

## ISEF Newsletter #3 - Monday, May 12

### Sue Wisner's Summary

This morning we did our final check-in process of the student projects and all went well with no violations. We wrapped up our morning with a full buffet for lunch and proceeded to our tour at the CNN center. That was very impressive and we all enjoyed seeing the pulse of the news center. We were brought to the news center with the world's longest escalator....8 stories in length and exited into a huge globe of the earth. Eliza McNitt was actually brought to a realistic news desk and read the prompter with incoming news. She did an exceptional job and could have had a job if she wanted!

All the students are getting along great and having a swim this afternoon at the hotel before heading over for the opening ceremonies refreshed their spirits and energy.

Atlanta has a wonderful Olympic Park in the heart of the city which was used in the 1996 Olympics when held in Georgia. This afternoon while the northeast was getting slammed with a Nor'Easter I strolled and sat in the park taking in the scenes of people dodging the sprays of the fountain enjoying a summer like day.

### Wynn and Andy's 7am Male Bonding Trip to 64 Walton Street, Atlanta

All good dialogue starts with a line to catch your attention, and this short story is no exception. This is a story about perhaps one of the oldest traditions of our human race ... male gathering of supplies. So that our students and adult staff can be well fed throughout the week, and battle for the gold of science fair winnings, Wynn and I set out for groceries this morning, at the ungodly hour of 7 am. Yes, as you can imagine, the hotel was very quiet ... but on a good note, the coffee was very fresh! Coffee in hand, we set out for the essentials of a well-balanced diet; soda, potato chips, pretzels, donuts, pre-packed coffee cakes from the Reagan era, and oh yes, gallons of milk for Eliza. The destination, "Walton's Supermarket" at 64 Walton Street. I'll never forget Wynn's comments ... "It's only 4 blocks away." Hmm, clearly city blocks. Anyway, as we walked through an industrial section of town, and walked, and walked some more, I asked Wynn, "Are you sure this store is in Atlanta?" Finally we arrived at what is probably the swankiest Foodmart in the city. The floor tiles may have been white many years ago, and the windows may have been translucent once upon a time. The store clerk greeted us, and was simply delighted to see the expansive shopping list that Wynn had in his hand. Wynn and I cleared the shelves of every high-nutrition snack in the store. As we brought the goodies to the counter, I could swear that the clerk's smile grew exponentially. Much to my surprise, Wynn had made a friend. Evidently, Wynn was lucky enough to meet a connoisseur of cash ... a gentleman that explained that he could turn 5 pennies into \$500 by the end of the day. Did we want in on this exciting opportunity of a lifetime? As tempting as it was, Wynn and I thought better, and figured that we would rely on the more traditional methods of earning a living. Having waited

for what seemed to be hours for the credit card receipt, as this gentleman filled Wynn's ear with his "quick-cash scenario," we finally were able to flee the fine foodmart establishment, and try to locate a cab. I called a local cab company, who, of course, didn't show. Un-phased, Wynn and I walked to a better section of town, and there it was, like a prayer answered, the pink and purple of the Dunkin Donuts sign. We knew our luck was changing. Not 1 minute later, a cab pulled up in front of double D's! Things were finally moving in the right direction. Well, 5 minutes later, and an additional 20 spot for the cab, Wynn and I were back at the Hilton Gardens, with a short story that neither of us will soon forget. The moral of the story ... all stores & neighborhoods look great on Yahoo maps ... go figure!

### **Alex McIe's comments on Sunday's activities**

We all arrived in Atlanta today, after a slightly bumpy but mostly painless flight. We settled into our hotel and admired the view of the pool, a sign Dayton liked, and the Omni with its shattered windows. We went to a restaurant called "Stats" for dinner, where Fiona ate half a chicken, Eliza met the suggested calcium intake for a month, and Dayton ate a whole lot of food. We stopped back at the hotel for a brief meeting and to receive our Connecticut pins, and then headed over to the center where the fair is going to take place. All of our projects made it here undamaged! Afterwards, we walked forever to get to the pin trading event. None of us had any pins left by the end of the night. Fiona and I took pictures with students from Japan, China, Argentina, Brazil, and many more. Eliza traded for a Florida pin that lit up and said "Drink OJ Everyday" and Theresa met up with an old friend. We were all exhausted when we finally stumbled back into the hotel room, and promptly fell asleep.

### **Eliza McNitt's Experiences from Monday**

So far, Atlanta has been quite an adventure. After finishing the set up of our projects we headed on over to CNN to get a grand tour of the studio after lunch. As usual, Dayton certainly had his fair share of desert. We got to see what it is like to work behind the scenes at CNN from the Headline News to En Espagnol. At one point during the tour of CNN they asked for a volunteer to try out what its really like being an anchor behind the camera. I couldn't resist and just had to raise my hand! I learned that being a news anchor is something I would certainly enjoy. After visiting CNN we were able to return to the hotel for a few hours and relax. Phew! Dayton, Theresa, and I decided to take advantage of the beautiful day and went for a swim. It's quite lovely down here. Alex and Fiona shortly joined us. We then headed over to the Opening Ceremony, and gee wiz was it grand! We were greeted by the bellows of the Atlanta Drumline. Their performance was truly exquisite. The ceremony was hosted by the infamous weather man on the Weather Channel. A "Shout Out" was also held to recognize each of the 51 countries, territories, and regions being represented at ISEF. Kids from Thailand, Estonia, Egypt, Jordan, China, and many other exotic countries jumped on stage with posters that represented where they were from. The governor of Georgia also spoke to us, along with Jacque

Cousteau's grandson Phillippe Cousteau. He was an excellent orator who shared with us the possibilities in the world to imagine, discover, and innovate. He showed us clips from his grandfathers travels to a village on the Nile to show them what life was like underneath the surface and even read us his grandfathers eulogy to his father, who died before Phillippe was born. Phillippe had even worked with Steve Irwin on his last expedition. He shared these stories with the tentative audience and even showed us video clips from the last documentary that he and Steve Irwin created. His speech inspired us all and taught us the effect science can have on the world.