Students join seasonal rush to find holiday gifts

By Supriya Ghorpade
Contributing Writer

Just as much of a tradition as Christmas trees and caroling, holiday shopping has kicked off with full force this month.

With very little money, students all over campus are panicking and stressing over what gifts to get for their friends and family. Like any penniless college student knows, when it comes to finding cheap gift ideas, it is important to have the right resources before beginning to search.

According to Ting Chung, a seventh-year Electrical Engineering major, the mall, Sears, and Good Morning America are two great resources.

“They usually have those segments on what you can buy and, Regis and Kelly are having a segment on gift ideas for under $15,” Chung said.


It is often smart to find a gift idea from the internet and then go to the mall to check the quality and appeal of the item before buying it.

If that does not help, newspaper ads offer colorful images that students can use to get more smart and up-to-date gift ideas.

Many students choose to venture out to local stores to see what is available for the holiday season. “I think places like Bar and Body Works have great little gift ideas, and Old Navy has some neat things too,” said Kathryn Moore, a first-year Mechanical Engineering major.

However, Nicole Green, a third-year Computer Media major, said that the key to finding the best gift may simply be “from the person you are getting the gift for”.

With gift ideas in mind, it’s time to shop. Some students have said that they begin their holiday shopping on Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, when stores often have major clearance sales. Some students are particular about finishing their holiday shopping by specific times.

“You’d like to get [holiday shopping] done by the weekend before dead week...”

Ting Chung
Seventh-year EE

The holiday shopping season has arrived and wish lists are getting long. Students have joined in the general scramble to find the perfect presents, cramming in gift shopping on top of classes and work.

Other students have different ideas. “I shop up until Christmas Eve...there really isn’t a deadline,” said Kristen Hill, a fourth-year Industrial Design major.

Where do Tech students shop?

Guys generally prefer to shop at electronic stores first. When asked about where he will head for holiday shopping, first-year Electrical Engineering major Rajan Ananthan answered, “Circuit City, Best Buy and the mall.”

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By Dr. N. Godara
Consortium Writer

Recent research has splintered a common myth that the ocular capabilities of giant pandas do not permit them to see color.

Angela Kelling, a graduate student researcher in Tech’s Center for Conservation Behavior in the School of Psychology, conducted the research. Kelling tested the ability of two Zoo Atlanta pandas, the male Yang Yang and female Lun Lun, to see color.

Kelling discovered that both pandas were able to discriminate between colors and various shades of gray.

The study was conducted in collaboration with Zoo Atlanta, which is among the major North American zoos that exhibit giant pandas.

Members of the Ursidae or bear family, which includes the giant pandas, were never believed to possess visual acuity because they have excellent senses of smell and hearing.

Although vision is not a well-researched aspect of the Ursidae family, some previous research has suggested that members of this family may have some sort of color vision that helps them to distinguish between edible and inedible plants.

One study indicated the ability of black bears to distinguish between the colors blue and gray and between green and gray, and its design became the basis of Kelling’s research.

Over a two-year period, Kelling investigated whether or not giant pandas can tell the difference between colors and shades of gray.

The tests that constituted Kelling’s study were presented separately to the two pandas.

The tests were conducted with three plastic pipes, two hanging under a piece of paper that contained one of 18 shades of gray and one that contained a color—red, green or blue.

If the panda pushed the pipe located under a color, it received a reward. If it pushed one of the pipes under the gray paper, it received nothing.

In most of the tests, the giant pandas chose the colored paper above chance levels, demonstrating an ability to distinguish between color and gray.

According to Kelling, this study does not allow for the general inference that giant pandas can see the full color spectrum.

Rather, it unveils the fact that pandas may have some sort of color vision that permits them to tell the difference between colors and shades of gray.

While this study shows that giant pandas have some color vision, it wasn’t conclusive as to what level of color vision they have,” Kelling said.

From this study, we can’t tell if the pandas can tell the difference between the colors themselves, like red from blue, or blue from green. But we can see that they can determine if something is gray or colored,” Kelling said.

That ability and the accompanying visual acuity could lead to the pandas being better able to forage for bamboo. For instance, to determine whether to head for a bamboo patch that is healthy and colorful as opposed to one that is brown and dying,” Kelling said.

This ability, along with the giant pandas’ advanced senses of smell and hearing, may help to ensure their survival in the wild.
An Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program initiative, the Research Plan is a recently developed program that is designed to allow undergraduate students the opportunity to further their research interests. Through this program, students are able to enhance their skills and develop meaningful relationships with mentors and lab members, in addition to receiving a Research Option certificate with their degrees. Typically, a Research Option participant is required to complete at least nine hours of undergraduate research, take an undergraduate thesis course, and write an undergraduate thesis that details their experiences.

Tech’s first Research Option graduates, who will be graduating this December, include Brian DiRito (College of Computing), Erin Epperson (Biology), Clara Moon (Biology), Christen Pirkle (Biology) and Tyler Weston (College of Computing).

Moon, a Biology major from Marietta, Ga., worked in Dr. Kirill Lobachev’s laboratory for two years to obtain her Research Option certificate. Her research project focused on the identification and characterization of mutants that affect mechanisms of genome instability at the site of inverted repeats in the yeast Saccharomyces cerevisiae. According to Moon, chromosomal aberrations, which may lead to cancer, are associated with repetitive sequences in DNA that can adopt secondary structures.

Moon believes that studying the mechanism of genome instability in the presence of unstable motifs will contribute to a greater understanding of other human diseases. She cites many benefits of the Research Plan, especially the opportunities it gives participants to enhance their communication skills as they present their research to their peers, mentors and other members of the scientific community. "Scientific research is not only about bench work, but also about communicating one’s findings to the scientific community," Moon said. "The Research Option has allowed me to become involved in the scientific community, giving me experience in the writing and presentation aspects of research in addition to the lab work," Moon said.

A fellow Biology major, Epperson’s Columbia, Ga., has worked in the laboratory of Dr. John Kirby for the past year. Specifically, her project entailed the development of a protein interaction model for the two-component signal transduction system of the Myxococcus xanthus bacterium. "Through the development of this model, Epperson and her fellow researchers hope to assist other scientists in determining the function of two non-chemotaxis proteins in M. xanthus, the mechanism of signal transduction and the manner in which M. xanthus integrates multiple environmental stimuli into a cumulative behavioral response via eight chemosensory systems. This model could potentially have a wide variety of significant medical applications in the future. Understanding the mechanism by which bacteria respond to environmental stimuli and process the information through signal transduction systems could assist researchers in the development of unique strategies for bacterial infection treatment and prevention." Epperson said.

"I’ve always known that I wanted to attend medical school after earning my undergraduate degree, but recently, began to consider pursuing clinical research through an MD/PhD program. I chose to participate in Tech’s Research Option in order to gain experience conducting research, which has helped me decide whether or not to pursue a joint degree," Epperson said.

"I have had a wonderful experience working in Dr. Kirby’s lab. I learned how to perform techniques only mentioned in lecture, how to devise my own hypotheses and how to write an effective manuscript. I believe this option is a unique opportunity among many undergraduate institutions and is well worth the extra effort," Epperson said.

E & A Course Schedule:

Must attend ALL dates and times

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday,</td>
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<td>Sunday</td>
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Cost: $100, includes book and licensing fee.

Registration begins December 18, 2006 at the Member Services desk in CRC.

Questions?

Contact: jordan.wienke@crc.gatech.edu 404-894-8834

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E:

F:

A:

Course:

Schedules:

- Thursday, January 18
- Friday, January 19
- Saturday, January 20
- Sunday, January 21

- 5:30 – 10:00 p.m.
- 11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
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Peters explained that the application and interview process for the Corps takes over six months and that students would be well advised to apply early in order to enroll in a program as soon as they can. Students majoring in fields related to engineering, environmental studies and business development are in high demand for the types of programs the Peace Corps offers. These students can readily find a program of suitable interest in the Peace from page 11

Decades of research have allowed us to understand the complex mechanisms that underlie inflammatory disease. However, the precise role of innate immune receptors in the development of autoimmunity is not yet clear. Here, we examine the potential involvement of Toll-like receptors (TLRs) and other innate immune receptors in the pathogenesis of inflammatory arthritis, using a genetic mouse model.

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Holiday from page 11
Electrical Engineering major.
Students have reported spending
over $100 on holiday shopping. For
those running low on cash this year,
a cheaper and more creative alterna-
tive to shopping can be making gifts
by hand.
“Those days everybody buys
things for people, but nobody makes
things. You really make things for
the people you love,” Chung said.
People have indicated a preference
for gifts made especially for them.
Myniece, she’s about nine [and]
she likes it when people make stuff
for her...[things] like little key
chains, drawing pictures, stuff like
that,” Hill said.
Some gifts that students have
reported making for others include
paper flowers, paintings and model
cars. However, finding the time
to make gifts can be a hassle.
Still, the true challenge is finding
that right gift idea.
Moore suggested an edible gift.
“Last year, I got my friend an edible
snow globe. To make it, you take a
coffee cup, put a cupcake in it and
make a winter scene using marshmal-
lows and candy and you stick it all
together with toothpick and icing,”
Moore said.
Others have mentioned iPads,
gift certificates, jewelry and humor-
ous greeting cards as good ideas for
presents.
Chung stressed the importance
of considering who is receiving the
gift.
“Theykey to getting a good gift is
to just listen to somebody; there’s really
no way around it,” Chung said.

Stress from page 11
ahead of time to realize how many
tests they’ve got and prioritize,”
Davis said.
“Prioritizing doesn’t just mean
making a list of things to do. It means
judging what the most pressing issue
is at the moment and tackling that
first. Students need to realize which
one is more important, trying to
have everything or being healthy,”
Davis explained.
Perez offered additional advice
on combating stress.
“To deal with the stress that
students are encountering right now,
they need to start thinking about
what a person needs to stay
healthy; namely, to eat well and sleep
well. Resting is medicine to treating
stress,” Perez said.
“[Students] also should exercise
adequately. That doesn’t even mean
working out, (they should) just get
some level of physical activity for
the body to stay alive and focused.
The CRC is a great place to go,”
Perez said.
Davis emphasized the value of
a good support system to students
trying to deal with stress.
“It is important to develop a
circle of supportive friends. During
a stressful time, it is pressing to have
someone to lean on and talk to. Do
something relaxing for a while [with
friends], rather than just palling an
all-nighter,” Davis said.
The Counseling Center offers
many programs on how to cope with
stress, insomnia and depression at
no cost to Tech students.
Students can seek individual
counseling or attend workshops
and big group counseling. This
semester, the Counseling Center
has also started group programs
to deal with relationship issues and
social issues.
“We started a group called the
Stress Busters to teach students
how to manage stress. Students are
welcome to come any time and sign
up,” Davis said.
While many students feel they
should be getting help with stress,
many are not simply because of
the negative stigma of seeing a
therapist.
Tech has a number of resources
here available to help [students] suc-
cceed. Students should look at going
to the Counseling Center not [as
getting therapy], but [as getting]
help to succeed. In that way students
are more likely to come out and seek
help,” Perez said.

This past spring, the Counseling
Center started an outreach program
for the student body through its
Stress Management Series, which
is held in the Wilby Room on the
ground floor of the library.
“Students do not have to sign up
to participate in any of the programs.
They can just walk in,” Davis said.
On the other hand, students have
come up with their own approaches
toward stress management.
“I realize [stress] is an inevitable
thing to come across. I believe getting
stressed out won’t solve anything
[and] will only make matters worse.
That isn’t saying that I won’t get
stressed out. I know I will. I just try
to not lose the best I can; the test is beyond
my reach,” said Rohan Trivedi, a
first-year Biomedical Engineering
major.
“Whenever I feel stressed out, I
like to clean. Mindless work takes
my attention off of the things I’m
stressed about,” said Jesse Cort, a
second-year Biomedical Engineer-
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TO THE BATCave
Can I not be tricked into eating cookies made for my salvation the next
time I need to study in the library? How rude.
TBA when a course admin gets TBS
i hate my roommate
Lindsay: I have a HUGE crush on you (MSE 2001)
Why do I do this to myself????
You don’t deserve this SHMIMT
I love the opinions editor
I wanna kiss you underneath the stars. We just don’t care.
Congrats to the new Nupes! Yo Yo
Why are there interstate highways in Hawaii?
Iknnow you think that I shouldn’t still love you, I’ll tell you that.
I think you should be able to read the slivers online...that would be
cool.
Blarg honk
Could all the over opinionated people please have an opinion about
something else? I am so tired of this “Free Speech” argument... (And
I can say that cause I have the right to free speech!)
LCJ is thinking that the III is really hurting her feelings
She is glad that WKIII doesn’t read the Technoapce
I should really come to a Technapce meeting one of these days...
John Stein, you Rock! Keep up the good job!!
tackle football at the burger bowl Friday at 5pm
is your phone ringing?
5th street bridge expansion: sending student money to block one of
the better city views on campus nothing useful, good job guys
finding common ground: finding new and inventive ways to waste
our money
You really creep me out by cyberstalking my xanga account!
Xanga stalkers unite
are those your pants? wait, why did you take your pants off?!
Xanga stalkers unite
are those your pants? wait, why did you take your pants off?!
The Counseling Center, housed in the Flag building, offers numerous
resources to help students deal with the harmful effects of stress.