MIT's Oldest and Largest Newspaper

Volume 117, Number 13

March 18, 1997

The Weather

Today: Cloudy, windy, 41°F (5°C)

Tonight: Snow, cold, 27°F (-3°C)

Tomorrow: Snow, wind, 34°F (1°C)

Details, Page 2

Dormitory Council Holds Elections to Name New Officers

By Zarenca Hussain

In elections held Thursday, the Dormitory Council has elected Ashley P. Shah '98 as its new president and named Manju V. Pravia '97 as vice president.

In addition, Victor Morales '98 was named the Residence Orientation Week chair, Kelly A. Druzicky '99 was elected secretary and treasurer, and Mitala K. Hill '98 was named as Judicial Committee officer.

Dormcon is the governing body for undergraduate dormitories. The council's main function is to act as an advocacy group for students, representing the interests of dormitory residents to administrators.

We have “continued to try to make our organization and the people we represent, i.e. dorm residents, more visible to the administration,” said current Dormcon President Christopher H. Barron '97.

This increased visibility is exemplified by representation of Dormcon on committees like the Presidential Task Force on Student Life and Learning and the housing and resident life re-engineering team, Barron said.

“It’s been great [the administration] has realized dorm residents are organized and well represented,” Barron said.

The newly elected officers will take office shortly after Spring Break, said current Dormcon Vice President Jen Pelle '98.

Dormcon to examine dining, rush

Students hoping to confront the high entropy to tackle current issues involving dining, dormitory policy, main campus access and housing.

There have been some logistical problems with getting Dormcon representatives to meetings of the Institute dining review working group, Barron said.

The Campus Police Crime Log

The number of thefts in 1996 at the Institute fell by about 36 percent compared to 1995, according to a police report released by the Campus Police last Wednesday.

Camps Police Crime Prevention Unit's series of seminars and other crime prevention measures, along with a decrease in the temptation and opportunity for petty thieves, contributed to a drop in theft.

By Jennifer Lano

The Women's Studies Program continued to hold its events during March, but none celebrated Women's History Month.

“We had a ton of events this term, but none of them were specifically for Women's History Month,” said Michele Oshins, the coordinator of the Women's Studies Program. “Every month is Women's History Month, like every month is men's history month.”

Last week, a Women's Studies display near the Building 14 elevator shaft was vandalized. Captain David Carlson said that the Campus Police received a report about the vandalism on the morning of March 10.

“We have in a display case that was smashed” and some paper which was torn from the display, Carlson said. “It probably remains as a vandalism case unless something similar happens again.”

MIT Students Sponsor Mes Latino and Women's History Month Events

By Dan McGuire

Activities for Mes Latino, which celebrates Hispanic culture, and Women's History Month are slowly drawing to a close.

Mes Latino is “going alright, we’ve had 15 or 16 events, and I think some of our events were pretty well attended,” said Maria A. Pravia '97, financial coordinator for the Mes Latino organizing committee. “The goal [of the events] was to share our culture with ourselves, the Latino community, but also with others,” she said.

“We’ve got a lot of events,” said one of the organizers. “Some of them were really well attended.”

The Campus Police provided 371 details for clubs, organizations, departments, and events during 1996. This amounted to a total of 2,574 hours of detail time.

The number of reported obscene and annoying phone calls nearly doubled this year to 135 incidents. The Campus Police received 17,035 requests for service during 1996. These incidents include criminal activity, emergency medical calls, suicides, and lockouts.

Serious crime on the decline

Thirty-eight arrests resulted in convictions or guilty pleas, while 29 cases are still pending.

Serious crime on the decline

Incidents of aggravated assault fell to eight in 1996, from 17 in 1995. At the same time, incidents of simple assault rose from five to 13.

During an aggravated assault, the victim is injured, in a simple assault, he or she is threatened but not harmed.

Three rapes were reported in 1996. One happened in 1995 and one in 1995. The last previous report of rape was in 1995.

Reports of hate crimes or incidents dropped from nine in 1995 to four last year. Two of these were related to sexual orientation, and the other two were tied to race or ethnic origin.

The number of reported obscene and annoying phone calls nearly doubled this year to 135 incidents.

Russian President Boris N. Yeltsin lured a potential presidential successor into his camp Monday, appointing charismatic young govern- 

WEATHER

Yeltsin Appoints Potential Successor to His Cabinet

New U.N. Secretary Annan Announces Personnel Cuts

Wealthier than average, the United States has 

lured a potential presidential successor into his camp Monday, appointing charismatic young govern- 

torices on Wednesday, the only requirement being that no more than five 

“Winter's Tight Grip

The British Prime Minister, John Major, is to set May 22 as the date for general elections, kicking off a formal campaign that is 

The appointment of Emovwa one of several moves Yeltsin 

newspaper. The other major reform 

Winter is holding on tenaciously despite the approaching equinox. Significant snowfall is in store for tonight and tomorrow. A large storm is gathering strength in the central states which by 

Cabinet appointments include the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, who succeeds 

Hugh Pym, a member of Major's Conservative Party, 

and is adopting all those American styles is no accident. British 

was held for 8½ years by Major's government before he was replaced by 

The convergence of campaign 

computers, it has been argued, will allow the 

Yeltsin's surprise move, on the eve of his summit in Finland with 

Russian President Boris N. Yeltsin lured a potential presidential successor into his camp Monday, appointing charismatic young govern- 

and will be enjoining on government officials to give up 

Yeltsin's surprise move, on the eve of his summit in Finland with 

and now take firm control of the Cabinet.

Wang Jun's Visit to White House Deemed Inappropriate

Panel Rebukes Torricelli for Claims in Guatemala Murder Cases

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Mexico's Ruling Party Faces Defeats in Morelos Elections

By Mark Fineman

A federal judge Monday rejected arguments by accused Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh to block, delay or move his trial because of a flurry of news reports and accounts in the recent publicity surrounding him.

Judge Matsch's ruling clears the way for McVeigh's trial to begin as scheduled on March 31. He and his co-defendant Terry Nichols, who will be tried later, face the death penalty on murder and conspiracy charges stemming from the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah federal building that killed 168 people and injured more than 500 others.

Matsch pointedly rejected arguments by McVeigh's lead attorney, Stephen Jones, that damaging information contained in this recent publicity must be considered in the full context of the evidence presented in a vigorous and careful questioning of potential jurors. Matsch said that he had full confidence that a fair-minded jury can and will be able to weigh the evidence impartially.

By Tom Kenworthy

The PRI also appears it will lose its majority in the state legislature for the first time in the 68 years it has ruled most of this nation.

State election board member Humberto Valverde Prado said the municipal tallies will not be completed until Wednesday; state legislative results will be final Sunday. But the head was satisfied by the result of a flurry of news reports that indicated that a recent protest vote would show the PRI was headed for defeat in at least 10 major cities and towns and give the party just a third of the seats in the state legislature.

"These results are broadly representative of what we're going to wind up seeing in July, at least in this region," said Federico Estévez, political scientist at the Autonomous Technical Institute of Mexico in the nation's capital. "It's clear that a large majority of people want to see a change."...
Lobby's Poster Insulting and Unjustified

So perhaps Dr. Saito wasn't meant to fall under the category of a "cartoonist" but rather to be treated as a "journalist". Regardless, the slur used to condemn "Rhino Man" is, in my opinion, a racial slur which I won't dignify by repeating it.

Unfortunately, the sponsors of the poster didn't provide any explanation for including it. I'd like to encourage Rao and anyone else interested in raising this issue to do so. The Tech is a forum for debate and discussion, and I believe it is important for members of the MIT community to have a space to voice their concerns.

In the end, it is the careless and casual use of anti-Asian stereotypes that has done so much damage. When we use such harsh rhetoric, we are silencing the voices of those who find it offensive to talk directly to us. The silence has been deafening.

As of this writing (Sunday morning), the poster has been changed to read that Professor Atama, is both Asian and a hero and a symbol of "Asian culture". Still, this doesn't address the broader issue of the anti-Asian stereotype. It is important for the sponsors to provide a meaningful explanation for including it in the poster.

Letters and cartoons must bear the authors' signatures, addresses, and phone numbers. Unsigned letters will not be accepted. No electronic submissions are accepted. Letters and cartoons are edited for length and clarity, and we reserve the right to publish our editorial comments.

To Reach Us
The Tech's telephone number is (617) 253-1541. E-mail is the easiest way to reach any member of our staff. Mail to specific editors should be sent to: The Tech, 50 Vassar Street, Cambridge, MA 02139-7029, or sent by interdepartmental mail to Room W2-001. All submissions are due by 4:30 p.m. two days before the date of publication.
I have watched with a certain amusement the campus discussion of the Aramark and food services issue, but the column by A. Arif Husain '97 ("Doom Dining Must Be Important Priority for Institute." March 11) has finally moved me to speak. I work part time for Aramark, I am currently at Networks but have also been placed in Lobdell Food Court. Furthermore, I have worked for other food service companies before coming to MIT and therefore have experiences to which I can compare Aramark.

A member of the MIT community (Class of 1997) and eat several times each week at campus dining facilities as well as off campus and in any of several kitchens where I do some of my own cooking.

Husain wrote in his opinion that "the dining system at MIT is by far the most deplorable aspect of student life." He evi-

and in any of several kitchen where I do campus dining facilitie as well as off campu

ing system at MIT is by far the most

Husain related his experiences feeding almost solely on cereal and pasta, a task so irritating that he avoided it until his hunger was strong enough. This can only happen if one of the following is true:

1. He does not care enough about his eating habits to invest time or money into eating well, or
2. He does not have enough money to eat well.

If the second were true, we might listen to him to hear the poor man's opinion. But I would wager that the first is actually the case. If it is, why would we seek the input of such a person on dining matters?

Husain then spoke glowingly of Harvard University's "guaranteed three meals a day." This is what we refer to at MIT as a mandatory meal plan. No single dining option has been rejected by the MIT populace as completely and thoroughly as the mandatory meal plan.

Under the current system, you can eat at any of several locations at just about any reasonable dining hour and at some locations at almost any hour. You eat when and where you want. You even get back what you don't spend at the end of the year. You can eat over Independent Activitve Period. You can eat at networks. Aramark bends over backward to make sure that facilities are always open somewhere. Husain distinguishes somewhat between "mandatory" and "forced," but perhaps he could clarify this for those of us that missed his meaning.

I want to say a few things about working at Networks. First, the managers there are incredible. They make amazing efforts to please their customers. They are very quick to respond to special requests, are willing to meet with anyone to discuss their grievances, suggestions, praise, or comments (most of what they get at MIT are complaints because if they haven't noticed, we are a school of professional whiners). There are customer comment boxes in every Aramark facility I know of.

Second, the managers push the workers to keep the place very clean, and everything I serve is something I would eat myself. The food is fresh, and the menu is very large for a place with the space limitations Networks has. Third, if orders get confused, the managers are quick to apologize and offer free food to keep their customers happy. Networks compares very favorably with the food places at which I have worked in almost every respect.

In closing, I would like to ask a few ques-

tion to anyone of interest in responding to my letter or criticizing the MIT dining system as it is. Have you ever seen up close any food service to which you can compare MIT's? If you have not, your ability to objec-
tively critique the system we have is less than ideal. Are your eating problems due to MIT's and Aramark's lack of service or your own lack of discipline or desire? Be honest. No one forces you to do all-nighters and feed yourself at 3 a.m. To be frank, I don't think the MIT food system needs revamping. I think we just need to move on and find our next issue to whine about. I propose the lack of a campus-wide free foot massage service. I think I've found my next mission.

For consideration, RSVP via Bellcore's virtual job fair which will run on April 12. For your chance to work on the boldest initiatives in telecommunications with BELLcore. We will be holding a hybrid/virtual Opportunity Fair on April 12.

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www.bellcore.com
waiting for Guffman

w. ants for Guffman is a hilarious comedy about the small southern town of Blaine, Mo. as it prepares for its sesquicentennial. The people of Blaine become obsessed with the creation of a musical in order to promote spirit and enthusiasm in their town, "the Stool Capital of the World." The film's humor revolves around the degree of seriousness with which the townspeople regard themselves. "It's not always easy to be a Blaine Faye," says one of the members of the town council, and the direct descendant of the town's wilderness guide/namesake. "I can understand how the Kennedys must feel." The mock documentary style of Waiting for Guffman is very similar to the technique employed in This Is Spinal Tap, in which Christopher Guest (Corky St. Clair) is the lead guitarist. The documentary tone is established from the use of numerous interviews with townpeople, including one yokel who claims he was abducted and "probed" by a UFO full of Martian spacemen. On this day, the man claims, his rear end goes numb every Sunday morning at the precise time that the spaceship picked him up.

Waiting for Guffman is filled with thinly veiled references to homosexuality, from the slew of Fed-Ex deliveries that arrive to support Corky's voice and earing to a town council member's com- munion of Corky's diverse talents to those of Barbara Streisand. A recurrent but unstated theme is the repression of homosexuality and transgender behavior among males in small-town Missouri, which is contrasted against the low-class homosexuality practiced openly by the town's rich residents. "Grab your girlfriend by the arm," goes one line from a song in the musical, "and take her out behind the barn." It is funny to listen to townfolk describe incidents of running into Corky in the panty- hose section of a women's clothing store, where he is ostensively shopping for his absent wife. None of the townspeople bother to ques- tion the fact that they have never seen the woman to whom Corky claims to be married.

The actual plot of Waiting for Guffman involves the actor's attempts to pool their tal- ents into the creation of a decent musical and Corky's desire to receive enough attention from a New York talent scout to give his group a chance to work on Broadway. Unfortunately, this "conflict" is not developed at all. Regardless of what the title implies, it does not seem to matter to the characters whether or not Mr. Guffman will visit the town in time to see the one performance of their musical.

Waiting for Guffman is a truly funny film, and an excellent way to spend two hours on a weekend afternoon. Parker Posey (Libby Mae Brown) delivers a stellar performance as a distracted Dairy Queen employee/actress, but Christopher Guest carries the film with his earnest and amusing affectations. Another noteworthy performance was turned in by Catherine O'Hara (Sheila Albertson), with her portrayal of an insecure travel agent who is repeatedly forced to take a back seat while her husband Ron (Fred Willard) engages in shameless self-promotion.
This year's model: U2's Pop mixes old with new

By Scott C. Deskin

These days, it's not hard to feel alienated by pop music. With the alternative music wave finally diminishing (a good thing), and lots of upbeat mid-eighties pop-rock bands filling the void (definitely a bad thing), it's hard to know who to trust anymore. Discounting the talent of most of the Grammy nominees this year (which I normally do), the current state of media over-exposure only leaves the established musical megastars in the spotlight. And let's face it: Most of these performers' glory days are behind them. Eric Clapton made his beer-music 20-plus-years ago, Lionel Richie should remain a fixture of the 80s; and Phil Collins should just go away, period. Of current rock musicians, that leaves R.E.M. and Pearl Jam, good bands who were their own worst enemies at promoting their latest albums (which, according to industry expectations, flopped). Which brings me to the curious case of U2. Industry favorites since their breakthrough album, The Joshua Tree, 10 years ago, this Irish band deserves credit for not resting on their laurels, for continually exploring new territory with each subsequent release. Though they've kept a low profile over the past few years (with the exception of the regrettable "Hold Me, Thrill Me, Kiss Me" contribution to the Batman Forever soundtrack), commercial and critical success: At first, I wasn't sure what to think of U2's "Discotheque." I had my doubts about this apparent bid for mainstream, concurrent with the band's flirtation with predominantly electronic dance music, as evidenced on "Discotheque." Oh yeah, and the knee-jerk, four-star review from Rolling Stone did little to assuage my fears. As it happens, "Discotheque" is the lead track on Pop, it's followed by "Do You Feel Loved?" and "MoFo," and these three songs grab the listener by the sheer persistence of the Larry Mullen's drums and the hissing, distorted guitars of The Edge. But lead singer Bono's words are often too facile for most teenagers. In the slight "Discotheque," he sings, "You know you're chewing bubblegum/You know that is but you still want some/Cause you just can't get enough of that lovie dovie stuff." Bono serves up a kinder (though not gentler) tune in "Do You Feel Loved," another song about lovemaking. But "MoFo," a poem to soul-searching and rock and roll, serves up lyrics about "lookin for to fill that GOD shaped hole/mother mother sucking rock and roll," strangely followed by "lookin for baby Jesus under the trash." After these dense concoctions of techno-funk and rock, the band hits its stride and segues into the middle of the album, where not coincidentally the best songs are found. "If God Will Send His Angels" is a soft ballad, where Bono is once again searching for salvation (10 years after "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For"). "Last Night on Earth" is "Until the End of the World" redux, only a bit more nihilistic, and the refrain ("You got to give it away") is sung with the right amount of dramatic bravura to hook the listener. The best songs, "Staring at the Sun" and "Gone," carry their strong melodic hooks with anthemic-like refrains that, amazingly, aren't mushy: "Not just dead and dumb I'm staring at the sun/Not the only one/Who's happy to go blind" ("Staring at the Sun") and "Goodbye you can keep this suit of lights/I'll be up with the sun/And not coming down" ("Gone"). From there, the album winds down with a couple of reflections on America: Both "Miami" and "The Playboy Mansion" (the latter song is just a string of pop culture references) seem more than a bit inspired by the Passengers' (aka U2 and Brian Eno) "Elvis Ate America," although a bit more restrained. In fact, "If You Wear That Velvet Rope" and "Wake Up Dead Man" are the most subdued U2 songs in recent memory. In the case of "Dead Man," which closes the album on a somewhat serious note, in contrast to the frivolity of "Discotheque," Bono, The Edge, Clayton, and Mullen, all pushing 40, still haven't found what they're looking for. But in the process, they've made Pop, which, although not as successful of capturing the cultural zeitgeist as Achtung Baby, is still a fine listen.

1997 Institute Awards Convocation Call for Nominations Final Reminder

The Nominations deadline for the 1997 Institute Awards is Friday, March 21, 1997.

Additional copies of the awards descriptions can be picked up in W20-549.

(RCA)

Please mail all nominations to the attention of the Awards Committee, W20-549. The Awards Convocation will be held on Wednesday, May 14, 1997 in 10-250.

Questions? Contact Katie O'Dair at 3-6777.
There's more than one way to look at the alphabet.

Learning more about typography and other aspects of graphic design is as easy as joining The Tech's Production Staff. Just call us at 253-1541 or stop by Room 483 of the Student Center and ask for Josh.
What do you think of the new rule requiring all male students to wear a 35D bra during finals week?

There it is! Yet another instance of apathy sweeping across the campus these days. We asked Prof. Straubner for the likely cause...

It's clearly a case of repressed sexuality. In Chomsky's words "Voulez-vous un chat avec fromage?" Society has always given these students the bamboo, so it's no wonder that they, uh... whatever.

Whatever' indeed! Yes. Thank God for our brilliant personality psychologists. 20 grams of fish gonads daily will do that to you. Beware of tofu, though! Well, that's all the time we have. Ciao, baby! Kiss, kiss!
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For more information, contact Neal Lackritz, Bose Institute, The Mountain, Framingham, MA 01701, Phone: (508) 766-6837, lackritz@bose.com

A prehistoric critic expresses his opinion in "Bedrock Anthem," performed by Zebras and Friends at the Omega Hop Sync contest held in Kresge Auditorium on Friday evening.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Help Wanted

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Students needed to pack and ship parcels to be sent via UPS at the end of the semester. $10/hour call 1-800-888-8344-SPED. Ask for Zebes & Friends. Orennek.

Reliable daytime dog walker needed for M-F daily 15 minute walk in Cambridgeport. $65/month. Call Chris at 800-542-2214x118. Free CD to qualified callers.

Positions Wanted

Person with 25 years of hands-on experience in metal casting, lost wax and sand. Has strong problem solving abilities, was interested in internship. A few hours per month as a consultant. Call 508-653-9484.

For Sale

8752 Integrity Five Station Brewer with faucet for sale. Comes complete with line strainer, brew basket, and 25 paper filters, 115/230 volt, 1/4” deep (including faucet) 23 1/16” wide, 21 7/8” high. Receives 3 wire ground cord, all inclusive. Decanters not included. Practically brand new, hardly used. Questions? Call 225-1500 and ask for Eric. Worth ~$300 best offer.

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Housing

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For more information, contact Neal Lackritz, Bose Institute, The Mountain, Framingham, MA 01701, Phone: (508) 766-6837, lackritz@bose.com

DAVID FABROS - THE BOSTON HERALD

MARCH 18, 1997
To: Members of the MIT Community

From: The Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Education and Student Affairs

Last year on May 15th the establishment of the Arthur C. Smith Award was announced. The first recipient will be named at the Awards Convocation on May 14th. This Award which honors the service to MIT by Professor Arthur C. Smith is to be given "to a member of the MIT faculty for meaningful contributions and devotion to undergraduate student life."

Nominations for the Award, in a brief letter describing the candidates' qualifications, should be sent or dropped off by Friday, March 28 to:

The Arthur C. Smith Award Committee
c/o Dean Robert M. Randolph - RM 7-133

For further information please call Dean Randolph at 253-4052.
Dormcon, from Page 1

Fall rush is silly, [Choosing where to live] is a difficult decision for a 40-year-old to make, let alone an 18-year-old," Shah said. While a spring rush would make more sense, fall rush is fundamental to how the administration deals with shortages of on-campus housing and to how students decide where to live on campus, Shah said.

"It's a big issue, and it's a difficult one to tackle," Shah said. This year, Dormcon made some changes to rush policy. Dormitories did not participate in Clearinghouse — a program used to track a freshman's whereabouts during rush — and instead replaced it with a messaging system where Dormcon members delivered messages to freshmen. In addition, there were more stringent rules with respect to prohibiting non-residents on dormitory property during rush, Barron said.

Dormcon works on party policy

Dormcon is currently working on a party policy to present to the Campus Police. The goal is to "find some way dorms can assure the CPs some sort of uniformity on policies dealing with parties," Barron said. The need for the presentation of a uniform dormitory party policy stems from the "campus-wide problem of dorms trying to hold social events and the CPs shutting them down for lots of different reasons," Barron said.

The policy is also intended to ensure better communication between Campus Police and dormitory social chairs.

"A lot of students feel the CPs frequently shut down dorm parties," said incoming president Shah. The hope is that fewer parties will get shut down. "When a party is shut down, it's a waste of dorm resources," Barron said. Barron attributed the reason for which parties are shut down to the general lack of information about Institute party policy on the part of Campus Police.

"The CPs and students are not really on the same page. We don't know enough about the CPs' obligations and CPs don't know what we want," Shah said.

"There's not a whole lot of communication between the CPs and the RCA," Barron said. One example is that Campus Police are not told which students organize the dorm events, he said.

Because of legal responsibility, once the Campus Police see or suspect something they are forced to act, and this may involve shutting the party down, Barron said.

The current president of Nest House, Madhavan is the president of Burton-Conner House.

This year, Dormcon has made an effort to do something about rush. Dormitories did not participate in Clearinghouse — a program used to track a freshman's whereabouts during rush — and instead replaced it with a messaging system where Dormcon members delivered messages to freshmen. In addition, there were more stringent rules with respect to prohibiting non-residents on dormitory property during rush, Barron said.

Dormcon is currently working on a party policy to present to the Campus Police. The goal is to "find some way dorms can assure the CPs some sort of uniformity on policies dealing with parties," Barron said. The need for the presentation of a uniform dormitory party policy stems from the "campus-wide problem of dorms trying to hold social events and the CPs shutting them down for lots of different reasons," Barron said.

The policy is also intended to ensure better communication between Campus Police and dormitory social chairs.

"A lot of students feel the CPs frequently shut down dorm parties," said incoming president Shah. The hope is that fewer parties will get shut down. "When a party is shut down, it's a waste of dorm resources," Barron said. Barron attributed the reason for which parties are shut down to the general lack of information about Institute party policy on the part of Campus Police.

"The CPs and students are not really on the same page. We don't know enough about the CPs' obligations and CPs don't know what we want," Shah said.

"There's not a whole lot of communication between the CPs and the RCA," Barron said. One example is that Campus Police are not told which students organize the dorm events, he said.

Because of legal responsibility, once the Campus Police see or suspect something they are forced to act, and this may involve shutting the party down, Barron said.

Shah is the current president of Nest House, Madhavan is the president of Burton-Conner House.
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POLICE LOG

The following incidents were reported to the Campus Police between March 7 and 12:

March 7: Wengam, bicycle parts stolen, $100; Bldg. E25, hack pack stolen, $400; Student Center, Michael F. Stone, of 744 Massachusetts Ave., Boston, arrested for a default warrant and trespassing.

March 8: Student Center, laptop jacket stolen, $120.

March 9: Wengam, suspicious motor vehicle; East Campus, noise complaint; Bldg. 8, suspicious activity; Sloan jet, 2 Hondas broken into; Student Center, malicious damage.

March 10: Bldg. 8, George Perez, of Pine Street Inn, Boston, arrested for trespassing; Bldg. W15, computer stolen, $2,000; Bldg. 20, laptop stolen, $3,950; W15, graffiti; Bldg. 14, malicious damage; Bldg. E17, backpack stolen, $50; Rockwell Cage, suspicious activity.

March 11: Senior House, latitude of credit cards; Bldg. 66, harassment; Bldg. 14, cash and cellular phone stolen $100; Bldg. 7, suspicious person.

March 12: Bldg. 8, ring and orange purse stolen, $1,150; Bldg. 20, VCR stolen, $700; Bldg. 68, CDs stolen, $100; Bldg. E25, Perez arrested for trespassing; West garage, suspicious activity; Johnson Athletics Center, cash stolen from wallets, $295.

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MIT Students Finish in Ninth At ACM Programming Contest

By Ritte H. Lin

This month, a team of three MIT students placed ninth in the National Collegiate Programming Contest. Justin S. Legakis, Scott T. Smith '98, and Svetslov D. Tzvetkov '99 represented MIT in the international competition, the largest programming contest for universities and colleges.

Harvey Mudd College finished first, followed by the University of Washington; University of Queensland, Australia; National Taiwan University; and the University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada.

MIT faced tough competition

The MIT students competed in a final round that included 50 teams from Asia, Europe, Latin America, and North America.

In order to qualify for the final, the team first participated in an internal qualifying round at MIT. They then competed at a preliminary round held at Harvard University and subsequently advanced at the regional level.

The finalists were chosen from an initial pool of over 1,000 groups.

During the ACM contest finals, each three-member team was given eight problems to consider. The team tried to solve as many problems as possible in five hours, but solutions were also examined for completeness and accuracy.

The judging was "harsh, even the slightest error is enough for the judges to return a determination of "wrong" for a solution," Tzvetkov said.

The teams were first ranked by the number of problems solved correctly, and next by the time used. For each wrong submission, teams were assessed a 20-minute penalty.

There were several types of problems given to the teams. Some were tricky and required the development of a complicated algorithm before individuals could write any code, Tzvetkov said. "There are also problems that are straightforward, but require [a] significant amount of coding."

The topics covered by the problems varied. The problems were presented as real-life situations. The team had to figure out the mathematical models first before coding the solutions.

An archive of problems used in the contests are available at http://www.acm.org/contest/archive finals_problems/.

Team members not pleased

The three members of the team said they were not satisfied with the ninth place finish. "I expected us to do much better, possibly even win," Legakis said.

"I expected to do better. The three of us are certainly competent, but we got off to a bad start. Part of the contest is luck. The best people aren't going to do the best all the time. I am sure there were 10 teams there capable of getting first place; we were one of those teams," Smith said.

"I believed that we could do better, even that we could win, but it wasn't our day," Tzvetkov said.

The MIT team was selected and trained by Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science F. Thomson Leighton PhD '81. The group also received guidance from Associate Professor of Computer Science and Engineering M. F. Frans Kaashoek and Amit Sahai, who won last year's contest.

The team had practiced solving previous years' problems individually and as a team. "We did much better in our practices. There is some amount of luck involved," Legakis said.

Last year, Tzvetkov represented the University of Sofia and finished fourth individually, while Smith finished fifth representing MIT. Both Smith and Tzvetkov will not be able to participate next year because according to the rules of the contest, a student can only compete in the finals twice.

This year's competition was sponsored by Microsoft Corp. in collaboration with ACM.

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Men's Volleyball Team Captures Second in Tourney

By Thomas Klamas

The men's varsity volleyball team took second place in the 1997 Rivier College Invitational Tournament on Saturday to improve their season record to 8-13.

On Saturday, the Engineers traveled to Nashua, N.H., for the Rivier Tournament. The opening matchup saw the Engineers dominate every aspect of play against a hapless Rivier College team (15-0, 15-5, 15-10), behind the powerful hitting of Jesper Jensen '97 (.800, 3 service aces) and Dave Lehman '97 (.710). The second match featured a rematch between the Engineers and Ramapo College, which MIT defeated 3-2 during the Vassar Tournament in February. Some of the physical and emotional fatigue from the previous night's state rematch between the Engineers and Johnson and Wales 15-3 and 15-7 of playing for the tournament championship trophy but were pleased with one of their most impressive tournament showings in several years, highlighted by Lehman and Morton being named to the all-tournament team. Margetts (9 kills) and Morton (8 blocks) also contributed for the Engineers, who fell in three sets (15-12, 15-10, 15-9) to claim second place.

The Engineers managed to battle Roger Williams University, which is ranked 16th in Division III, during the finals, as both teams were exhausted from the day's play. MIT benefited from stellar offense from Lehman (9 kills, .667) and Robertson's 12-kill debut at outside hitter but had trouble digging RWU's powerful hitters, allowing RWU to sidestep at will and keep the Engineers off of the scoreboard. Margetts (9 kills) and Morton (8 kills, 6 blocks) also contributed for the Engineers, who fell in three sets (15-12, 15-10, 15-9) to claim second place.

The Engineers dropped the third game 15-12 but recovered to win the fourth set 15-9 behind clutch hitting from Lehman and Margetts (20 kills and aggressive blocking from Morton and swing hitter Hans Robertson '99.

The Engineers took second place in the 1997 Rivier College Invitational Tournament on Saturday to improve their season record to 8-13.

The final two games were see-saw battles, as both teams struggled to maintain the momentum, but the Engineers were unable to overcome a virtually error-free SUNY performance, and SUNY took the last two games (15-13, 15-13), despite outstanding defensive numbers from opposite hitter Hsiao (10 kills, .292 hitting percentage), outside hitter Jensen (12 kills), and middle blocker Lehman (10 kills). MIT's tip coverage was weak in two rotations which allowed a SUNY opponent to exploit it. The Jets dropped the Engineers to 1-4 in Odense Conference play, essentially eliminating them from conference playoffs despite a challenging schedule which featured five of the top 10 Division III teams in the country.

The Engineers close their season tomorrow night at 7 p.m. against rival Harvard University at Harvard's Malkin Athletic Center, in a rematch of the closely-contest, Feb. 8 matchup that saw Harvard defeat MIT 3-1.