

The G.S.A. NEWSLETTER



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Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

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Headlines 1997

or what you missed while you were busy working on your thesis project
by Jutta Beneken

Ah, 1998! Yet another year closer to the computer apocalypse also known as the year 2000. Any thoughts on where you're going to spend the singular moment at which your computer will self-destruct and remain nothing but a pile of useless plastic? (Chances are that even if the 2000-computer problem is solved in time, the computer you own now is going to be a pile of useless plastic by the year 2000 anyway). I suggest that you leave your computer behind and travel to the Pacific islands of Fiji or Tonga. Their geographic location is closest to the next millennium (which, by the way, doesn't really begin until 2001). But choose your destination with care: nearby Western Samoa is beyond the International Date Line and thus almost a full day behind.

But I'm jumping ahead. Following a long-standing January tradition, I should be reviewing 1997, not previewing 2000. So what really happened in 1997? If the following doesn't sound familiar, you've either been living in a cave or you've been spending too much time in lab, which ultimately amounts to the same.

In February, scientists in Scotland cloned a sheep and named her Dolly. The connection between the sheep and her namesake singer/actress becomes clear when you consider that the sheep was derived from a mammary gland cell. Dolly the sheep continues to make headlines. Early in January 1998 the

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Restaurant Guide

by Sarah Wheelan

Tired of burgers and pasta? Take Eastern Avenue east into Highlandtown for some terrific Greek dining experiences. Bakeries abound with some of the best and freshest bread in existence, and three restaurants will tempt you with Mediterranean delights.

Drive east on Eastern Avenue until you go underneath a set of railroad bridges. Take a left at the first stoplight (Macon) past the bridges and you will see Illona's (410-342-0287), a Highlandtown tradition. Although the sign advertises Illona's as an Italian and American restaurant, its real strength is Greek food. The American dishes we've tried so far have been average (but for an incredibly cheap price).

The Greek specialties are an even better deal: Greek appetizers run from \$2.95 for the garlic dip to \$4.95 for dolmades to a little more for calamari. These appetizers are uniformly excellent, especially the dolmades (grape leaves stuffed with rice and spiced beef) and the spinach pie, which is the best around, heavy on the spinach with just the right amount of cheese and garlic. (Spinach pie is spiced spinach wrapped with cheese and garlic in phyllo pastry. Try it!) The appetizers are large (as is everything else here — you WILL have leftovers) so plan to share a couple. Next up is a Greek salad with the house Greek dressing. The feta cheese in this is so fresh that you won't be able to eat store-bought feta again, and the dressing is perfect. The salads are very generous; two people could share a small salad and three or four could share a large. Usually at this point we're

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Upcoming GSA Meeting

February 10

GSA Meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 3 pm in Hunterian Room G-5.

NOTES FROM THE GSA

GSA Happy Hour

Tuesday, January 27th
4:30 - 6:00 P.M.

Bodian Room (110 WBSB)

Beer, soda, and munchies provided.
Graduate students only, please.
Contact Kellie Cummings
(kbc@welchlink...)
with any questions.

Alicia Showalter Reynolds Memorial Lecture

Dr. Linda Buck
Harvard University, HHMI
Dept. of Neurobiology

Tues., May 5th 1998
(more details to come...)

GSA Workshop Series

keep a look out for future career workshops sponsored by the GSA

- teaching careers
- consulting
- industry
- patent law/patent examining
- regulatory affairs

contact Tara Riemer
(triemer@bme.jhu.edu) if you are interested in planning any of these workshops or if you have suggestions for participants

GSA Travel Award Report

The Graduate Student Association has budgeted funds for supplementing student travel to scientific meetings or for field work. The main goal of the travel award is to enable a student to attend a pertinent event when it would otherwise be difficult to do so because of limited laboratory or departmental funding. More information about GSA student travel awards can be found at <<http://www.med.jhu.edu/gsa/travel.html>>. The following is a report by Mary Silcox, a student in the Program of Functional Anatomy, who received a GSA travel award to attend a meeting.

The Society of Vertebrate Paleontology is the premiere North American organization, and their annual meeting gathers a wide and varied assortment of paleontologists who are interested in everything from towering T-rexes to tiny cowering fossil mammals. In 1997 the society held their conference in Chicago, an easy walk from the internationally renowned Field Museum of Natural History (the recent purchaser of "Sue," the T-rex that was sold at auction in Fall 1997). This ensured a good turnout, and the meetings provided four days of excellent professional talks, as well as opportunities to make contacts and renew old friendships.

With the aid of a travel award from the GSA, I was able to attend and present a paper based on research I have been doing with Dr. K.D. Rose of the Anatomy Department. We study mammal fossils from the base of the modern mammalian radiation, dated to around 55 million years ago. My paper focused on change in tooth size and shape over approximately 3 million years in Diacodexis, (the earliest known artiodactyl and presumably the ancestor to modern cows, deer, sheep etc.), using more than 1000 specimens collected from deposits in Wyoming. I received a lot of good comments and suggestions on my work. Attending and participating in such meetings is an essential part of survival and success in my field, particularly given the current shortage of funding and job opportunities in paleontology. My financial support from the GSA was crucial in allowing me to take advantage of this opportunity.

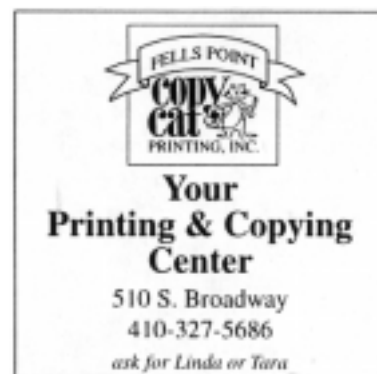
Mary T. Silcox
Dept. of Cell Biology and Anatomy

The pen is mightier than the pipet...

Please send any poems, short stories, creative writing, articles, or black and white art/photos to the GSA Newsletter! Submissions for the next issue are due on **March 17**. Contact any editor for a copy of the 1997-98 Submission Guidelines, or check the GSA Web Page!

GSA Web Page

Check out the GSA Web Page at <http://www.med.jhu.edu/gsa> You'll find everything from local happenings to GSA meeting minutes to back issues of the GSA Newsletter. Bookmark it!



Help Wanted

If you are interested in editing the newsletter, please contact Ed Hsiao or Jutta Beneken for more information!

Ed Hsiao
GSA Newsletter Editor
PCTB 607
725 N. Wolfe St.
Baltimore, MD 21205
Phone: (410)614-0199
Fax: (410)955-0831
Email: ehsiao@welchlink

Jutta Beneken
GSA Newsletter Editor
Hunterian 703
Phone: (410)614-2533
Email:
jbeneken@welchlink

GSA Newsletter Editors

Edward Hsiao	<i>ehsiao</i>
Jutta Beneken	<i>jbeneken</i>
Alan Meeker	<i>ameeker</i>
Carolyn Sevier	<i>csevier</i>

*fax 955-0831
attn. Ed Hsiao,
PCTB 607
snail mail: Ed Hsiao,
GSA Newsletter
PCTB 607, 725 N. Wolfe St.
Baltimore, MD 21205*

Party for the Schools of Medicine, Nursing, and Public Health

Friday, January 30th from
7:00 P.M. until 1:00 A.M.
at the E level of Levering Hall
on the Homewood campus.

Includes D.J., free food, and a cash bar
with drink specials.
Bring your school ID.

Sponsored by the Johns Hopkins
University Alumni Association.

Please e-mail
cgrubb@welchlink.welch.jhu.edu
with any questions.

Heard Around Hopkins: Privacy tips

by Shirley Skiles

In Maryland, a new law was recently enacted whereby anyone can pay two dollars to the MVA and get all the information in your file based on your automobile license tag number. The MVA is selling this information for profit to private interests and commercial organizations and the new law makes it completely legal. In order to stop your information (address, DOB, SSN, driving record, etc.) from being sold you can call 1-888-682-3772 and privatize this information. It is all done by touch tone; you only need your driver license number, date of birth, social security number, and the desire. Think about it; someone you accidentally cut off can now find out where you live for two dollars and a phone call.

Also Bell Atlantic is starting a service called "Star 54" this year. It will allow anybody to call 1-301-555-5454 and input your home telephone number and for 75 cents the computer will give the person your name and complete address. To get this service blocked on your home number all you need to do is call 1-888-579-0323 and tell them you want "Star 54" blocked from your phone. You have until February 7, 1998 to do this free of charge.

GSA HAPPY HOUR

Tuesday,
January
27th
4:30 - 6:00
P.M.

Bodian
Room
(110 WBSB)

Beer, soda,
and munchies
provided.

Graduate
students only,
please.



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same scientists who cloned her said that they had mated her - "the old-fashioned way" - but didn't know if she was pregnant yet. Here's a thought: if Dolly turns out to be infertile, Richard Seed may be cloning infertile babies for infertile couples. Wouldn't that be ironic?

In July, Pathfinder landed on Mars and the cute 25-lb all-terrain vehicle named Sojourner began taking pictures and colliding with rocks. Don't let that get you down, little rover, because it happens to the best. In late December 1997 and early January 1998 it became chic for celebrity skiers to collide with trees. Of course the AMA promptly responded by suggesting that skiers should wear helmets. Forget the helmets. If you pay attention and avoid wooded areas, trees shouldn't be a problem.

On the last day of August, the most photographed woman in the world and her companion were killed by a drunk driver who obviously mistook a Paris city tunnel for the German autobahn. The world continues to mourn Diana, while her brother has joined those who are trying to make money off her death. The sad, gracious lady suffered enough in her lifetime, let her rest in peace.

You must have heard it at least a dozen times in the past two weeks. Those year-in-review flashbacks and analyses all show the same: the best and the worst, Superbowl to World Series, Dolly to Diana. I couldn't resist but give you my own take on things, but I want to leave you with some events of 1997 that are equally fascinating but failed to make TIME magazine's Best and Worst list or Science magazine's "Breakthroughs 1997" list.

In January, scientists find evidence for life on earth more than 3850 million years ago. Where? In carbonaceous inclusions in rocks found in western Greenland. The geologists found that the isotopic compositions of these rocks lies in the range of those found in living and ancient microorganisms. Meanwhile the search for intelligent life anywhere on earth continues (see the earlier story on celebrities and trees).

In September, Swiss scientists report that they have created a simple computer that can repair and replicate itself. The idea is based on a series of identical processors, called "biodules". Each of these contains the information required for the biodules to function together as a computer, kind of like an artificial chromosome. The self-repair is made possible because the system can identify a faulty biodule, deactivate it, and replace it with a spare biodule that until then had been sitting on the bench, so to speak. The self-replication is possible if there are enough spare biodules around for the entire system to renew itself.

In December, Austrian scientists and another group in Italy were able to teleport the quantum state of one photon to another photon. In other words, the science-fictional "Beam me up, Scotty" has just become a little less fictional and a little more scientific. Now if only someone would design a turbo lift. In light of our present elevator situation, we could really use one of those. Science would get done a lot faster around here.

So, like any other year before it, 1997 had its share of tragedies, great inventions, and scientific breakthroughs. What will 1998 hold in store for humankind? The excitement of more great discoveries and milestone events becomes almost too much to handle. Uncertainty is always exciting, but it can also be frightening. One thing 1997 has taught us: maybe we should look to Europe for signs of intelligent life.

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too full to continue, but for the more brave-hearted, there is a huge range of possible entrees. Beef, veal, and Italian entrees range from \$8-\$13 and seafood entrees are slightly higher. The calzones (\$6.25 plus \$.75 for any extra fillings) are enormous and delicious, some of the best I've had. The sauce is perfectly spiced and the bread is fresh and perfectly crusty. As for dessert, you're on your own because we've always been too full to try it.

The next restaurant down the road is Ikaros, which is on the right side of Eastern Avenue (4805 Eastern, 410-633-3750) as you head east. Ikaros is the fanciest Greek restaurant around, quite suitable for dates or parental visits. Prices are slightly higher than at Illona's, but not significantly, and the food is strictly Greek. Appetizers range from \$2.95 to \$5.95 and include spinach pie, dolmades, and all the other essentials. Appetizers here are very flavorful; the spinach pie is well-spiced and not at all oily. Other appetizers we have tried include a flaming cheese (great for parties) and tzatziki, a garlic spread. All have been wonderful. Entrees range from \$8.95 to \$13.95 and include pretty much any Greek food you can imagine. Their souvlaki and gyros are fantastic, perfectly spiced with a light cucumber sauce on the side. Another favorite has been mousaka, a Greek-style lasagna with eggplant and potatoes. It comes with or without meat (the meatless version is the ONLY vegetarian entree, surprisingly). Other seafood and meat dishes have been uniformly excellent. Dessert is a must here, but share, as the sweet baklava and the shredded wheat are wonderful but can get overwhelming.

The last spot on the list is Samos, at 600 Oldham St. (one block south of Eastern Ave.). They have a full carryout menu and only three or four small tables, so this is a good place to pick up a picnic lunch or a quick bite on the way home. The food, though, is anything but fast food. Their spinach pie (\$2.95) is unique and delicious, their Greek salad, while not as fresh as Illona's, is wonderfully flavored and makes a meal in itself, and their souvlaki and gyros can't be beaten by anyone for price (\$3.65 and up) and for flavor.

All three of these Greek restaurants are worth a try, so venture on down and be prepared to eat a lot. Note — Ikaros is closed Tuesdays, Illona's is closed Mondays, and Samos is closed Sundays.

E-mail me at wheelan@ncbi.nlm.nih.gov with comments!