In a surprise announcement yesterday, university architect Gilbert Delgado revealed that the Trump Organization has been selected to build Cornell’s new tech campus on New York City’s Roosevelt Island. The company has also agreed to invest an undisclosed sum in the project.

In recognition of Trump’s involvement, the new campus will be known as the Donald J. Trump NYC Tech Campus and serve as the home of the Cornell/The Technion Institute for Really Good Ideas. Groundbreaking is scheduled for early in 2014.

“We believe this is a truly inspired selection,” said Delgado. “Donald Trump is one of the best known real estate developers in the world. He has experience in any number of real estate markets, from luxury real estate and hotels to golf courses and casinos. Plus he’s a New Yorker. The opportunity to move into the higher education arena with a cutting-edge tech campus in his home town was impossible for him to pass up.”

Trump’s preferred architectural style suggests that the university may be moving away from the kind of structures it has recently built on its Ithaca campus, which have been designed by such notable contemporary architects as Richard Meier, Rem Koolhaus, and Thom Mayne.

“There may a bit more gilt, marble and neon than we’re used to,” said Delgado. “But hey, it’s an island. He can make the entire property his canvas.”

Delgado concedes that Trump’s involvement in the project is a sign of Cornell’s interest in developing Roosevelt Island’s commercial potential as well as its campus site. With several thousand feet of East River shoreline, the island is a perfect location for condominiums, restaurants, specialty shops and other businesses. Even an amusement park is being considered.

“Look at it this way,” he said. “When the campus is finished, it will have more than 2,000 students and hundreds of faculty and staff. They have to live somewhere. They have to eat somewhere. Why not right next door?”

Cornell Outdoor Education (COE) was not going to be left out in the cold when it came to offering courses at the new CornellNYC Tech campus on Roosevelt Island.

“The place is perfect for us,” said a COE staffer. “We are already planning on ropes, climbing and leadership courses from the bridge, teaching canoeing and kayaking on the river, and scuba diving for the many mystery items that are sure to be found in its murky waters.”

A trail that already winds along the banks of the island will also provide opportunities for long-distance running, he said, noting that people could go as many laps as they wanted.

And, with the advent of the Trump offerings, joggers will be able to stop along the way for a drink, food, or even a roller-coaster ride. “We want to be able to offer a full range of experiences for our future leaders,” he said.
Dining halls to go Veggie, starting the fall semester

In an effort to stay at the forefront of trends in both university food service and nutrition, Cornell Dining has announced that its dining halls will serve only vegetarian fare beginning in the fall semester.

“We feel this is in the best interests of the campus, not just students, but faculty and staff as well,” said Cornell Dining director Gail Finan.

“Just take a look around. There are a lot of bad eaters out there. We need to help them.”

To kick off the new program, Cornell Dining will be renaming Risley Dining Hall to honor legendary Cornell nutrition professor T. Colin Campbell, a longtime advocate of plant-based diets and one of the lead scientists in the China-Oxford Cornell study on diet and disease in the 1980s.

“We’re kind of following the Campbell, Dean Ornish, Michael Pollan plan,” said Finan, referring to the well-known advocates of meatless living. “It’s like Pollan says: Eat Food. Not too much. Mostly plants.”

Finan said that Cornell Dining will also have special dining stations for vegans, a dietary approach she admits is puzzling even to her.

“I love cheese and ice cream too much to give them up,” she said. “I don’t know how they do it. I have a good friend who’s a vegan. Yes, she’s thin. But I swear when she wants a meal she just goes out and lies face down in her yard with a fork. How much fun can that be?”

To keep happy those carnivores who may feel left out under the new plan, Finan’s staff plans to hold periodic special events featuring beef, pork, chicken, and fish.

“I suppose we’ll have Meaty Mondays and Fishy Fridays,” she conceded. “But the campus needs to know it’s largely meat-free from now on. Starting in August a BLT is a bean, lettuce, and tomato sandwich. Get used to it.”

Tech Talk by The Mouse

Solving new problems with old ideas

Have you had it with your office computer? Is it always crashing? Do you have problems keeping it and your handhelds in sync? Slow access to the Internet?

Never fear - Cornell Information Technologies has come up with a solution.

Cornell is returning to the pre-computer days, and has contracted for 5,000 Selectrix typewriters for staff to use instead. The typewriters were bought on EBAY from an avid collector who foresaw that this day would come.

The same collector also sold the university 100 cases of white-out, a skid of carbon-copy paper and twenty mimeograph machines.

It is expected that campus mail will return to its glory days, except that the university has decided to go green instead, and will use the horses at the Equestrian Center for delivery.

“It’s the new Pony Express,” said one administrator, who preferred not to be identified.
In an effort to house Cornell units and programs in locations with names that better relate to their subject areas, the university has announced the relocation of a number of offices.

“These moves will achieve a more logical connection between our programs and the buildings they occupy,” said Director of Space Planning Mary-Lynn Cummings. “We should have done it years ago.”

The first relocation will occur early this summer when the Department of Food Science is moved to Cook House. This will be followed by the Philosophy Department’s move to Sage Hall.

Other moves scheduled for the summer include:

- The Department of Geology to Stone Hall
- The Department of Textiles and Apparel to Stocking Hall
- The Department of Statistics to Dyce Laboratory
- The Department of Crop and Soil Sciences to Mudd Hall
- The Department of Music to Noyes Lodge
- The Department of Anthropology to Savage Hall
- The Medieval Studies Program to Knight Lab
- The Department of Russian to the Big Red Barn
- The Library’s Shakespeare collection to Bard Hall
- The Department of Communication to Lyon Hall

“We’re also trying to turn Von Cramm Hall into a study facility for students,” said Cummings. “That would be particularly appropriate for finals week.”

In recent weeks, more than a thousand viewers have watched the webcam that the Lab of Ornithology installed at the site of the Red-tailed Hawk nest on Tower Road. Big Red, as the mother is known, laid her third egg on March 22. The eggs should hatch in mid-April.

But three nights ago, an unheard of phenomenon occurred: observers witnessed a pair of Ivory-billed Woodpeckers displace Big Red and her mate Ezra to take over caring for the nest. The Ivory-bill, long considered extinct, became the center of national attention in 2005 when Lab researchers caught a fleeting glimpse of what they were sure was the bird in the swamps of Arkansas. They reluctantly abandoned the search five years later, having found no additional evidence.

“This is absolutely unbelievable,” said a Lab staff member. “Instead of the fuzzy video we shot of an Ivory-bill in Arkansas, we have been able to transmit live images of a pair of the birds for days at a time. This will set the ornithology world on its ear.”

The staffer noted that the woodpeckers are nesting well beyond their deep Southeast range and that it’s highly unusual for them to nest in the open instead of in a tree cavity.

“So not only have we discovered they are not extinct, we have witnessed a drastic change in their range and behavior. It’s almost as if they have made some kind of enormous evolutionary leap. And the fact that they have arrived at Cornell is beyond ironic.”

The Lab has just set up another webcam, this of a Great Blue Heron’s nest at its Ithaca headquarters. Because the herons are so much larger than either the Red-tails or the Ivory-bills, it is thought that the herons will not have to give in to the brooding instincts of either of the smaller birds.

“Of course, all bets are off if a dodo bird shows up,” said the staffer.

Tired of the same-old, same-old? Cornell has developed a new mentoring program, Xtreme-to-U, providing a platform for faculty and staff to share their skills with each other.

Mentors sign up with the skill they are offering to teach – the more unusual and dangerous, the better – and mentees sign up noting the skill they would like to learn. Skills can be office-, survival-, or sports-related.

The program administrator will match mentors and mentees, who will determine where and when to meet.

All participants must sign a release form removing Cornell from all responsibility. To sign up, go to: RUCrazy.cornell.edu.

Ever since the Mars Rovers wound down, Cornell has been looking for a new gadget to take their place, and has finally succeeded.

The new combination gripper, racing car and robotic submarine (GRCRS) has brought together Cornell’s best recent inventions, with the ability to travel over land or water or traverse vertical surfaces.

These abilities will allow it to scale mountains such as Mt. Everest, or swim across oceans as large as the Pacific, should they be found on another planet.

In the meantime, GRCRS will launch off Beebe Lake in honor of Cornell’s sesquicentennial, in 2015, destination Shoals Marine Laboratory.
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t is, we just wish it would stop. I can barely
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this particular plant has maintained its bloom
the odor goes away. Experts are unsure why
bloom normally wilts after four or fi ve days and
of visitors since it bloomed on March 14. The
It seeps into the air intakes in the buildings. My
clothes reek so badly by the time I leave work
I don’t know whether to go home or check in
to a funeral parlor. Even my dogs won’t get
near me."

The plant, also known as titan arum (Amor-
phophallus titanium), has drawn thousands
of visitors since it bloomed on March 14. The
bloom normally wils after four or fi ve days and
the odor goes away. Experts are unsure why
this particular plant has maintained its bloom
so long.

“We just don’t know,” said Peter LePew, man-
ger of the greenhouse where the plant has
been on display. “It could be the soil. It could
be the unseasonably warm weather. Whatever
it is, we just wish it would stop. I can barely
keep my lunch down anymore.”

The extended bloom has resulted in at least
one unusual entrepreneurial idea. Bill Martin,
an automation control specialist for Facili-
ties and a seasoned air exchange engineer,
believes he might be able to fi nd the proper
mixture of eau de Corpse Plant and other
odors to market a new perfume.

“When we were monitoring the air from the
greenhouse I noticed that at low concentra-
tions the odor is not that bad,” said Martin.
“It made me wonder if you use the right
amount of oil from the Corpse Plant and oils
from other substances you might end up
with something quite nice. I’ve talked with a
colleague in the Chemistry Department and
we’re going to take a shot at it.”

And does Martin have a name for this pro-
posed product?

“Oh, I don’t know,” he said. “How about
‘Repose’ or ‘RIP?’ Or maybe just ‘Corpse.
Whatever it’s called I’m sure it will get you
noticed.”

Whew-ee! Visitors to the Corpse Plant can get one whiff too many.

Corpse plant lingers, may lead to new perfume

The much-anticipated blooming of the
Corpse Plant two weeks ago has taken
an unexpected twist. It won’t wilt.

“This was fun for a while,” said Ima S.Mellon,
a communications specialist in the College of
Agriculture and Life Sciences. “But now we’re
all sick of it. The smell is all over the Ag Quad.

A new series of readings will take the place of
“Chats in the Stacks” at Mann Library. The fi rst
Friday of each month, at 4:30 p.m., a member
of the Cornell community will read from their
recent work. Book signing and reception follow
the reading. The author and book will not be
announced in advance.

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