

Summer: a time for creative renewal



By Justyn Melrose
STAFF WRITER

I once spent a whole summer watching Family Guy, eating microwavable chicken nuggets and drinking Kool-Aid. Relaxing during the summer is something I'm good at — perhaps too good at.

To me, yes, summer is a time to kick up your heels or to lounge around the house in the same clothes you slept in, but I also think that summer is a time to embrace the life that has been smothered by school stresses and the academic work cycle.

I've been working on a novel for almost five years, starting and restarting and scrapping everything and changing names and places and plot points. I haven't done even the slightest bit of work on the novel since I came to Guilford.

I won't lie and say that it is solely because of studies, because I doubt anyone would believe that. I spend time with friends. My time gets sucked away into Facebook and YouTube and watching "Doctor Who" and "Avatar: The Last Airbender" on Netflix online.

Nevertheless, writing is something that is important to me.

I've heard art majors complain about how difficult it is to find time to do personal art because of all of the academic requirements and assignments.

Sometimes, you just want to power-doodle in the sketch book that, for a while, was something of a Holy Bible to you, but has since become little more than a paperweight.

Summer is a time to listen to those urges.

Free range. No requirements. Just you, your hands, and the vast vat of artistic brain sludge that has accumulated throughout the academic season.

Perhaps I'll work on that novel. Or write a song using the seven chords I know on guitar. Heck, maybe I'll even learn an eighth. Maybe I'll draw an epic war between a massive marshmallow alligator and a small but tightly knit guerrilla troop of panda warlords.

You've been holding your breath for months. Summer is when you can let it out.

Still, though, many of us want to schedule all of our time and hold our breath even longer until the school year starts again. Internships. Jobs. Whatever. We pack so much into our off-season that we completely forget that there's this whole chunk of our personality and world that has been neglected.

On the other hand, sometimes we completely forget about our schedules. We forget what day of the week it is or even what month it is and turn into a bucket of jelly in front of the television or computer screen.

Both mindsets have their own benefits. Work and scheduling brings money and experience. Lounging brings peace and relaxation. But we mustn't forget that there is more to us than work and play. There is playful work.

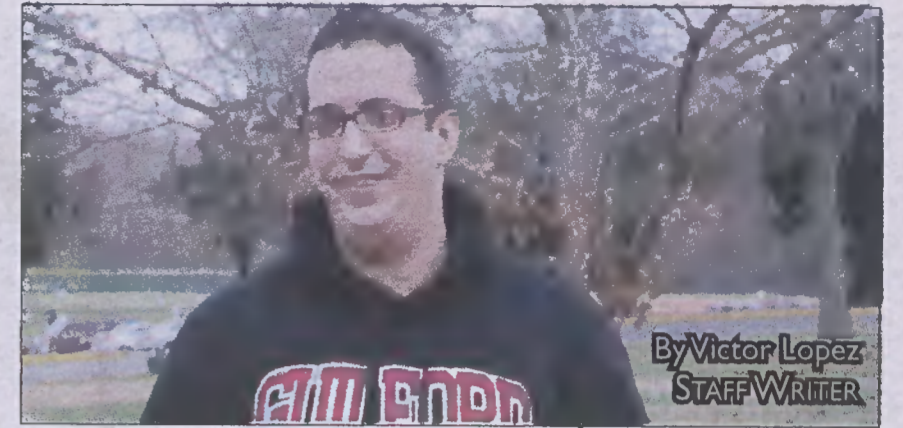
For months you've wanted to go biking in the park, but you never got around to it. By the end of the summer, you realize, not even once have you actually gotten up to go for that bike ride. Sure, you emptied your DVR of all those shows you recorded or you've got another item to put on your resume, but how much progress have you made?

Are you any happier? Maybe. Could you be happier? Probably.

Most importantly, is that happiness in your control? A lot of times, the answer is yes.

There's nothing wrong with lounging and there's nothing wrong with work, but it is nevertheless important to remember who you are and to use this time to embrace all of your talents and make the most of the summer.

CCE Student Government Association Elections



By Victor Lopez
STAFF WRITER

For a moment, I wished I were giving birth to a baby instead of assuming my role as the incoming vice president for the Center for Continuing Education Student Government Association.

While I've never been a socially active member of the CCE SGA community, for years now I've served as a representative, most notably attempting to close the perceived divide between CCE and traditional students. "Wow, you don't look like a CCE student," is often the comment I get.

By running for the position of vice president, I wished to continue closing this divide in a greater capacity during this upcoming academic year.

The elections were challenging, as there was some "othering" of individuals during and following campaigns which bred contempt and ultimately confusion, which is the third cousin of what I felt: hurt.

There were rumors of alleged vote-stacking and campaign violations. Though those allegations were never completely substantiated, the complaint was certainly lodged.

When I could finally take no more email battles CC'd for the world to see, the conflicts based in anger landed me sitting across from a mediator to smooth over some communication issues with another party.

The uninterested third party said, "I've never seen anything like this," and though I wasn't sure if he was speaking about my angry reactions or the miscommunications as a whole, I agreed on both fronts.

I joined the student government because of my passion for my school, my love of the Quaker process and my drive to learn.

Though two weeks have passed since the conflict and those wounds have healed, the CCE SGA has a long way to go to prove that it is an association that does more than dole out money for social events and that it serves some civic good.

While the CCE SGA has given a lot of service to the community, like providing emergency scholarship aid and other assistance to needy students and families in the community, we've a long way to go to actually represent our constituents.

It means nothing if, on issues like opposing hateful legislation, we can't come to timely decisions free of power struggles and prejudice — for example, deciding whether to back the traditional students and the faculty by opposing Amendment One, which is being voted on across N.C. next month.

As CCE students, we have a long way to go. Every "adult" student has a unique story to share and accomplishments to earn in the face of some students who think we don't belong on this campus at all.

"(CCE students) slow down our classes and should just go to a community college," an anonymous pollster said in a survey done by The Guilfordian.

Regardless of the divide, it is the student government's job to serve the community they represent and bring those voices to the college administration at the appropriate times.

Perhaps my notions connected to the role I play in the coming year as a member of the executive board of the CCE SGA are merely romantic, but I truly want to see the CCE SGA become a conduit through which we can build greater bonds between CCE students and our traditional peers.

I want to know that I left a legacy of creating a culture of care amongst the students of Guilford College, forging bonds with the traditional students, faculty and administration. This goes beyond having ice cream socials and welcome back celebrations that are convenient and tasty.

I hunger for something more than food. The substance I need is change.

Linda Catoe contributed to this article

Finding home away from home

By Christiana Baiden
GUEST WRITER

To be a zillion miles away from home is probably one of the most difficult things. It is even more difficult when you are by yourself in a new country. I had this sense when I boarded a plane from Ghana to the United States as an exchange student to Guilford College.

It was my first time on a plane and I felt so dizzy, but the flight was scary fun. I was not sure what awaited me in the States because, back home, I hear that "America is a free land" and "people take their freedom for granted"; Americans act how they like without any control. "Almost everyone has a gun." The idea that everyone had a gun scared me to death because I have never seen a real gun before, and I know how deadly guns are. I promised myself not to get into a fight with anybody for fear that I might be shot.

Do I still have these notions about Americans? No.

All my preconceived ideas about America changed after meeting very friendly and welcoming people at Guilford. People are full of smiles, generally affable and very relaxed. They glow with warmth that almost feels like being around loved ones back home. Well, I have been told the

story would have been a bit different if I were to be in the big cities where everybody is busy and rushing to go somewhere. Greensboro is pretty much a small city, and I dare to say that it has very relaxed people.

I did, however, have some great cultural shock. The major difference was the food. You may say that I like food, but I can't help it because cooking is my hobby and I have a soft spot for good food. And if there was anything that made me want to run back to Ghana in my first weeks here, then it was definitely the food. I seriously yearned for my fufu with aponkye nkrakra (a Ghanaian food), and my favorite dish: yam and palaver sauce. I knew this was impossible, so I settled for any food I could get. Within about two weeks, I got used to American food: burgers, fries, collard greens and my favorite: "mac 'n' cheese."

Apart from the food, which was the biggest difference to me, I experienced other cultural shocks like the difference in weather and the educational system here. I come from a country that is warm almost all year long. We do have some cold months, but I am sure those are like spring here. Words cannot express my excitement when I saw snow for the first time. I literally basked in the snow, made several

snow men and took lots of pictures.

I really like the educational system here. Guilford is a small school, and teachers and students have a one-on-one interaction which makes learning fun. I must confess though that I had some difficulties being so open with my professors and the administrative workers because back in my university, University of Cape Coast, it is an honor to dine with your professors; sitting at the same table with my professors and the administrative workers here every day makes me feel so special. I know students here do not see anything exceptional about this. For me, though, it is an honor. I still cannot bring myself to address my professors or the administrative workers by their first names, for this is seen as disrespectful back home.

Friends here ask me if I am excited to go back home, and I don't know what to say because I have mixed feelings. I love my country and I want to go back, but I cannot deny the fact that I love this place and shudder whenever I think of the fact that I have to go home. I have met very nice people and have made good friends. I wish I could spend more time with them but that is not possible, so I make it a point to enjoy every second I spend with them. I am away from home, yet I feel I am home here at Guilford.