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Last Curtain Call!

Posted on [August 4, 2011](#) by [Jordan](#)

This is probably going to be my last post. Tomorrow is our final day in which we give demos at the symposium, so I will be setting that up most of the day. We have for the most part completed the V-Volcano. The only thing that remains to be fixed is the updated terrain. We still haven't found out how to import the new models into the V-Volcano, but an OSG guy was just hired to tackle that work after we are gone. The good thing is that most of the bugs are gone within the system, so it doesn't crash anymore. This will be good for the demo.

Overall, the REU program was great. I really enjoyed the C++, Maya Modeling, and OSG animation courses. I could have probably done without the Ethics course since I just took that course last semester. I would like to thank all of the instructors of the courses for taking time out of your schedule to teach us about modeling, HCI, how to read a paper, etc. Also, thank you Ted and Marie for giving us feedback for our papers, posters, and projects; also, thanks for making the extracurricular activities really fun. They were a nice breather from a long days work.

I would also like to thank Tom, our grad-mentor, for being an awesome mentor. You were very supportive throughout the program, and I thank you for that.

I liked the fact that the REU program was interdisciplinary. It was great to meet a variety of people from different educational backgrounds and learn how to work with them. The extracurricular activities were also a strong point. Being able to interact with my fellow interns in fun activities was a lot better than sitting in a lab doing nothing for ten weeks.

I would have liked more interaction with my PI faculty mentors though. It would have been nice for them to stop by occasionally to say hello and see how things are going. I understand they are busy, but a little interaction other than one time lunch would have been nice.

Like I said, this has been an awesome experience. I can't believe the summer is over; it seems like I just got here last week. I've met some great people, and I hope to keep in touch with them. Since I really enjoyed my time here, I will gladly recommend this REU program.

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The Finishing Touches

Posted on [August 3, 2011](#) by [Jordan](#)

Today, for the V-Volcano, we are putting everything together. Basically, we are putting everything we did on one computer in order to make one final program. Hopefully, this can be completed by the end of the day; I'm confident that it will be though.

There are only a few days left before we pack up for home. It's kind of sad to see this all end, but I am excited to go home for a while. I will miss everyone here, and I hope to keep in contact with them, so if anyone wants to keep in contact with me I am on facebook.

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Home Stretch

Posted on [August 2, 2011](#) by [Jordan](#)

Well, it's the final week. I can't believe how fast this summer has gone by. This week is basically rapping everything up. The poster is done and is currently in printing. I am waiting on feedback for the paper, so I will be finishing that up later today. As for the V-Volcano itself, the finishing touches are being put on it. We plan on finishing our work today, and tomorrow we will put everything together into one platform.

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An Inner-Body Experience

Posted on [July 28, 2011](#) by [Jordan](#)

Good news, the waypoints have been fixed on the V-Volcano. The program used to crash everytime you used the waypoints, but not any more.

Yesterday, we went to Des Moines for a field trip. In the morning, we visited Principal Insurance company to visit their user study lab. I expected a little more than they showed us, but it was an eye opener to see how little companies invest in user studies. In the afternoon, we visited the Science Center. The Science Center was pretty cool. We got to see the Imax projection screen, behind the dome theater, and the reels of the movies. We also got to see the Body World display of the real bodies that have been plastisized so that you can see the inside of the body. I've read and seen pictures about this, but I never thought I'd be able to see it. It was pretty amazing.

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Grad-School?

Posted on [July 26, 2011](#) by [Jordan](#)

Today in our lecture luncheon, Thelma Harding spoke to us about graduate college. I'm pretty sure I'll be going to grad school, so it was nice to have an informational setting about it. I think the biggest pain will be taking the GRE. I was hoping to be done with tests like those when I took the ACT, but unfortunately not.

Last night, we watching the movie *Insidious*. It's a paranormal horror movie that in my opinion is one of the better scary movies to come out in a long time. It has a great plot and introduces the scary "boo" moments at the right time.

As for the V-Volcano, everything is the same, so nothing new to report. On a side note, I was pretty excited to see my name as a co-author of Tom's paper on the V-Volcano that he's going to present at a conference in October. I hope we can create another paper out of the one the InVest team is writing for the REU program. We will get one out of the user study that is performed after we leave, but I would also like to get one out of the changes we have on the V-Volcano. The only problem is that it's only an informative paper, so we'll see what happens.

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Surviving A War

Posted on [July 25, 2011](#) by [Jordan](#)

This weekend was a lot of fun!! On Saturday, we went paintballing! Todd and I dressed for the occasion by dressing as GI-Joe soldiers. We created armor out of aluminum cake pans and duck tape; it was pretty epic! The battle itself went pretty well; Shane and Vlad, Robo-Team's grad-mentors, joined us, so that was a lot of fun to have them there. I think everyone enjoyed shooting at eachother; this allowed them to vent some steam built up over the summer. The rest of the weekend we watched several movies since we were all wiped from paintballing. It was nice to relax after the epic battle. On Sunday, Todd and I went to the mall and had an interesting time, but it was fun nonetheless.

This morning, the InVest team was involved in a user study for the ISP team. I'm not allowed to talk about it in detail since the other teams haven't done the study yet, so I'll keep it brief. I hope we didn't skew the results too bad since the InVest team has a more aggressive way of conducting teamwork, so sorry if we did ISP team. I was told the way we talked to each other was pretty entertaining, so you are welcome for that entertainment.

As for the V-Volcano, I am fully on the research paper now. I have pretty much every section written up, so now I just have to make it flow nicely and add figures/pictures. We will also be receiving poster feedback tomorrow night, so hopefully all goes well for the poster.

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Friends In Reverse! Boop, boop, boop.....

Posted on [July 22, 2011](#) by [Jordan](#)

Last night, we went on a video scavenger hunt for our extracurricular activity. My team consisted of Todd, Daniel, and myself. We were given a series of tasks to do on and off campus and video tape us doing them. This turned out to be a lot more fun than I expected it to be. The night involved us singing the Oscar Meyer Weiner song in front of the meat counter, jogging with a random guy, conducting a wrestling interview in front of a confused gas station clerk, group hugging a Wal-Mart greeter, and several more exciting things.

Tomorrow, we are going paintballing. I am really excited about this since I haven't been paintballing in a while. In a way, I hope that it starts to rain on us so that it will make it more fun. My partner in crime, Todd, and I have a surprise put together for the event, so it should be a lot of fun.

The research paper is coming along for the V-Volcano. This morning I was in the zone and read several papers that I am going to use as references. Luckily, most of the paper is complete since we already had to write chunks of it throughout the summer. I just have to smooth everything out and make the paper flow nicely.

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Midweek Report

Posted on [July 20, 2011](#) by [Jordan](#)

We are slowly progressing with updates on the V-Volcano. I've pretty much rapped up the modeling for the Mount St. Helens model. I am now starting on the Piton de la Fournaise model. The models will be limited when compared to the mount st helens model since more is known about the Helens model. Our poster is coming together nicely! Everything is pretty much written into the poster except for the conclusion. Today, I'm starting to piece together the research paper. It's not due until next Friday, but I think I would get a head start on it.

Other than that, everything has been going great! Everyone is starting to conduct their user studies, so I will be participating in a few for the next couple of weeks. Unfortunately, this weekend my old x-country team is having our annual reunion, and I won't be able to attend. This is a little of a bummer since I haven't seen any of them all summer. The good thing is that we're going paintballing this weekend, and Todd and I have a little surprise made up.

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A Mastiff Problem!!!

Posted on [July 18, 2011](#) by [Jordan](#)

This last weekend was awesome! Todd, Ramy, Alicia, Kerstyn, Ramy, and I went to Todd's home town of Pella, Iowa on Saturday. It was a lot of fun! We started the day by going to the beach; it was packed but the water was refreshing on a scorching day. We then grilled pork burgers at Todd's house which tasted great. After relaxing in the AC for a while, we then decided to go fishing. We fished at a pond that is owned by a family that Todd knows. Although I had not luck on catching fish, it was a lot of fun. The family had a giant Mastiff named General that kept circling our car and barking as we left. It took us a while to get out of the long drive way with this giant dog preventing us from leaving.

I am starting to create the models for the Piton volcano for the V-Volcano since I have pretty much completed the models for the Mount St. Helens model. Our only problem is trying to get the program to read the model files that I created in Maya. This is going to take some time, but I feel we will figure it out....hopefully.

The rest of the afternoon will consist of me cleaning up the poster, so that should be fun.

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It's Friday!!!

Posted on [July 15, 2011](#) by [Jordan](#)

Well, it's Friday! This morning Kerstyn and I presented a paper for journal club. I think we did pretty good; everyone was talking at least. I hope it wasn't too boring, so sorry everyone if it was.

The V-Volcano is still coming along. I have added depth to the volcano, so it no longer is a thin sheet. The direction/elevation scales are finally done, so that's good. I believe I'm rapping up everything on the mount st. helens model, so I will be moving to the piton model soon.

Last night, we went to the Fuji steakhouse. We had the Hibachi grill where they cook everything in front of you. Our chef has hillarious and a great cook, so it ended up being a pretty good night. Now, fishing and relaxing for the weekend!

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