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DIT: Students Union

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DIT SKI CLUB GO ON THE PISTE

DIT students make their way up to La Folie Douce, an après ski bar where people can go watch the sun go down from the top of the French Alps. Sixty-two people went to Val Thorens with DIT ski club for a week at the end of January. Photo: Gavin Hughes

DIT to join up with other colleges to make a ‘super IT’

BY AISLING O’SULLIVAN

DIT could be joining forces with four other colleges if recommendations made in a recent report go ahead.

The document, launched last month, sets out 26 recommendations to be put in place over the next 20 years.

Entitled “the National Strategy for Higher Education 2030,” the 127 page document, more commonly known as the Hunt report, sets out that DIT could join together with other institutes of technology (IOT).

“The institute of technology sector should commence a process of evolution and consolidation,”

Already, DIT has been in talks with three other IOT’s including IT Tallaght, Blanchardstown IT and Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art Design and Technology. If amalgamated, it would form what is known as a Technological University (TU).

Initial discussions about a Technological University for Dublin started last year and in November 2010, the Governing Body gave the go ahead for DIT to enter formal discussions with the three other IOTs with a view to creating what would be a new university for a new Ireland.

President of DIT, Professor Brian Norton described the end goal as “a new civic and technological university for the Dublin Metropolitan area” that will “provide a world class experience for students, develop graduates who can respond to...”

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**News In Brief**

Graduate unemployment: A look at the figures

450,000 The number of people unemployed in Ireland in September, representing a jobless rate of 13.7 per cent. This is one of the highest unemployment rates in the developed world.

1,000 The number of graduates set to leave Ireland every week, according to a USI estimate.

150,000 The number of graduates set to emigrate in the next five years.

**DIT student volunteer praised**

A DIT student was one of nineteen volunteers recognised at a photographic exhibition launch in the National Library, on 24 January 2012. Entitled “We Volunteer”, the exhibition will travel throughout Ireland and Europe in an effort to highlight the positive work third level students are doing for communities, at home and abroad.

Speaking at the launch, founder of international development agency SUAS, Michael King said “the key is to create meaningful opportunities for people to engage in volunteering. So I commend the volunteers who are here today for their generosity and their time.”

He continued by saying that aside from money, time and energy are one of the greatest gifts a volunteer can give and said that “students are rich in time and energy but poor in cash”.

Ross O’Neill, the DIT student featured in the exhibition told DIT News how it felt to be asked to be part of the exhibition. “I feel honoured and I feel like I don’t deserve to be here when I see lots of different types of volunteering which volunteers do, and I’d deem them a lot better than me.”

“Volunteering means a lot in my life. It started off with a soup run and then made me who I am today. It made me grow as a person and it’s great to be surrounded by people I want to be like and learn from”. Ross, who studies computing in Kevin Street was among students from all over Ireland including NUI Galway, Queens University, University College Cork and many more. Each student represented the types of volunteering available such as offering other students advice, teaching in Haiti or working with the homeless.

Also speaking at the launch was Marian Harkin MEP, who explained the economic return that volunteering can achieve, “decision makers, those who decide on policy have to be made aware of the economic value of volunteering before they will allocate resources...It is reliably estimated that for every euro that is invested in volunteering, there is a return of between five and eight euro”.

The exhibition will be visiting various locations throughout the year. To find out where it will go next, visit the Campus Engage website www.campusengage.ie
News in brief

DIT students in final of Newstalk competition

This month four DIT students will go to the national finals of the Newstalk Student Enterprise Competition. Taking place in the home of last year’s winners, Tipperary Institute, numerous teams from various colleges and institutes of technology will take part.

Representing DIT are Matthew Weldon, Stephanie Lawless, Ciara Quinn and Aisling Leonard. The foursome beat off 34 other teams to make it to this stage, under the guidance of their coach Dr. Paul Donnelly.

The stakes are high for all of the competitors as the winning team will get to go on a two-week study trip to the Caribbean where the students will shadow senior executives of telecommunications company, the Digicel Group, sponsored by Group Chairman, Denis O’Brien.

The winners will be announced on Monday, 7 February.

USI vice president resigns

BY STEPHEN BOURKE

USI Deputy President Cónán O’Broin has resigned after being offered a job by a political party.

O’Broin announced he would join the election staff of Labour Councillor Robert Dowds earlier this January. USI President Gary Redmond said the job offer would have led to “a very serious conflict of interest”.

“It would be unacceptable for Cónán to continue in his current position given that he has been made an offer by a political party.”

DIT News understands that O’Broin gave up his involvement in USI’s voter registration campaign as soon as the job offer was made.

“This was not an easy decision for me to make,” O’Broin told the USI national council on January 15th, adding that “in order to allow USI to conduct an unquestionably impartial General Election campaign which is entirely transparent” he had to resign.

23-year-old O’Broin studied Economics and Political Science in Trinity College before being elected President of its Student Union in 2009. He was elected Deputy President of the USI last year.

Boots provides emergency contraception without prescription

BY SOPHIE CAIRNS

Boots is now selling the widely-recognised “morning after pill” in its stores across Ireland.

The initiative began on Wednesday 12 January 2011, the first of its kind in the country. Previously, the only way to get the pill was through a prescription from a GP.

The pill costs €45, around €20 cheaper than at a GP clinic or Family Planning Centre.

Mary Rose Burke, chief pharmacist at Boots, said the store is legally entitled to give the medication directly to women under a system known as Patient Group Direction (PGD), which allows its medical director to authorise the practice.

The service involves a private one-on-one consultation with a trained pharmacist in a secluded room. The pharmacists involved have all trained in emergency contraception, long term contraception and sexual health issues.

Clare Callen, Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs reacted to the move saying, “I think it is a great move by Boots to distribute the morning after pill over the counter. I totally trust the knowledge and judgement of the staff in Boots.”

She went on to point out that “outside of term time, the cost of the doctor’s appointment puts contraception out of the reach of a number of students. By making this pill available over the counter Boots are cutting out the waiting time for appointments with doctors, which means the pill can be gotten quicker, which means it works more effectively.”

The Irish Family Planning Association also welcomed the move with its medical director Dr. Catriona Henchion saying the emergency contraceptive pill was “a very safe and responsible method of preventing pregnancy.”

The introduction of the over-the-counter “morning after pill” has proven a controversial move however. The decision has been criticised by the Irish College of General Practitioners, which said the over-the-counter service would raise concerns about the ‘quality and continuity’ of care.

RTE show Off The Rails has picked one of our very own DIT students, Alfric Elian Rice for their new segment “Steal Her Style”. This will involve a team of stylists transforming participants into their celebrity lookalike. Alfric, who is also a model in this year’s DIT Alfa Romeo Fashion Show will be made over to look like Victoria Beckham. One of the fashion show’s organisers, Katie Harrington said “We are so excited for her and can’t wait to see the transformation.” To see Alfric turn into Victoria Beckham tune into Off The Rails on 9 March 2011.

Turn to page nine for the Big Debate on emergency contraception - see what the students think!
Redrawing the grant boundaries

BY STEPHEN BOURKE

Grants to DIT students from Wicklow, Kildare, Meath and Louth could be slashed by as much as 60 per cent under new government rules.

The Finance Bill passed by the Dail in January increases the minimum distance a student's home must be from their college in order to receive a grant at the non-adjacent rate by twenty kilometres.

From next September, local authorities may pay grants at a lower rate to students living within 46 kilometres of their college rather than 26. More than 25,000 students will be affected nationwide.

"It doesn't sound like much," says DIT President Ciaran Nevin, "but when you see it on a map, the difference is huge."

"As these changes to the grant will not be implemented until September 2011," he says in a letter to TDs, "it will be up to the new Government to decide on whether they will be made."

New survey shows students are unhappy with canteen food

BY BARRY LENNON

A user satisfaction report on the Aungier street canteen suggests that it should be more student friendly.

Third year media arts student, Glenn Fitzpatrick compiled the report on basis of the results of an online survey he conducted.

Among the report findings it noted that students were not happy with the variety of food available, especially for vegetarians. 60 per cent of students disagreed or strongly disagreed that the canteen was value for money in the report.

Charging for condiments was criticised by those surveyed. "Students spend close to seven euro on a full meal and they want a condiment which they pay for as well, so its literally salt in the wounds" said Fitzpatrick. Charging for condiments was introduced to prevent students using superfluous amounts according to the report. It offered alternative solutions made by the survey's participants.

Students' union representatives are to meet with canteen management on the findings of the report. "We want them to continue to do well but we think that could run their business a little more student friendly," said Fitzpatrick. Manager of the canteen, Kevin McCarron could not comment on the findings of the report, but said that management would look at it.

Fitzpatrick urged that in his report, "the general consensus is the canteen service is pretty good. It's clean, the customer service is good, the staff are friendly, the atmosphere is good, people like eating here." He added that this would aid talks between DITSU and the canteen management. McCarron said that they had a good working relationship with DIT and DITSU.

This survey and subsequent report arose due to a number canteen related issues raised at a class rep meeting.

Sixty-five DIT students took part in the online survey. Fitzpatrick said that he was surprised by the participation he received. He is to pose his candidature in the upcoming class rep convener election in Aungier Street.
First page:

Fine Gael most popular party with students

BY AISLING O’SULLIVAN

Fine Gael are the most popular party among Irish students, a study by DIT News has revealed.

Ten colleges were surveyed in an effort to see how many students are members of political societies.

The various institutes and universities included Trinity College, University of Limerick, NUI Maynooth, University of Cork (UCC), DCU and IT Tallaght amongst others.

Fine Gael came out on top with the most amount of members, 950 in total.

Fianna Fail has a substantially lower following but still takes second place with 650 members.

Among all the colleges surveyed, Trinity College has the most amount of political societies while Tralee Institute of Technology had no active political societies.

UCD however, have the most amount of members with over 900 students signed up to various political societies.

DIT have three active political societies including Labour, Fine Gael, and Fianna Fail. Each society has 30, 29 and 15 members respectively.

The most popular, Labour Youth was set up last year. When asked whether they would campaign students to vote in the General Election, the chairperson said their first priority has been getting people registered to vote.

Students can join a society at any stage of the year and can do so by going to www.socs.dit.ie and finding the contact details for every society.

Continued from the front page

DIT students lead the way

Twenty nine DIT students took part in the Common Purpose leadership program on 24 and 25 of January.

DIT Campus Life and the Societies Office have partnered with Common Purpose to deliver this high quality, intensive, two-day residential leadership training programme. The students represented all areas including DIT Societies, DIT Sports, DIT student union, DIT Access service and DIT chaplaincy.

Over the past four years, DIT and Campus Life have been working to develop the skills of the students who run and contribute to the student organisations that are an essential part of the DIT Student Experience. These practical leadership skills contribute significantly to the students' employability skills, and contribute to DIT's stated aim to be the HEI of choice for career-focused education.

Common Purpose is an organisation committed to supporting the development of leaders who contribute to positive change in their community. They have 20 years experience of delivering high quality training programmes across the globe. Common Purpose have developed this training programme for student leaders in the UK, the FrontRunner programme, but the DIT PitStop programme is the first time that they have worked with higher education students in Ireland.

Mr Mark Ryan Managing Director of Accenture made a presentation to the student leaders on the first day which was followed by a question and answer session. Students were also joined by five leaders within DIT including Professor Norton, Noel O Connor, Jim Kelly, Mary Scally and Ellen Hazelkorn. Students got a chance to meet and ask questions in a café style question and answer session.

James Costello, DIT Societies Officer of leadership and training said “this event was the first of its kind with third level students and I received excellent feedback from all concerned and it is hoped to run it again next year.”
Let's talk about drugs

The fifth annual ‘Let’s Talk About Drugs’ Media Awards competition was launched in January and encourages students to get creative while raising drug awareness.

Students must create an ideal media piece surrounding the issues facing drugs and alcohol users and their families. Submissions can include an article, a cartoon strip, a short film or an audio feature.

According to organisers at the Greater Blanchardstown Response to Drugs (G.B.R.D.), the aim of the Drugs Media Awards is to encourage debate around the drugs issue in Ireland by asking third level students, to create original media features.

Speaking about the competition, Phillip Keegan, Co-Ordinator with G.B.R.D., outlined the purpose behind the Drugs Media Awards: “We want to encourage as many people as possible to start thinking and talking about the drugs issue here. For example, is addiction to prescription drugs becoming more of an issue? With cheap alcohol on sale in supermarkets and corner shops, is cost the only price? Or, is recovery from addiction possible through rehabilitation? Through researching these themes, every person who enters the Drugs Media Awards will be helping to educate themselves, and others, through their articles and features.”

The Dublin People Group and City Channel were confirmed as Media Partners for the 2011 competition and the deadline for entries is Wednesday, 16 March. Any winners will receive a new Netbook computer.

Full competition details are available from the G.B.R.D. website at www.gbrd.ie

#GE11 - what’s it all about?

First he resigned as party leader, but remained Taoiseach. Many asked - how can he lead the country when he can't even lead his own party? But then he resigned from that too. So some guy called Michael Martin took his place. For now. You'd be forgiven for being confused about this whole General Election 2011 (GE11). So, Bernard O’Rourke breaks it down and tells us exactly what all the fuss is about.

After all the political chaos of the last few weeks, Ireland will now go to the polls to vote for a new government within the month, on Friday 25 of February.

Following a chaotic handling of the issues facing the Fianna Fail led Government, junior coalition partners the Greens finally announced that they were pulling out of Government on Sunday 23 of January.

While the Greens had stated before Christmas that they would support the Government until the best date for election could be found, the resignation of Brian Cowen as leader of Fianna Fail finally pushed them over the edge. The Green’s patience had finally "reached its end," claimed party leader John Gormley.

On Saturday 22 January 2011, Brian Cowen announced that he would be stepping down as leader of the Fianna Fail party, but not as Taoiseach. This is the first time in the history of the state that the Taoiseach has not been the leader of his own party. The following Wednesday Micheal Martin was elected as the new leader of Fianna Fail.

Cowen’s resignation followed a gradual decline in Fianna Fail in the public eye, and in particular in the fall from grace of Cowen as leader of that party. Cowen always had a reputation as a poor communicator, who barged his way through issues without really communicating his intentions. One of the most typical examples of Cowen’s leadership style was the disastrous interview on Morning Ireland in September 2010 where he sounded "half-way between drunk and hungover" following a Fianna Fail meeting in Galway that weekend.

While this impression of Cowen stayed in the public image of the Taoiseach from that point on, it was the revelations of Cowen’s golf game with Sean Fitzpatrick that transformed Cowen from a drinker who couldn’t really communicate as well as a leader should, to a man who had genuinely put his own interests and the interest of his friends ahead of the good of the country. While Cowen claimed that this was merely a social outing, it is believed that the controversial bank guarantee was discussed, and even that certain promises were made by Cowen which he kept secret form the general public and his own party.

The main challenge to the government now comes from Fine Gael and Labour, the two biggest parties currently in opposition. While Fianna Fail have been in near constant decline for the last year, Fine Gael and Labour have both been in the ascendancy. With a general election only weeks away both parties appear to have enough support to enter a coalition together after the election.

However other parties – most notably Sinn Fein – also believe they have enough popular support to significantly increase their numbers in the Dail. Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams is so firmly committed to this that he has vacated his seat as an MP in Westminster, and his seat in the Northern Assembly, to contest the upcoming election here. He will run in the North Louth constituency, where popular support for Sinn Fein is strong.

One of the final acts of the current Dail was the passing of the Finance Bill which will bring into law some of the changes proposed in December’s Budget. Among the changes contained in this Bill is the replacement of the €1,500 student services charge with a student contribution fee of €2,000. Following concessions made by the Government in order to pass the bill, families with more than one child in full-time study will now qualify for tax relief after paying this €2,000 fee.
Sign Soc go viral on YouTube

DIT sign society has launched a new initiative to film a series of 4-6 videos presented by other DIT societies.

Each society will cover the topic related to their society activities for example, dance, fashion, SVP, LGBT, CAFA, guitar, film and many more. After all the individual society videos are finished a final video will be compiled of clips of each session, demonstrating participation of many different DIT students.

The idea is to promote the fun of learning sign language for more students throughout DIT and to promote society events by collaborating with sign soc.

To facilitate a greater uptake and attendance, sign soc hope to hold the classes on each of the society’s home campus. After the session those that attended present the vocabulary and phrases they learned to camera, creating a short video lesson in line with those already done. Participant societies will be encouraged to wear their logo with t-shirts or hoodies. Around 11 video clips will be shot of the class in action for use in the final compilation video. Videos are then edited and will be released each week, publicised by both sign society’s YouTube channel which averages 200 hits a day and the participant society.

Sign soc also plan to hold an Inclusion & Integration week – Disability Awareness within DIT. Running from 28 February - 3 March they will hold various events such as a sports day, workshops for students and staff, presentations and guest speakers.

If your society is interested in this unique video series or in the sign language courses, you can contact DIT Sign Soc on their Facebook fan page at DIT Sign language Society or email ditssignsociety@hotmail.com. They also have a YouTube channel you can visit at http://www.youtube.com/ditsignlanguagesoc.

Library budget saved

EVA HALL

The DIT library budget has been saved from severe cuts following an extensive campaign by staff and students.

The decision to reinstate the library with the same budget as last year is welcomed by DIT Student Union Vice President Clare Cullen, who, along with fellow members of the SU and DIT students, relentlessly campaigned for a stop to the cuts. Speaking to DIT News Ms. Cullen said: “It was a long road and I think we finally saw movement because DIT realised we were serious, and working together as a team. We wouldn’t give up”.

The current budget for library resources sits at over €2 million, and as reported in DIT News last November, the proposed cut of 10 per cent which all non-academic departments at DIT face this year, would have resulted in the library losing more than €217,000. The initial idea was to cut back on vital online resources such as journals and databases, leaving students with no other option but to use university facilities elsewhere.

DIT has also seen extra library staff employed in order to facilitate students during late opening hours and weekends, resulting in library hours returning to 09.30am to 09.30pm. While it is not yet clear what facilities will suffer further cuts due to the library budget being reinstated, Ms. Cullen does note that the cuts “will have to be shared over the rest of DIT” due to the library not partaking in the otherwise compulsory cuts. She believes students however should be satisfied with the outcome, as it proves “DIT is listening to the students”.

Students are recommended to have their say on additional issues relating to library hours via the Student User Groups (SUGs) which they can sign up to through their class reps.

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Nominations open for SU positions

Nominations for all Student Union positions are currently open and will close 11 February at noon sharp. The various opportunities include President, Vice President of Academic & Student Affairs, Vice President of Services & Trading and the Class Rep Convenor (part time) for six campuses in 2011/12. 

Hustings, question and answer sessions and debates will be held on each site from 15 - 24 February so students can see and hear each candidate in action. Voting takes place in the six main campuses from 28 February to 2 March. All you need to cast your vote is your DIT student card. As an automatic member of the student union, you are on the register and your name just needs to be ticked off the list.

The SU elections voter turnout has grown over the last few years as has the number of candidates coming forward. The Student Union expects that this year will bigger again but we will have to wait until nominations close on the 11 February - so if you are interested in running yourself, there is still time.

For everyone else, what you need to do is make sure you have strong representation for the coming year. So, check out the candidates, online and in person, and find out what they stand for, ask them questions or talk to their team when they are out canvassing and consider who you think will do the best job for you. If no one fits the bill, then get to the polling booth and demand they reopen the nominations - i.e. vote R.O.N on the ballot paper, and the process begins again.

It is your right as a DIT Student, whether full time, part time, postgrad, apprentice or other to vote in the SU elections. With an imminent General Election, cutbacks, bailouts, fallout and budgetary minisfields ahead, you need to know you are being well represented within DIT and nationally at the Dept of Education, HEA, the new Government lobbies and all other relevant bodies.

Follow all the candidates campaigns and the elections process - from build up to live streamed count on www.ditsu.ie/suelections2011

Free condoms and information on all aspects of Sexual Health and Guidance are available all year round in student union offices, but during S.H.A.G week they will be hitting each site on different days so go along and join in the fun. But Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, Clare Cullen reminds us of the serious message behind the week. "S.H.A.G Week this year is aimed not only at your physical sexual health but also promoting a healthy mental attitude towards sex, sexuality and relationships. The motto of the week is No Matter Who You Choose, Choose Safe Sex!"

If you want to get married, take a ride on a phallic, get down and dirty in the Sex Workshop, win some sexy stuff in the Dirty Sexy Table Quiz or just grab a free condom or two, S.H.A.G Week will be in your site between Wednesday the 9th and Thursday the 17th! See you there?

R.A.G stands for Raising and Giving - and this year DITSU are raising for and giving to CITYWISE. This is an organisation elected by the Governing Council to receive the proceeds for RAG week 2011. Every year, DIT students participate by organising events like shaving and waxing your heads and other bits, to gadding about in togas, sponsored silences, dance offs, fasts, fancy dress street collections and more. The aim this year is to do even more. If you want to get involved you can pop into the office or check www.ditsu.ie/RAG for more ideas and inspiration. "For RAG week 2011, we have lots planned, including a messy night out, the RAG ball, a comedy gig and another gig to appeal to certain tastes, the 40ft Dive in Dun Laoghaire, the traditional bungee jump, and we're exploring new options as well, like firewalking, skydiving and much more besides!

We're also hoping to announce a big surprise for the middle of February to do with RAG. I can't say a whole hell of a lot right now, but trust me, we're hoping to manage something that no other college will be able to pull off this year."

"However, we're always open to new ideas from you folks, so if you want to get involved, just pick up a sponsorship form and away you go! Our RAG charity, Citywise, is grateful for any help you can offer - especially if it's volunteering," said Eric Fitzgerald VP Services & Trading.
The Big Debate

Should Boots be selling the morning after pill over the counter?

Last month, Boots announced that from 12 January 2011, the ‘morning after pill’ would be available from all stores nationwide. Two DIT students debate whether this move by Boots will have a positive or negative impact on society.

For me, the answer to this is one is obvious. If your general thumb points you towards simple daily freedoms and the availability of options, then you agree with me. Offering the morning-after pill over the counter is a good thing. Just because the option is there, it does not mean that you’re going to be forced to it. Nobody is going to be standing over you in the morning ready to shove it down your throat if a mistake happens; it’s just handier to get now when you’re probably not feeling the best as it is. I believe in having options.

If you are in need of this pill, you are going to get it through a doctor regardless, so why not cut out the middle man and get straight to your local Boots pharmacy? To coin an overused phrase in today’s times, the old system of obtaining the morning after pill was like, ‘an Irish solution to an Irish problem’, if you catch my drift… If you find yourself in a situation where you need it, you will get this pill. It’s silly to put up nonsensical obstacles. You don’t need to go to a butchers to get your pork chops or a bakery to get fresh scones, so why not get with the times and go immediately to the pharmacy for the morning-after pill should you need it.

I feel that the true controversy here is the general feeling of this ‘pandemic’ of people practicing unsafe sex and the promiscuity that is associated with the pill, but people make mistakes every day. To quote Rachel from Friends, everybody can wear what they’re supposed to wear and one of those little guys can still get through. It wasn’t that long ago that Ireland didn’t allow any form of contraception and we can all agree that we are never going back to those days, so where’s the sense in having obstacles now?

Emmet says “I disagree with the morning after pill, it’s second to abortion”

I’m very cautious in writing this argument as I sincerely don’t want to sound like an old prude. Alas, I fundamentally believe the morning after pill should not be available over the counter.

My main reason for saying this, is I believe that receiving the pill over the counter greatly reduces the interaction between an experienced medic and the patient. Well Woman Centre chief executive Alison Begas said she would be concerned that a woman who receives the morning-after pill in a pharmacy may not be counselled properly. She continued to say that part of the process of going to a GP to receive the morning after pill is a counseling service where the GP can advise the woman on an appropriate form of contraception for the future.

There’s many myths about the pill. Taking it three times or more can make you infertile. Well these are just myths. But, according to morningafterinfo.org (yes, that is a real website), no actual studies have been done on the effects of emergency contraception after multiple uses or have any studies been done on the effects of the morning after pill on girls under 15. Until more information on the pill is widely available, and until we completely understand the effects of emergency contraception, I strongly believe it is irresponsible to make the pill so sipantly. Yes: some information is on the web, but it’s also available easily and more accurately from your GP.

I understand the convenience of it. Yes okay, if your boyfriend breaks the night before, it would be great to be able to pop into Boots on your way home and grab a pill. But, on the other side of this, there will be girls who will have unprotected sex and think it’s okay because worse comes to worse, the pill is in Boots. And you can probably get three for the price of two.

Myths V Facts

Myth: Emergency birth control pills are not safe for young women.
Fact: No studies of emergency birth control pills have included women younger than 15.

Myth: Emergency birth control pills are unsafe.
Fact: Emergency birth control pills are very safe. Emergency birth control pills work exactly the same as regular birth control pills. In fact, emergency birth control pills are the same medication as many birth control pills, used in a specific way.

Myth: Using emergency birth control pills more than once is dangerous.
Fact: Emergency birth control pills contain the same hormones as regular birth control (oral contraceptives) and are similar to those your body produces. No one has specifically studied the effects of using emergency birth control pills over and over.

Myth: Emergency birth control pills protect me against diseases.
Fact: Neither emergency birth control pills or regular birth control pills protect against sexually transmitted infections.

Myth: Emergency birth control pills can affect my ability to have a baby in the future.
Fact: Neither birth control pills nor emergency birth control pills affect your ability to get pregnant later. Emergency birth control pills are higher doses of regular birth control pills. After taking emergency birth control pills, you could have heavier or lighter bleeding. You might get your period sooner or later than usual. Your period might be longer or shorter. But after a month or so, your menstrual cycle should return to normal.
Fighting the forces of despair

Dublin’s homeless problem is only getting worse, but there are people on the front lines fighting the forces of despair. Stephen Bourke looks at the activities of the Saint Vincent de Paul society in DIT and goes along to one of their regular soup runs to see the work they do for Dublin’s homeless people.

My route to college takes me past some of Dublin’s homeless hotspots. There will be at least one on the Ha’Penny Bridge, battered by the chill winds that whip along the Liffey. Another will be covering under Merchant’s Arch, and another at the top of the steps under the Central Bank.

Then there’s the forlorn-looking man who sits on his rucksack under the awning of a closed shop next door to the George, and sometimes one or two men still in their sleeping bags in a doorway a little further up. Finally, there’s the Roma woman who mans the choke point between the bus stop and the Carmelite Centre. That’s just the western side of the road.

As the recession bites, Dublin is experiencing a crisis of homelessness and poverty. In December the Homelessness Agency carried out its annual rough sleeper count. On a night when five centimetres of snow fell on Dublin and the mercury dropped to -7 degrees Celsius, they counted 90 people sleeping out of doors in Dublin.

Hostels provide a bed for the night, and soup kitchens like the Capuchin Day Centre on Bow Street supply hot meals. Other than that, many of Dublin’s Homeless have nothing to do during the day but loiter around the City Centre.

However, a group of DIT students tirelessly for Saint Vincent de Paul society and as part of this, they carry out regular soup runs.

The group meets at four to make sandwiches in an empty classroom. The soup run is fairly ad hoc. Bread, cheese and meat are bought on the day and sandwiches are made on classroom desks covered with a tablecloth. Water for hot drinks is begged from the campus shop, and they’re off.

Half the group head towards Stephen’s Green and they do a sweep between Grafton Street and Connolly Train Station, crossing the Liffey at O’Connell bridge. The rest will patrol from Kevin Street and the Liberties through Temple Bar and across to the North Lotts. The bridges across the river are usually places where beggars will congregate due to the heavy flow of pedestrian traffic.

It’s important not to intimidate the people we’re dealing with,” says Ross O’Neill, one of the coordinators, “so it’s best to just crouch down to their height, and just talk to them in a normal tone of voice.”

Although there might be as many as eight or ten in a group on a soup run, only two of us approach the man.

“Hi, we’re with St. Vincent de Paul.”

One man wants tea with four sugars in it. When someone requests this it usually means they’re coming down from a heroin hit and want to soften the blow by keeping their blood sugars high. This, plus the cold, makes tea with lots of sugar a common order. They talk to him, ask if he has eaten a main meal today and if he has a place to stay the night. Regularly the men are uncertain of having a bed to sleep in.

We take a winding course towards the river via side streets. Two lads and an older man are begging on the Ha’penny Bridge while a woman squats in Merchant’s Arch. Some stop to give the woman some tea, while I talk to the two young men.

The wind chill was vicious and I was getting cold. I was wearing a warm coat, hat, scarf and gloves; he wore a thin hoodie. I asked why didn’t they didn’t move to somewhere more sheltered.

“There’s nowhere else you can go without the guards moving you on,” said Paul. “They do be always hassling us.”

“They’re bastards so they are,” adds his friend.

Paul wants three sugars in his tea, and takes a sandwich. He asks if we have any chocolate or biscuits. We don’t, but promise to bring some out next week. Something else the soup run team is asked for often is cigarettes, but SVP don’t carry them.

“We’ve had some difficult people,” says Ross. “Sometimes you get drunks and others are just incomprehensible. Most of the people out there on the streets are normal enough. They thank us for the tea and food and say they hope to see us again.”

The soup run team keeps going until the flasks of boiling water run out. While a homeless person might say no to a sandwich if they’ve eaten already, a hot drink is rarely refused.

“Giving them a hot drink is only a short-term solution – not even that – it’s only a short-term comfort. After we leave them a cup of tea and a sandwich, and walk away, they’re still homeless.”

When we help one person they will often point us towards others. There is a camaraderie between the homeless, they know each other from hostels and soup kitchens. They share a way of life.

As we return to Aungier Street, with all of the hot water and most of the sandwiches gone, Ross is slow to declare the run to be a success.

“Sometimes I say to people ‘That sucks’ when we've been going around with a bag of sandwiches and haven’t found one person to help,” says Ross, “but that’s the wrong attitude. It’s good that there was nobody out there. It means they’re not all out on the streets.”

Although the cold snap stopped the Aungier Street Soup Run team from covering their beat last Thursday, the volunteers hope to be back this week. “It’s annoying that we couldn’t help people out when the weather was so bad,” says Ross, “But SVP head office told us it was a safety risk to have people out on the ice.” In the new year DIT SVP plans to double its soup runs to two a week with another group working from Bolton Street.
Welcome to Camden Street

Bell rings overhead as I enter Fafei's. The French creperie is small with a homely décor. Yellow painted pine chairs are furnished with patchwork cushions and matching tables are adorned with an array of mismatching coasters and table mats. The alluring smell of coffee and sizzling crepes emanates from behind the tall counter where owners Anne-Sophie Laidain and her partner Graham Murphy work.

Slightly further down the road, three Korean women with broken English are painting each other’s nails and gossiping in a beauty salon embellished with pink neon lighting. Across the road from them, a North African man named Simon is contemplating what he should do for the night, once he closes the doors of his cousin’s bakery. This is Camden Street.

Located on the outskirts of Dublin City, Camden Street is a colourful place, where the assortment of businesses is as diverse as the origins of those who own them. Though it is located auspiciously close to the bustling Grafton Street, Camden Street is bereft of well known chain enterprises. In their place is a bountiful amount of privately owned cafés, grocery shops, bakeries and salons. Like Fafei’s, a huge amount these businesses are owned by non-Irish immigrants. The only thing these business owners seem to have in common is the decision to establish their livelihood on the vivacious street.

Fafei’s has been in business on Camden Street for five years. Anne-Sophie tells me this as she keeps one eye on her red haired child who runs around empty seats and tables. Her soft French accent is as welcoming as the cozy décor. She lived in Ireland for a year before setting up Fafei’s. Though she lives with Graham in Beaumont, she loves Camden Street.

“I love this area” she says in perfect English. “I find it very popular. It has the Irish charm that I like. It’s very cultural” she says. Anne-Sophie is animated when she talks about Dublin and her love for the city. When I ask her how business is doing however, her smile fades and she admits that it is very challenging and they are finding it difficult to compete with the growing amount of cosmopolitan cafés and bespoke bistrois. In the aptly named Beauty Salon where the Korean women paint their nails, I talk to Helen. The salon has been opened only six months. When I ask her why they chose the location of Camden Street she diverts her attention to and older woman sitting in the corner. They chatter in Korean for a few seconds before Helen tells me that Camden Street seemed like a good location because it is accessible to everyone. The salon is decorated with Korean posters and trinkets. When I ask Helen if they do good business she pauses for a long time before admitting that it’s been “just okay”, I notice their price list undercut on its competitors by at least 20 per cent. As I leave the empty salon the three women resume their manicures.

In 2007 the CSO reported that over 420,000 non-Irish immigrants were residing in Ireland.

There are many clues on Camden Street which suggest it is an area heavily populated with immigrants. A Western Union is located on the adjoining Aungier Street. Immigrant Support organisations such as Comhlamh, The Irish Black and Migrant Workers Association and The Republic of Congo Solidarity Group are all also conveniently located in close proximity.

At the recent “Diverse Views on Diversity” conference in Dublin, Chief Executive of the Immigration Council Denise Charlton spoke about how the recent economic downturn has gravely affected immigrant owned businesses. “We need to understand that immigration is a permanent and positive reality,” said Ms Charlton. “Many people who moved here before the economic downturn now call Ireland their home – they are here to stay, so the make-up of our society has changed forever” she concluded.
Starving for Perfection

In a study carried out by the Office of children and youth affairs, self-image was identified as the number one factor that ‘hurts’ the mental health of Irish teens. Stephanie Fennell talks to a group of teenage girls about their idea of self image and what their daily life is like.

Every female strives for that ‘perfect body’, whatever it may look like in your own head. Whether it is Eva Longoria, Katy Perry, Elle MacPherson, or Tyra Banks, there will always be one famous person we truly admire and look up to.

To many, it seems that celebrities have ‘it’. ‘It’ being what we see as perfect. So what do these celebs do to maintain this body we all envy? What we understand is that they do not eat very much food, and they exercise a lot, probably on a daily basis. Surely ordinary people like us can have a go too. A low fat diet and a gym membership card are fine, until it has taken one step too far. That extra step towards our own vision of the ‘perfect’ body may be tagged Anorexia Nervosa. Those who are non-sufferers may describe anorexia as an illness that creates a world of obsession, body dysmorphic disorder, anxiety, insecurity, and sometimes bulimia. Anorexia sufferers will simply describe their illness as beauty. What I set out to discover was where exactly this deception of beauty stems from. Is it the media? Is it celebrities? Is it just something every girl will encounter once in her lifetime?

"If I go the day without eating, intentionally or not, although I'm hungry and very cranky, I feel proud and would try to get to bed to avoid the kitchen before I feel too tempted to eat." To investigate, I took the chance to ask a group of 15 and 16 year old girls the questions I was curious to know the answer to. A class of transition year students attending Loreto College in Swords gave me some interesting feedback. Although it took a few minutes for the girls to engage with me, their attention and knowledge of the subject shone through immediately. I could instantly predict that I was going to be satisfied with my findings. Out of the 24 girls, 21 of them have dieted and 14 of them were currently on a diet. "I wouldn't dare touch a piece of chocolate after exercising or doing sports!" and "only the celebrities can diet properly because they have nutritionists to tell them what is good and what is bad to eat" are a couple of the responses I received regarding the relationship they understand between food and exercise.

Celebrities such as Katy Perry, Jessica Alba, Beyoncé, Cheryl Cole and Rihanna were the top women the girls liked the thought of resembling the most. Although one girl did say that she thinks Cheryl Cole is "a little on the skinny side, especially the year she won the X Factor with Alexandra Burke." Ok, so the girls seemed to admire curves, but what did they think of skinny celebs? "Keira Knightly is way too thin" said one girl sitting alone at a table, "I wish it would go back to the days when Marilyn Monroe was looked up to. There's too much pressure on all girls to look a certain way, so much that there can even be competition between girls." Surprisingly, not one of them mentioned airbrushing, which suggests the fact that they believe the celebrities all look like this without any help of computers and enhancers.

Even though they all understood how wrong it is to deprive the body of food, the whole class nodded in agreement when one of their classmates said "if I go the day without eating, intentionally or not, although I'm hungry and very cranky, I feel proud and would try to get to bed to avoid the kitchen before I feel too tempted to eat."

"It's this attraction to this feeling of a hollow stomach that slowly but surely spirals out of control and into anorexia. Many girls avoid food to feel good, while others do it to look good. Girls must understand the danger of anorexia and size zero models. What's this 'One size fits all'? It's NOT REAL! It's not healthy. And it's proven not attractive. Pass the chocolate please..."

1.2% of Irish girls may be at risk of developing anorexia

200,000 people in Ireland have eating disorders

80 people die in Ireland every year due to eating disorders

Society Spotlight

This Month THIS is what were talking about in The Macra Society: Mr. Personality

Patrick Sullivan talks to DIT News about the annual Mr. Personality competition and what Macra Soc is all about.

So, what's the idea behind your society?

To provide an avenue for young farmer and rural dwellers to integrate into DIT life and to promote personal development through Macra na Feirme. Another aim is to promote Macra at Macra events nationwide.

What is the Macra?

Macra was like Facebook for culchie's before broadband passed the M50. It's about meeting new people and having the craic! Sky-diving or slow driving, dancing, chancing and even romancing! You name it we'll be at it! Express yourself in activities ranging from five aside soccer to debating, drama to slage making. We've got it all!

Can anyone join? Or just country dwellers?

Anyone and everyone! We welcome people from all walks of life but particularly culchies. Once you pay the two bob membership fee, you're a member. Getting the two euro off some Cavan folk seems to be the bother!

When was it formed?

In September, our founders were dismayed that they would miss "the ploughing" (the national ploughing championship for the uninitiated) while stranded in the "big smokle". Rising from the ashes of the DIT Garth Brooks and Shania Twaine Fan Club, the Macra Soc & Culchie Club came into being to fulfil the need of culchie's all over DIT.

What is the Mr. Personality competition and when/where is it?

The Mr. Personality Contest is a macra festival where 30 or so of Macra's most dashing young men compete in character testing challenges and knee knockingly tense interviews over two days.

He who represents his region best is nominated as Mr. Personality 2011!! This year's Mr. Personality Festival will be held on the 15th and 16th of April in the Springhill Court Hotel, Killkenny City.

DIT Macra Soc. and Culchie Club will definitely have a contingent attending this event, we would welcome any new comers interested in coming along.

We also have a post summer exams trip to the "Blue Jean Country Queen" festival lined up in June,Think Dr.Ted's Lovely girls contest.

Interested? Like what you hear? Email macraandculchie@socs.dit.ie
Munich: A metropolis with a heart

The author Thomas Wolfe once remarked "How can one speak of Munich but to say it is a kind of German heaven? Some people sleep and dream they are in paradise, but all over Germany people dream they have gone to Munich." Wolfe is certainly on to something here, as Munich is a metropolis with a heart, while many Germans call it the 'secret capital of Germany.'

Though cold in January, it is a nice time to visit Munich as the snow sets the scene, and makes the Alps in the background look even more majestic. During World War II the majority of the city was reduced to rubble, but was rebuilt to its former glory and it now a wonderful city well worth visiting today.

The Hofbräuhaus is a necessity. Founded in 1589, it is the world’s busiest pub, and here you will find servers in traditional lederhosen and dirndels! This pub is rich in history as Hitler established himself as a powerful leader by giving a speech here in 1921. Nearby the main square the Marienplatz is a must see, where amazing churches give way to beautiful statues. Peterkirche church has a tower that gives way to spectacular views of the city for only €1.50.

Restaurants that are reasonably priced and serve traditional German food are plentiful in Munich. Pork knuckles, bratwurst, and sauerkraut are recommended! Students will find Munich quite reasonably priced in general, with Sportsbar and Atomic Café being the best night spots for party animals.

Munich is loaded with art galleries and museums, with the BMW museum being perhaps the most exciting. Other exciting places to visit include Schloss Nymphenburg which is one of Germany’s largest baroque palaces, while the outdoorsy types might prefer to go to Englischer Garten, one of Europe’s largest urban parks.

Munich has something for everyone, and with Ryanair offering flights to the nearby Memmingen why not book a trip!

WIN: €50 Voucher

Forgot everything you think you know about vintage shopping. Wave goodbye to those well intended but inevitably lost hours spent trawling through rail upon rail of 80’s nightmare gowns and buttonless blouses. Our shop of the month, Wildchild Originals does all the hard work for you. Featuring superbly selected pieces, expertly arranged, from a variety of era’s and some of the finest leather boots seen on sale anywhere in Dublin. Since moving to its new location at 26 Drury Street, eight months ago, the store has expanded its horizons and now encompasses a large array of unusual furniture and lighting, assiduously sourced from all over the world. Check out Wildchild Originals Facebook page where you can browse some of their sizeable stock and also www.wildchildoriginals.com for more information.

To win the Wildchild voucher simply tell us the address of Wildchild's new store. Email answers to ditnews.fashion@gmail.com by 18 Feb.

GET 10% OFF IN WILDCCHILD WITH THIS VOUCHER. JUST CUT THIS OUT AND BRING ALONG

Valid until end of Feb
Ana Kinsella, is the 22 year old ingénue and English Student behind personal style blog ripped-knees.blogspot.com.

How long have you been blogging for now? I've been blogging for a little over 2 years now.

What inspired you to blog initially? I started because I wanted to keep up my fashion writing in between deadlines and to get a place online where I could put all my writing together.

In the beginning did you have any reservations putting your photos up on the internet and baring yourself to the public? I didn't start outfit posts for a while, and at the start it was always with the intention of illustrating something; say, a post on jeans, so I include a photo of myself wearing jeans. I was a little hesitant at first but I stopped caring pretty quickly. Outfit posts generally get a good reaction and if they didn't, I probably wouldn't bother with them.

Are there many perks to the job? Freebies in exchange for a mention on Ripped Knees? Err, not so much. I avoid advertising because I don't really have time to run a whole 'blog-business' at the moment! And I don't really go to high street press days and so on because I think it makes for boring blog posts. I didn't start a blog for the dollar bills, and if you do I think you've made a big mistake. That's not to say I haven't worked with some companies on the blog before, but the rewards aren't exactly yachts and caviar, you know?

Cillian O'Connor, Trinity Student and author of male-mode.com an articulate blend of fashion reportage, personal opinion and social commentary that's been going for an impressive 3 and a half years.

What inspired you to blog initially and what motivates you to keep it up to date? At first I was just searching for a semi-creative outlet for all these thoughts I had about fashion and style. The initial decision to create the blog was undoubtedly motivated by sheer boredom induced by living in rural Wexford and not having a clue who to talk to about Raf Simons for Jil Sander. I wanted to connect with others interested in the same things as myself and I'd also heard having a blog was a good way of breaking into the journalistic arena.

Do you think men are being catered to fashion wise in Dublin? It's far from equal in terms of the choices available for women and men but it's slowly changing. Stores like Indigo & Cloth don't treat men's as a side-project but cater to both sexes in equal measure. Vintage favourites like Wild Child take the same view, understanding that men are big earners and are now slowly but surely coming around to the idea that clothes might not just be for protecting your gonads from gale force winds.

What's your favourite fashion blog at the moment? Probably Pelayo Dias' Kate Loves Me - www.katelowesme.net for his style and talent for inducing envy through constant documenting of all the fun he has, but I also love Hint Magazine's blog http://www.hintmag.com for its irreverent voice on the often too-serious world of fashion.

The face of fashion has irrevocably changed in the past few years. Gone are the anarchistic days of stuffy fashion writers and elitist commentators. No, the industry has taken progressive steps towards a more democratically interactive forum and all in the name of blogging. Fashion blogging has encouraged a whole generation of discerning fashionistas to take to their laptops, digital cameras in hand and share with the world a fresh take on how they get dressed every morning. The success of blogging on the fashion world has been unprecedented, and is due, in part to the shameless voyeuristic aspect of it coupled with the ease of accessibility for most aspiring bloggers. It seems like everyone is trying their appropriately accessorised hand at blogging, and we, the style starved readers, are lapping it up. You see, bloggers represent what real people wear. Gone is the 'it' bag and those tricky catwalk trends that require wearers to be 6 foot tall and Scandinavian. These blogs are the hi tech equivalent of peeping the way your friend ties her hair scarf or seeing someone in a cute outfit on Grafton Street – it's outfit inspiration at its very best. Unsurprisingly blogging has single handily managed to topple an antiquated fashion hierarchy which once made life hellish for rogues or newbies. Today, expect to see Rumi, of FashionToast.com rubbing shoulders with the likes of Alexander Wang, or Tavi, the 13 year old Wunderkind behind thestilettoookie.com sitting front row at Rodarte - blogging has come full circle. With that in mind, were talking to three influential Irish student bloggers who have decided to bear all online in the name of fashion.

Jane Kenny, a student at NCAD, is a relative newcomer to the blogging arena having only started www.lovejaney.wordpress.com in January 2010.

Love Janey is almost like an online diary, full of your fashion wants and needs. Have you ever been tempted to create a personal style blog? Or is that something you'd rather not do? I have thought about it, but I think it's not really for me. I am generally uncomfortable being photographed, I much prefer being the photographer or the stylist - I make a useless model! If I were to go down the personal style route it would probably be more of a street style thing, where I would take pictures of other people! How would you rate Irish girls fashion wise, compared to our counterparts in the UK? Countries dress differently, depending on national culture and various other reasons. Girls in Manchester dress differently to girls in London. Same goes for Ireland. Also, London is a much bigger city than Dublin, and it has a culture of fashion creativity & industry, so it's only natural that people will be more experimental. I think: Irish girls have a different, more laid back attitude, both to style and life in general, so I think it's only natural that our clothes reflect this.

Fashion blogging is all about being imaginative with clothes and trying new things, do you feel that high street shops these days stunt our creativity when it come to being original? Truthfully, there's not that much creativity in buying a mass-produced high street garment, but we all do it. Some people don't have the time or inclination to put a lot of thought into being creative so high street looks are good for them. I think it's like everything in life, if you take the bits you want from it and make it your own then you can be original, but head to toe anything is never a good look in my opinion. I guess you could argue that because they rip off designer trends, it's more affordable to try different styles, but most girls can recognise a topshop dress at 20 paces, unless it is really well styled.
Bad Romance

Styled by: Stephane Costello & Christopher Ramsay
Photography by: Alex Hutchinson
Model: Nas Ghaedi
Shot on Location at Fairlawn, Glendeleary
BouE £40 River Island
SkiP £35 River Island
Tights £12 Topshop
Boots £158 Buffalo
Jacket £120 A Store is Born
Choice Music Awards 2011 - winners odds

The winner of the Choice Music Prize 2011 will be announced at a live event in Vicar Street on Thursday 3 March. Over half the shortlisted musicians will be performing before the €10,000 grand prize is presented. The ten strong shortlist is arguably the strongest in the six years that the competition has ran. Anyway, before all that excitement starts, there's the even more important part. Gambling. So Kevin Donnellan runs through the odds on each artist and see if we can put that maintenance grant to good use.

**VILLAGERS - BECOMING A JACKAL**
The prohibitive favourite. It is increasingly difficult to find someone who doesn't like this album. Conor O'Brien's project made it onto the Mercury Prize shortlist as well. So the Brits have given it the thumbs up which legitimises the whole thing, doesn't it? The only chance it has of not winning is if the judges decide it's not alternative enough.

**HALVES - IT GOES, IT GOES**
Critically acclaimed without crossing over from blogs to the mainstream. Arguably the point of a prize is to highlight acts like this and slow burning albums of this nature. But judges could probably content themselves with the fact that being shortlisted has boosted their profile already.

**CAST OF CHEERS - CHARIOT**
One of the most blogged about bands in the country this year, they swept the boards at the recent Digital Socket Awards. If there was a best newcomer section then these lads would win hands down. But there isn't of course, so difficult to see them coming through. Expect to see them on future Choice Shortlists though.

**JAMES VINCENT McMORROW - EARLY IN THE MORNING**
The token male singer-songwriter this year. Actually 'token' is harsh because this guy is in the shortlist on merit. One of about five dark horses. The judging panel includes Ray D'Arcy and I just have this image of Ray bullying the judges into submission because McMorrow is his flavour of the month. However that's not based on any logic or reason.

**ADEBISI SHANK - THIS IS THE SECOND ALBUM OF A BAND CALLED ADEBISI SHANK**
The other big winners at the Digital Sockets along with Cast of Cheers. One of the best instrumental bands around, not just in Ireland. But their music might be a little too niche for this. If the judges used albums titles as the deciding factor then they'd be odds-on favourites. But the judges probably won't do that...

**FIGHT LIKE APES - THE BODY OF CHRIST AND THE LEGS OF TINA TURNER**
The best Irish band around or the most irritating show in town depending on who you talk to. Not as great as some believe but not as annoying as others say. Still, they'll split the judging panel in two so it's hard seeing them getting the nod.

**IMELDA MAY - MAYHEM**
Pretty high odds here. Might be that she's a little too established and mainstream to tickle the judges fancy. Was favourite to win in 2008 when Super Extra Bonus Party won, probably the most controversial decision in the awards short history. But different judges now so there's unlikely to be an award-as-an-apology handed out.

Unusually high odds. But Imelda May hasn't conquered the world through her records; it's all about her live shows. The album sold well and got a good response but it's not the reason she's had another great year. Would be an aMAYzing upset if she won. Did you see what I did there, did you?
Venue of the month: Octopussy

Octopussy was relaunched last month and is the most unique student night in the city. Featuring bouncy castles, hot tubs, giant twister, Elvis, limbo, swimming pools and differently themed nights every week - it really has to be seen to be believed. 2011 got off to a good start for 'Octo' (as it's known by fans), as the venue was rammed with a fun and energetic crowd, dividing their time between the attractions and the dance floor. It really is the only club night where you can get chatting to a stranger over a game of giant twister, have a bit of dance with them, get married by Elvis in his white chapel and seal the deal with a kiss in the hot-tub towards the end of the night.

Octopussy is every Thursday night in the The Academy, £6 entry for students.

Celeb Treats by Eleanore

By Eleanore Hutch

So Katie Price and Alex Reid have split. Who is shocked? No one! Personally I am surprised they even lasted this long. Perhaps the most amusing thing about this split is that Jordan can't even divorce Alex immediately as they haven't been married a full year. Good lord.

Jordan recently released possibly the longest celebrity split statement ever, where she notes "Our difficulties were also not helped by Alex becoming more fascinated by life in the media eye. Alex's desire to promote himself caused a change in the dynamic of our relationship and contributed to our alienation." Ha! Is she serious? That is the pot calling the kettle black if you ask me, as Jordan is pretty fond of the old limelight herself!

The latest reports however say that Alex isn't too easy to shake off however, as he's refusing to leave the marital home. Sounds awkward. My favourite story about the whole break up is that Jordan is supposedly having a security guard sleeping on a camp bed outside her bedroom to keep Alex out. Wow.

Workmen have since been seen changing the locks outside her house, which Jordan claims is merely a "security upgrade."

Alex was recently seen looking glum while leaving Jordan's house with some of his belongings. Alex shouldn't be sad - he's escaped! Plus, he can look forward to all the cheques he will be getting when he inevitably spills his guts to a tabloid, and he will most likely be offered guest appearances on shows like I'm a Celeb or Dancing on Ice! Alex won Celebrity Big Brother for being hilarious but dim so he could have a relatively promising career post Jordan.

Meanwhile, Jordan looks set to forever pine for Peter Andre and will probably try to replace him with him with another cage fighting ape.
From back bedroom to front stage...

Neighbours beware: Red Bull Bedroom Jam is back, giving bands that rock hard the opportunity to do so from the comfort of their own homes, while the world watches online.

Unsigned bands can upload a video to the competition website, and from 21 February, the weekly Bedroom Jam Buzz Chart will reveal which acts have been the most popular in terms of video views and comments. Social media activity, such as YouTube, Twitter and Facebook also counts in the chart. From there, 15 bands will be filmed live from their bedrooms for the website; from those, eight bands will be chosen to actually get out of their houses and play at festivals this summer including Download and T in the Park.

Four judges, including Aled Phillips, frontman of Welsh band Kids in Glass Houses, who toured with last year's winners, will be there to pick three acts for a live final. The deserved overall winner will then support an established band on tour and record at Red Bull Studio Lor: Jon.

The amateur garage band of today could be the festival surprise of the summer with Red Bull Bedroom Jam.

How to get involved:
• From now on bands can upload their videos to the Red Bull Bedroom Jam site
• 15 bands will be chosen using the Buzz Radar system to play live shows live from their bedrooms every Monday at 5pm
• 8 bands will be chosen by this year's judges: Andy Copping, Vice President of Live Nation, Beckie Sugden of The Agency Group, Darren Taylor Editor of Rocksound and Aled Phillips of Kids In Glass Houses to continue to the Festival Stage
• At the end of the festival season 3 finalists will be chosen by the judges
• The final 3 will go head to head in a public vote to see who walks away as the Bedroom Jam Champion!

Head to redbullbedroomjam.com to upload your entry videos and tune in at 5pm on 21/02/2011 to catch the first live show.

DJ Soc get ready to spin off 2011

Tired of the same cheesy, chart and mainstream music you hear in the majority of clubs when your out for the night in Dublin? DIT DJ Society is 10 years old and continue to bring alternative nights to the DIT students. They guarantee some of the best DJing you will hear anywhere and with this years SpinOff Competition coming up - you're in for a real treat.

First up is the Dublin heat in one of Dublin's greatest clubs, POD (the section of Tripod where Crawdaddy is also located, in case you didn't know!) The best DJs from Dublin colleges will each play for 20 minutes on the night. They will be judged and the best two will go through to the Final.

UCD, Trinity, DIT, DCU, ITT and more will all be represented and out for the sesh.

The same thing will happen for the regional heat where the 'country' colleges get involved. Galway, Limerick, Cork, Belfast, Sligo and many more will all be represented.

This heat will be held in one of the most charming and overlooked clubs in Dublin, The Twisted Pepper, where a certain delicious Tonic Wine Beverage can even be sampled. Two more DJs will go through to the final for the regional colleges.

Then after those South and Northside club heats, we will be having the big final in Button Factory, on Friday 4 March, right in the heart of Temple Bar.

The finalists will compete to be crowned the champion. The winner will warm up to the headline set from Riva Starr. If you haven't heard of Riva Starr, he plays DJ sets that will have you locked in a sweaty rythm from start to finish. Check out his song 'I was Drunk ft Noze'. He is guaranteed to pump out everything from this quirky anthem to brilliant house and even bigger dancefloor beasts. All with his signature groove and style.

These will be cracking nights, showcasing Ireland's best college DJs, one of the hottest DJs in the world and all profits will be aid of charity. So there is no excuse not to drag a few friends along, organise a crew from Galway, Cork, Sligo or wherever your from!

So forget about Coppers for one night. For any student who like a good DJ set - this will the biggest Dance music event DIT has ever hosted! These DJ sets will go off, not one to miss.

Anyone who wants to take part can send an email to ditsoc@gmail.com or contact us at our www.facebook.com/ditdj before Friday 11 February.

Dublin Heat: Wednesday 16 Feb in POD, Harcourt St with StrangeWays, Here We Come
Regional Heat: Thursday 3 March in Twisted Pepper, Middle Abbey St with Mr Jones.
DIT DJ Society Electronic Music Conference - limited places
Final w/ RIVA STARR on Friday 4 Mar in Button Factory Temple Bar with Riva Starr
By Colm Farrell

Tripod hosted the launch party of the 9th annual Jameson Dublin International Film Festival on January 25th. People lined up to hear a taste of the events planned for this year’s festival.

The star of the show Maura Tierney, from the award-winning television series ER, was there to greet and chat amongst guests. She is currently in Dublin for rehearsals of ‘God of Carnage’ at The Gate Theatre.

After that the speeches were over and the party began with free Jameson all night long as well as plenty of banter and laughs throughout the night. The festival will take place from 17 to the 27 of February and will consist of over 130 events, including galas, red carpet screenings, evening screenings, afternoon screenings and 3D screenings. Ticket prices vary from €8 - €10 not including the 10% discount for students (score). Season tickets, excluding the National Concert Hall, are €235.

For full information on the festival go to www.jdiff.com

Music video comp

For the first time ever, DIT Film Soc is holding a Music Video Competition, and the deadline for entries is on the 24 of February. Email or check out facebook for details. They are also hosting a Film Festival in the IFI in early April and is looking for short film submissions. If you’re a budding filmmaker and want your work screened contact ditfilmsoc@gmail.com for entry details.

Save the date!

Students from DIT will once again be making the journey with the Wells For Zoe charity to help bring clean water to remote regions of Malawi. So it’s fundraising time and there are a number of great events happening over the next month where you can help out.

Love is for Losers! - February 15th - Whelans - €5
The anti-Valentines Day Event. Performances by Heroes in Hiding with Bairbre Munnis supporting. Comedian Marcus O Laoire will be MC’ing the event. More guests to be announced on the night.

Seven Deadly Sins February 28th - NV €10
A good not-so-old-fashioned club night based around the seven deadly sins. More details to be announced but promises to be the best Monday night in history.

Table Quiz and Charity Auction – March 3rd - Karma - €5
Table quiz, raffle and...DATE AUCTION! All the fun of a table quiz with the added treat of being able to anonymously (very important!) bid for a date with one (or more) of a number of highly eligible guys and girls!
Hereafter

Judging by its predecessors, I expected Clint Eastwood’s latest film ‘Hereafter’ to be an emotionally evocative and thought provoking piece which questions the conventions of modern society, highlights racism and the issues of the marginalised, while at the same time being downright cool. What I got is a request from my Dad to never pick the film again.

Starring Matt Damon, ‘Hereafter’ tells the story of a reluctant psychic medium. Unlike his entrepreneurial brother, George Lonegan (Damon) feels oppressed by his “gift”. Despite finding fame and money by communicating with the dead, George has retired from psychic readings and chosen to live a modest but inevitably lonely life.

Cécile De France plays the prosperous Marie LeLay, who, following a near death experience, gains a morbid fascination with the afterlife. Marie is a renowned Parisian journalist, but as her obsession with ‘the hereafter’ increases, her popularity and stature decrease - leaving her, like George, feeling vulnerable and misunderstood. No prizes for guessing how that one works out.

The catalyst that connects Marie to George is the heart breaking story of neglected twins Jason and Marcus. Like Gran Torino, Hereafter is slow and subtle. In spite of the film’s surreal supernatural themes, Eastwood has refrained from sensationalising the story. Mediating with the dead is portrayed as something plausible, and doesn’t seem to generate many baffled reactions. Consequently, the main conflict in the film is Georges struggle to find love, Marie’s attempt to recover her success and Marcus’ journey to...well that would be giving too much away.

Okay so this film won’t be to everyone’s tastes. Still, typical of Eastwood, this film has spectacularly poignant moments. I don’t think this film will go down as one of Eastwood’s masterpieces, and I don’t think it’s a particularly defining role for Damon. I think it’s good.

CASSIE DELANEY

John Boyne
Noah Barleywater Runs Away

John Boyne’s latest novel, the fairytale ‘Noah Barleywater Runs Away’, is a tale of magic, adventure and youth. Like his devastating, but phenomenal, ‘The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas’, Boyne’s book is aimed at children, however it appeals to readers all ages.

‘Noah Barleywater Runs Away’ tells the tale of a young boy called Noah who runs away from home in order to escape his troubles. Boyne’s beautifully written book is an interesting twist on a classic fairytale, where the reader sees the protagonist Noah stumble upon a magical toyshop owned by a mysterious old man. Noah spends the day with the old man, where they exchange stories and teach each other lessons about life.

This charming book is unpredictable but entirely rewarding, as the moment Noah steps into the toyshop the reader is transported into the magical world where donkey’s talk, door’s can move and Noah can avoid his problems. Noah and the old man take turns recounting tales from their past, and as the story progresses we slowly learn why Noah has run away. Meanwhile every puppet carved by the old man is a piece to the puzzle of the fascinating life he has led.

This tale is reminiscent of ‘The Magician’s Nephew’ from the Narnia series, as it is sad, whimsical and full of imagination. Currently short listed for the Children’s Book of the Year at this year’s Irish Book Awards, and having made the Irish bestseller list, Noah Barleywater is officially a hit. Though perhaps not quite as impressive as the beautiful and tragic Striped Pyjamas, this ceases to matter as the books are so different making it difficult for any critic to call Boyne original.

‘Noah Barleywater Runs Away’ is a short and sweet novel about growing up and the responsibilities that go with it. If you’re a fan of the CS Lewis or traditional fairytales then this is an ideal book for you. ‘Noah Barleywater Runs Away’ is available in all good bookshops now.

ELEANORE HUTCH

White Lies
To Lose My Life

For me, listening to the White Lies is often like listening to a certain early song by The Killers you didn’t want to hear again. Or, far that matter, any Killers’ song after 2006.

After attending a free gig last year however, my opinion of the Londoners changed slightly as I was surprised at how an array of average indie tracks, can Contrastingly sound so appealing live. This lead me to debut album To Lose My Life and the band itself becoming a more attractive prospect.

Unfortunately the difficult second album, Ritual, does little to move White Lies away from the typical indie outfit. If you’re a fan of Editors, Interpol and generally unoriginal sounding music then this is the album for you. Minor synth and techno noises don’t do enough to differ tracks like Bigger Than Us and The Power & The Glory from any other new boring releases.

The main aspect the album has in its favour is the moments of Joy Division-esque alikeness like McVeigh’s voice in Streetlights and the few times it emits a sort of dark sound, if possible. Some tracks on the LP are annoyingly repetitive and the word LOVE, while powerful, is used far too much. You often wonder if you could tell the difference should the first album be played along with random keyboard beats.

If you are a fan of this style of indie pop music and prefer a blander sound, you may feel this is music snobbery and that White Lies have done a fine job in following up their debut album. Obviously a Whi Lies fan will enjoy the new songs and anyone with this taste will be more than inclined to give it a listen. But as far as attracting new listeners goes, it may fall short. Although if the London trio feel the music is adequate, why alter it.

DECLAN MERRIN
Monaghan United defender Niall Flynn endured the lowest part of his career so far when he got injured midway through last season but it was a very different case only months before.

Flynn, who played in the All-Ireland College’s final with DIT in 2010, had recently turned 19 when Premier League club Wolverhampton Wanderers offered him a week on trial.

"The scout was over watching Aaron McCarey and I just happened to have a good game the day they were over. They asked me what age I was and found out I was young enough so they offered to take me over for a week."

To be granted the shot in the big leagues was enough really because you’re never going to get clubs from England coming to watch you when you are past a certain age, I think 16 or 17 is usually their cut-off point and I just got lucky."

However, that could have been said about Kevin Doyle, another Wolves frontman. The Wexford native was 21 when Reading took a chance on him following a goal spree for Cork City in 2005.

To mimic those achievements Flynn will have to battle back from a serious injury that has kept him out of the game since tearing his ligaments last July. It meant that he had to miss arguably the club’s greatest ever season as they reached the FAI League Cup final and only missed out on league promotion in a penalty shoot-out defeat to Bray.

Yet, his enthusiasm to see the bright side of everything is probably as a result of the fact that, deep down, he knows he is good enough. Times can change quickly and now his aspirations are simple. “I’d be happy now for a few years to just keep my place in the team and get at least two full seasons under my belt at Monaghan. Hopefully we can go one better next season and earn promotion to the Premier League and I want to play a part in that.”

Flynn may never get another chance to play for a big club abroad but there is enough evidence to suggest his career will be successful at home in Ireland.

How fickle can fate be?

Football can be a fickle game. During the highs you are competing with some of the best players in the sport. By contrast, simply kicking a ball can seem impossible in the midst of the lows. The majority of football in Ireland goes unnoticed meaning the country’s most gifted players seek to ply their trade abroad. David Caulfield talks to DIT student, Niall Flynn about his experience.

Kick start your coaching education

St Catherine’s Sports Centre, on Marrowbone Lane in Dublin 8 was the host venue for the first ever DIT Student Kick Start 1 course. Thirteen DIT student’s attended and successfully completed this course. The course normally costs €45 but a rate of €25 per person was charged as a student discount had been agreed.

It is designed to give the participants an introductory insight into soccer coaching and is targeted at coaching 6-9 year old children.

From a practical point of view coaching topics are demonstrated and performed by FAI coaches and students are selected into groups and they put together their own short coaching sessions. There is no formal assessment but full attendance is required to complete the course.

DIT are planning to run further Kick Start 1 and 2 courses and a referee course before the end of this term depending on interest.

Opportunities are available for successful recipients through FAI work placements and FAI Summer Soccer Schools programme which runs for the month of July and August each year all across the country. It is also planned to for the students to coach in primary and secondary schools in the area after Easter.

For any information on upcoming course contact John O’Carroll – FAI Facilitator for DIT on 0867954371 or email john.ocarroll@fai.ie
Defeat for DIT in All Ireland

The DIT Men's Premier Soccer Team have been defeated in the All-Ireland League Quarter Finals 1-0 by Dublin rivals IT Tallaght in Grangegorman on Wednesday 26th January.

It was this team's second consecutive quarter final having made it right through to the final last year where they were narrowly defeated 2-1 by UCD in Tolka Park.

DIT faced a tricky group campaign to progress to the quarter finals with draws against IT Tallaght and UCD and wins over DCU, Trinity College and Colaiste Ide to top the Dublin group on 11 points. It was an open draw for the quarter final with the three other regions and surprisingly all regional teams ended up drawing the teams in their own area.

DIT dominated much of the game and particularly the first half. After just 20 minutes DIT's Toheeb Adigun who had been keeping the Tallaght defence busy up till then was brought down just inside the box and DIT were awarded a penalty. Eoin Kavanagh stepped up to take the penalty but it was saved well by the keeper. Kavanagh scored twice from the spot in last year's semi final win against Athlone IT but failed to convert on this occasion.

Tallaght started to take control at the beginning of the second half and ten's minutes in, the ball was squared in to the box and Adam Cullen blasted in from 10 yards. DIT remained much in control and had a number of chances in the second half.

Sailing Club find their stride

By Ben Malone

DIT Sailing Club had a busy end of year attending two regional events.

The first was the westerns held in Clifden Sailing Club hosted by NUIG. The event was run in very tricky conditions, the Saturday morning saw very light winds meaning a long postponement for the 100 races that were scheduled that day. Racing finally got underway at lunch time. DIT 1 got off to a good start winning their first bout against hosts NUIG. The light winds meant racing was slow and racing had to be cut off early as the light grew dim. The Sunday morning gave more consistent conditions with a steadily growing breeze. DIT 1 found their stride after a poor day on Saturday to come back and dominate the silver fleet winning all of their races on Day 1 putting them in a good position for the knock rounds on Sunday.

A strong tide made the starting line a very tricky area where one mistake could cost a race. They raced four races on Saturday with a 50/50 result. With diminishing light and Carlingford Lough fast running out of water, the round robin was cut short leaving no opportunity for DIT to redeem themselves. Day two saw similar conditions as they headed into the knock out rounds with DIT 1 losing out by the overall winners. DIT 2 dominated the bronze fleet winning all of their races on Day 1 putting them in a good position for the knock rounds on Sunday.

They worked their way through the knock out rounds all the way to the final where they faced UCD, who had also dominated their round robin matches with a 100 per cent winning streak. The end of the race saw DIT come in second place.

It was not to be DIT's day and they bowed out at home in Grangegorman which is a rare occurrence for this team. They now have the Umbro Cup to concentrate on and have a home tie against Cork IT with the date to be confirmed.

In the other quarter finals UUJ beat Belfast Metropolitan 5-1, Carlow IT defeated NUI Maynooth 2-1 and Cork IT defeated UCC 3-1 on penalties after it finished 1-1 in normal time.
Oil team crowned intervarsity winners

DIT were crowned the inaugural Novice Irish Universities Swimming and Waterpolo Association (IUSWA) champions for 2010. The members of the mens swimming and waterpolo dub stepped up to the challenge which took place over a weekend long tournament on the 27 and 28 November. The resident DIT team beat the hosts, Trinity College in a thrilling final penalty shoot out. The Swimming and Lifesaving intervarsity competition will take place on the weekend of 25 February 2011 in Kilkenny. Last year was the most successful year to date for the club, signing up a grand total of 134 members. The ladies team also had a victorious record to date, trouncing TCD in a number of friendly matches in November 2010. On 16 November, the DIT team came away with a massive 14 – 4 goal victory. Training takes place on Monday evenings at 7:30pm in Kevin Street Pool. Early Morning Swimming is available in Belvedere Mon - Fri, for 3€.

Snooker Club pockets success

BY EVA HALL

The DIT Snooker and Pool Club are hoping 2011 brings the same pot luck as 2010 as the club celebrates one of its most successful years to date.

The three DIT teams proved they could pocket success alongside previous winners NUIM at the Snooker Intervarsities in Belfast last November. In the Higher Education Snooker and Pool Council ran event, DIT’s C Team reached the quarter finals after qualifying from the group stages. The B Team reached the semi finals of the Plate Trophy, losing out to Tallaght and Queens University Belfast, who was the eventual winner.

DIT’s A team narrowly missed out on their big break when they reached the final of the event for the first time. A strong NUIM Team took the lead and celebrated a third win in a row. In the individual competition 22-year-old Paul Ennis of DIT reached the quarter finals, narrowly losing out to Maynooth's Johnny Williams.

2010 was an equally impressive year for the DIT pool team, where two teams playing the first of their fixtures in the CUSAI National Pool League came out on top in two of three events. Both the A and B Team defeated Trinity B, but unfortunately lost to UCD A in the final round.

The Snooker and Pool Club is already chalked in for the next Pool Intervarsities held in April where it hopes to continue its success.

National squad trials for DIT soccer players

Following the DIT senior squad successful qualification form the group stages, more good news has come about as six of the team have been picked to participate in trials for the College Football of Association National squad.

The six members chosen for the trials are Michael O’Connor, Killian Thompson, Gareth Matthews, Toheeb Adigun, Craig Hyland and Darren Soon.

This year's selection is very significant as the World Student Games is being held next year in China and each player will look at gaining selection for the CFAI squad as a stepping stone to being involved at the Games. The current manager for the CFAI squad, Danny Crowley, will also be manager for the team flying to Asia.

The CFAI team mainly play games against League of Ireland sides, the Defence Forces and the Garda National side. DIT has been very well represented in the CFAI side in recent years with five players in both the 2009 and 2010 squad. The six players will be hoping to increase DIT reputation even further.

DIT staff soccer for men and women

Staff soccer can be arranged at astro pitches near Kevin St. Aungier St and Cathal Brugha Street and also at DIT Soccer Clubs home ground in Grangegorman.

If you want to represent DIT Southside v DIT Northside For further information contact:

Northside staff: Seamus Reilly- seamus.reilly@dit.ie - 087 2192380
Southside staff: John O’Carroll - john.ocarroll@fai.ie - 086 7954371
GAA star Paul Galvin joins DIT

By Colin Higgins

Paul Galvin will play for DIT in the forthcoming Sigerson Cup, it has emerged. DIT’s new recruit is looking forward to the prospect of competing in this season’s Sigerson Cup, and hopefully winning his first medal in the competition.

Galvin was present in Croke Park last week for the launch of the competition, the finals of which are being staged in UCD this year.

The 2009 Footballer of the Year has taken up a course in fashion in DIT and his name was on a press release from Croke Park yesterday that indicates that he is eligible to pay for his new college.

The 31-year-old began a postgraduate diploma course in fashion buying and management in late January. He will join a team in DIT that includes the likes of Aidan O’Shea, Tom Cunniffe, Alan Freeman and Diarmuid Connolly as the college aim to win their first Sigerson title.

Galvin is hoping to make up for the disappointment of losing out to Sligo IT in the 2002 final when UCC lost 0-6 to 0-5: “I captained UCC about 10 years ago to lose a Sigerson Cup final, which was a big disappointment. It was a medal I’d love to win. I always had a feeling I might get another go at it. I’m delighted at the chance because I only got cleared to play a couple of nights ago. It’s a fantastic competition and DIT are strong. It’s very competitive.”

Galvin denied suggestions his new career might affect his football career: “I suppose a time comes where you need to think about your career as well because the football won’t last forever. I’m just very focused on football and the time comes when you might want to think about your career.”

DIT will be one of the strongest teams in the competition and impressed in a recent O’Byrne Cup victory over Wexford.

Galvin, who made a name for himself in the competition with UCC in the late 1990s, will link up with the aforementioned Aidan O’Shea, Tom Cunniffe and Alan Freeman of Mayo, Galway’s Gareth Bradshaw and Dublin’s Diarmuid Connolly.

Disappointing draw for DIT in Fitzgibbon Cup

There was plenty of drama and talking points from the most recent round of fixtures in The Fitzgibbon Cup. The four games took place on Wednesday 2 February and were full of action and excitement. There was a crucial late goal at Mobi Hall, where Joseph Cooney was the hero for NUIG, netting in injury time to salvage a 1-15 to 1-15 draw for his side, to deny DIT the victory.

The Galway students’ task was made all the more difficult when Tipperary Senior star Seamus Hennasy was sent off after 20 minutes. Michael Murphy hit two points as DIT led by five at the break, before John Conlon hit back with three points for NUIG on the restart.

However, a late brace by Paul Ryan looked to have secured the win for DIT, before Cooney’s late goal gave the Galway men a fighting chance of making the quarter-finals.

In Group D, University of Limerick enjoyed a comprehensive 4-18 to 0-8 win over DCU last Wednesday. Tipperary natives Kieran Morris and Joe Gallagher goals as UL led by 2-4 to 0-8 at the break.

DCU failed to score in the tough conditions that prevailed throughout the second half, while UL added further goals from Joe Dooley and substitute Tommy Connors.

Limerick IT hung on for a narrow 1-13 to 0-13 victory over Waterford IT in a game played in very windy conditions.

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