on Time"
49 " `- the Church on Time"
50 " `- the Church on Time"
51 " `- the Church on Time"
52 " `- the Church on Time"
53 " `- the Church on Time"
54 " `- the Church on Time"
55 " `- the Church on Time"
56 " `- the Church on Time"
57 " `- the Church on Time"
58 " `- the Church on Time"
59 " `- the Church on Time"
60 " `- the Church on Time"
61 " `- the Church on Time"
62 " `- the Church on Time"
63 " `- the Church on Time"
64 " `- the Church on Time"
65 " `- the Church on Time"
66 " `- the Church on Time"
67 " `- the Church on Time"
68 " `- the Church on Time"
69 " `- the Church on Time"
70 " `- the Church on Time"
71 " `- the Church on Time"
72 " `- the Church on Time"
73 " `- the Church on Time"
74 " `- the Church on Time"
75 " `- the Church on Time"
76 " `- the Church on Time"
77 " `- the Church on Time"
78 " `- the Church on Time"
79 " `- the Church on Time"
80 " `- the Church on Time"
81 " `- the Church on Time"
82 " `- the Church on Time"
83 " `- the Church on Time"
84 " `- the Church on Time"
85 " `- the Church on Time"
86 " `- the Church on Time"
87 " `- the Church on Time"
88 " `- the Church on Time"
89 " `- the Church on Time"
90 " `- the Church on Time"
91 " `- the Church on Time"
92 " `- the Church on Time"
93 " `- the Church on Time"
94 " `- the Church on Time"
95 " `- the Church on Time"
96 " `- the Church on Time"
97 " `- the Church on Time"
98 " `- the Church on Time"
99 " `- the Church on Time"
100 " `- the Church on Time"
101 " `- the Church on Time"

---

As Chris Miernicki discovered, there are many reasons to join UPS. But she soon realized that UPS can provide you with something even more valuable: a solid career path. If you have the drive to learn and enhance your skills, you have the potential to move up at UPS. Find out for yourself!

Part-Time Package Handler

Work a consistent schedule 3-1/2 to 5 hours a day, 5 days a week. No weekends or holidays! Not only will you earn great pay of $8.50 per hour, with increases of 50¢ after 90 days and 50¢ after one year, but we offer unsurpassed benefits including paid vacations, weekly paychecks, consistent work schedules and excellent benefits (Medical/ Life & 401K). Plus, we make it easy for student employees to receive up to $23,000 toward tuition, books, fees and related college expenses with our Earn and Learn Program.

To learn more about Part-Time Package Handler opportunities, and the UPS Earn and Learn Program at Governors State University, please contact Melissa Stern at 708.387.4884 ext. 2555 or email: www.upsjobs.com/chicago/Access Code: 2354

UPS is an equal opportunity employer.
Black History Month

The three paintings above by Damon Lamar Reed were among those on display here during the African American Artists Invitational Exhibition. Other artists whose works were featured were Carla Carr, Darnell Moore, and Calvin Harris. (Photos by Anaya Hughes)

At left, GSU building maintenance staff member Keith Briggs sang out during “The Dream is Alive in 2005” tribute to Martin Luther King. The program was celebrated in music, dance, and the spoken word Jan. 25 at The Center for Performing Arts. (Photo by Ken Williams)

Attention GSU Students

Want To Earn Extra Money?

Part-Time Jobs Available in the Office of Institutional Advancement

Temporary workers are needed to make telephone calls to alumni

Dates: During March 2005
Hours: 6:30 to 9 p.m. Monday thru Thursday 4 to 8 p.m. Sunday
Location: Engbretson Hall
Salary: $7.50 per hour
Qualifications: Must be enthusiastic, articulate, and have good communications skills.

Call or stop by the Institutional Advancement Office to apply - Room D84200, 3rd Floor D-Wing (708) 534-6360

or send e-mail to: t-doran@govst.edu

Cell phone users alert!

Stop whatever you’re doing!

Shortly, cell phone numbers are being released to telemarketing companies, and you will start to receive sales calls on cell phones. Call this number from your cell phone:

888-382-1222

It's the National Do Not Call List. It will block your number for five years.