

October 2010

# Planet Longhorn

*Letters from Austin, TX*

Planet Longhorn teamed up with ACACIA for a second time this year for the biggest Halloween Party EVER. The fraternity was kind enough to let us host the affair at their house, which included a haunted hallway upon entry, a dancefloor with music by DJs Michael Heyne & Dominik Stein, beer pong, and some amazing costumes— everything from zombie fraternity boys, to boxed wine, to rubik's cubes. The event was free, which resulted in a shortage of beer and punch toward the end of the night— good thing we still had some of Vanda's jello-shots floating around!



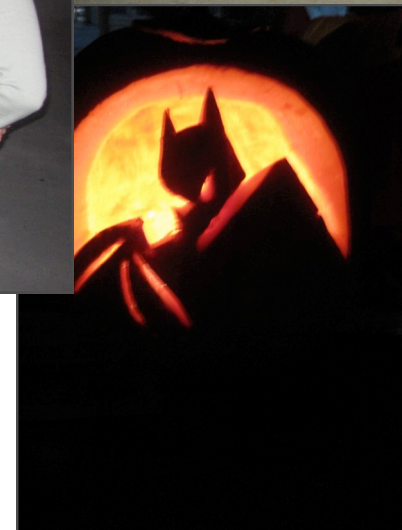
## Pumpkin Carving!

Planet Longhorn started Halloween weekend with a night of Pumpkin Carving at the Orange Tree apartments in West Campus. We brought out the pumpkins, carving kits... and a drill (because you're not doing it right if you're not using power tools to carve your pumpkin). We had some great efforts, with the following results:

1st prize: PL alumni Michael Brown with a batman pumpkin

2nd prize: PL officers Lauren Brandewie and Kim Kauffman, with a "Nightmare before Christmas" theme

3rd prize: Charlotte Pye, Shaun Neale, Stu Bird, Parina Patel, and Tam Le (basically, Team Bath)



## Planet Longhorn Goes Camping!

Planet Longhorn hit the great outdoors this past month to enjoy a bit of sun, swimming, campfires, grilling, S'mores, and more at Krause Springs. After spending all day on rope swings, tanning, and playing with ... cricket bats (?)...the tents went up and the campfire started! We all learned how to put up tents and many of us learned how to "supervise" the tent construction. The boys led an expedition to find fire wood, and came back successfully with half a tree trunk over their shoulders only to be followed throughout the night by a questionable secret stash of wood pallets brought out by the Aussies and Kiwis. The night went on with lots of loud (possibly disruptive according to some..) singing, grilling, and S'more making! Little did we know that foreigners use anywhere from 2-6 marshmallows per S'more, an impressive feat actually. People fell pretty much anywhere with a little tent floor space, and after being groggily woken up by boy scouts in a nearby camp, Planet Longhorners packed up and made it back to Austin.

*Photo Credit: Rachel Walker & Annea Nordling*



## Alumni of the Month: Rachel Taylor

**Name:** Rachel Taylor

**Nationality:** New Zealander/Hobbit

**Home University:** Victoria University of Wellington

**Semester studied at UT:** Fall 09, Spring 10

**What are you studying?** Finished my degree at UT and will be graduating in just over a month with a BA in International Relations and Development Studies, minoring in Google Maps! **What are you doing now?** I'm working full time (blah), living with my parents (double blah) saving up heaps of money to 1) clear my Austin debt 2) travel the world all over again come May 2011! After travelling next year, I'm planning on moving to Melbourne to do Honours in Cultural Geography, and then hopefully Masters in the US. **Favourite Planet Longhorn memory?** Impossible to pick! Halloween as the Statue of Liberty, Tubing, OU weekend (cramming 20 odd exchange students into a tiny house with one toilet), Gossip sessions on the IHOHOI porch about shenanigans the night before, road trips, OrangeTree party concepts, Cain's on Tuesday, PL meetings, Australia Day, random nights at Rio 21 and COSTUME PARTIES. What I miss most about PL is that getting a small group of friends together always meant 6 people rocking up, and how amazingly hilarious everyone was. Actually no I have a favourite: Alex Henderson putting on a t-shirt after the Party Barge (video available on my facebook). **What I miss most about Austin:** Texan pride, accents and flags. Living in the most perfect city to be a student ever – West Campus, the E-bus, Sixth Street, Everclear, tailgating, SXSW. I miss living in the most perfect party house ever (IHOHOI forever) but most of all I miss having a million amazing friends who could always be counted on to go out dancing, hot tub at 3am, gossip for 5 hours straight at “study sessions” in the courtyard, help me plan and coordinate my parties (and clean up the morning after) and come up with never-ending New Zealand insults. I really miss the community feeling in Austin, feeling like you were part of something big by wearing burnt orange and knowing that no matter what time it is, OU still sucks.

Oh and Miley. **Where will you be in ten years?** Will hopefully have crossed Africa, South America, Iceland and Seguin, Texas off my travel to do list and if all goes to plan, be finishing up my PhD in Geography getting ready for a career in academia! And still dancing to Miley. **Where will you go on your next trip?** I'm planning a six month trip in May 2011 going to Scandinavia, the Balkans, Romania, Lebanon and Turkey for the European summer and am hoping to intern in NYC at the American Geographical Society Oct-Dec. If my funds hold out, I want to cross some more states off my list to reach my goal of visiting all 50 US states (only 25 to go) Anyone in Europe/US, I would love to catch up (and possibly sleep on your floor). **Expected date of return to Austin:** If internship works out, I'm hoping to come down a couple times during Fall 2011 – need my American Halloween, Texan football and general Austin fix!

My year in Austin was the most amazing year ever. I'm still proudly repping Texas back home and can't wait to go back. Planet Longhorn made my year a million times better than it would have been, and I wouldn't have met most of my best friends without them. Every single PL'er deserves big ups for the amount of time they spend making Austin the perfect exchange destination. I hope all current and future exchange students have as an amazing time as I did, and take full advantage. Just remember, post exchange life is going to be unavoidably lamer, so live it up while you're there, and worry about the credit card bill later! **Contact info:** I'm one of the millions of Rachel Taylor's on facebook. An easier way to find me is rachelina.ballerina on Skype, and heylookitsrach@gmail.com. Anyone who comes to NZ, I would LOVE to be a tourist guide – seriously look me up, I'll see if I can hook you up with Samwise Gangee!

