On-Campus Rents Set to Increase As Dorms Continue to Run Deficit

By Kelley Riviere

Graduate dormitory rents are going up again. Because of skyrocketing energy prices, MIT says it will hike the rents by five percent next year. The change comes on the heels of last year’s 6.5 percent increase.

Graduate students are also getting a raise in their stipend pay-checks, but only by 3.5 percent. See “Grad Student Stipends to Increase 3.5 Percent Next Year,” page 15.

The Housing Office says it will lose more than $600,000 this year because rents are not enough to cover the costs of running and heating the dormitories. Raising the rent won’t fix that problem — Larry G. Benedict, the dean for student life, says that Housing will lose even more money next year.

Rents would have to go up by 15 percent in order to cover Housing’s deficit next year, but that kind of increase would be unconscionable, says Isaac M. Colbert, the dean for graduate students. He wants MIT to ask alumni — especially alumni who only went to MIT for graduate school — to donate to MIT in order to close the dormitories’ deficit.

Graduate student representatives say MIT’s dormitory prices are already more than comparable Cambridge apartments. “People need to wake up and start doing research,” said Daniel I. Abadi G, who works on a Graduate Student Council group concerned about rents. “You can get more for similar or even slightly less off campus.”

The group surveyed graduate students last month, and found that 82 percent of single graduate students who moved out of dormitories ended up preferring their new apartments.

Housing, Page 15

MacVicar Fellows Selected

By Curt Fischer

This year’s three recipients of the MacVicar Faculty Fellowship, which honors outstanding undergraduate teaching at MIT, share a common commitment to laboratory and project-based learning, and advocate changes in the core curriculum to increase hands-on experience. The MacVicar fellowship, begun in 1992 to commemorate Margaret MacVicar, MIT’s first dean for undergraduate education and founder of the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program. It provides Fellows with $100,000 over a 10-year period for the development of a new program of undergraduate education at MIT.

Professor Leslie K. Norford, MacVicar, Page 16

Student Input Increased For Grad Housing Plans

By Rosa Cao

Students and administrators are expressing “cautious optimism” after administrators demonstrated an increased openness to working with students, communicating with a community of “stakeholders” in the project to build a new graduate dormitory in Northwest campus.

While some constraints such as the footprint of the building (its total size and residential density), the compressed timeline that requires signed architectural plans by March 31st, and the total $104 million cost hold hard limits, considerably more space has been opened up for student input through the vehicle of stakeholder subcommittees.

In a closed meeting Wednesday, Chancellor Philip L. Clay charged the committee of stakeholders including students, housemasters and administrators to provide recommendations and advisory input into building plans that had previously been regarded as essentially fixed.

In an interview, Dean for Student Life Larry Benedict said, “it was a productive meeting; forward looking. Yes, everyone is still angry about the past, but the past is the past and now we’re moving on.”

“This was about not having enough student input — the process breakdown as well as the lack of affordable housing,” said former GSC president Baron Singh. “The problem with the decision making was on the positive side of what we expected. They’ve offered an olive branch.”

As part of the administration’s increased commitment to accountability, minutes from the stakeholders and subcommittee meetings, as well as progress reports will be available on a designated webpage, to be updated regularly.

Ashdown, Page 13

In Short

* Candidates for Undergraduate Association President and Vice President will debate at 9 p.m. on Monday, March 6 in the Student Center. Representatives from the Tech will moderate the debate.

Send news information and tips to news@the-tech.mit.edu.

Media Lab Post-Doc Found Dead Tuesday

By Jenny Zhang and Marie Y. Trilbault

MIT Media Laboratory post-doctoral associate Pushpinder Singh ‘98 was found dead in his apartment by his girlfriend on Tuesday, Feb 28, according to Senior Associate Dean for Students Robert M. Randolph. The death is being investigated by the Middlesex District Attorney, said MIT Police Chief John DiFava, who would not further comment on the circumstances surrounding the death.

However, EEC5 professor Patrick H. Winston ’65 said in a class Wednesday that the cause of death was suicide. Winston said he had said that at the time based on speculation, because other than back problems, Singh appeared to be in good health.

Singh “was a wonderful kid” who had a brilliant career ahead. He was gregarious, and would often pick up his laptop to sit in the lounge and talk to people who came by as he worked.

Winston said. Afterward, Singh “always had a very positive outlook,” he had adjured his back and been in a lot of pain for some time, Winston said.

At the end of January, Singh had given a talk at MIT Endicott House.

Singh is survived by his parents and siblings. Randolph said. Two memorial services will be held one today, and another at MIT next week.

Ashdown, Page 13

The Weather

Today: Cloudy, windy, 32°F (0°C)

Tonight: Clear, windy, 23°F (-5°C)

Details, Page 2

Dawn M. Wendell G steps on Killian Court to look at a mock Olympic gold medal that appeared on the dome the morning of Tuesday, Feb. 28.
Iraqi Sunnis and Kurds Call For Prime Minister's Removal

By Robert F. Worth

Leaders of Iraq's Kurdish, secular and Sunni Arab parties asked the main Shi'ite alliance on Thursday to withdraw its support for interim Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari as its candidate for prime minister in the next government, saying that al-Jaafari maintained the sectarian violence that swept the country over the past week.

The leaders said that if al-Jaafari continues as prime minister, they might file complaints against him for being a unite only party leader who is much larger than the Shiites, in a move that could upheave the political process and prolong efforts to form a government.

The request came as al-Jaafari imposed a daytime vehicle curfew in Baghdad on Friday, in an apparent effort to forestall any sermons at Friday prayers that could ignite the sectarian conflict that broke out after the bombing of a major Shiite shrine in Samarra last week.

The violence dimmed after the government imposed three days of curfew starting last Friday.

"The street is angry, and we need to contain the anger of the street," al-Jaafari said in a televised appearance Thursday night, in a brief statement that appeared to be aimed in part at the nation's imams. Al-Jaafari spoke after the second meeting of a new national security council, created to investigate the Samarra bombing and its aftermath and to prevent further outbreaks.

Kenya Police Disrupt TV Station And Major Newspaper

By Marc Lacey

Dozens of masked police officers forced a television station off the air on Sunday and ransacked the broadcast center before moving to a newspaper plant, where they disabled the printing presses and withstood hours of protests.

The crackdown on the country's second-largest media company came after the government jailed three of its journalists over a recent article about political intrigue involving President Mwai Kibaki. Kibaki, elected in 2002, has experienced a flurry of critical press coverage in recent months as its administration has grappled with accusations of corruption and political infighting.

"When you rattle a snake you must prepare yourself to be bitten," declared the country's tough-talking internal security minister, John Michuki, brushing away criticism of the raid.

Bush-India Pact Would Allow Continued Nuke Development

By Elisabeth Bumiller and Somin Singhap

President Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of India announced here on Thursday what Bush called a "historic" nuclear pact that would help India satisfy its enormous civilian energy needs while allowing it to continue to develop nuclear weapons.

Under the agreement, the United States would end a decades-long moratorium on sales of nuclear fuel and reactor components and India would separate its civilian and military nuclear programs, and open the civilian facilities to international inspections.

The pact fills in the broad outlines of a plan that was negotiated in July in Washington, Democratic and Republican critics said India's willingness to subject some of its nuclear programs to inspections was meaningless as long as the country has a secret military nuclear program alongside it, and that the pact would only encourage rogue nations like North Korea and Iran to continue to pursue nuclear weapons.

They predicted a bruising fight in Congress, whose approval the pact needs.

"The bill would allow us to control terrorists and other criminals, while safeguarding the civil liberties of the American people," Bush told reporters.

But reaction to today's vote signaled that the Patriot Act will continue to be debated in the United States long after the terrorist threat had been approved. The senators opposing the bill, all Democratic except for the independent James Jeffords of Vermont, argued that the civil rights protections written into the measure were too modest.

"Americans want to defeat terrorism and they want the basic character of this country to survive and prosper," said Senator Russell D. Feingold of Wisconsin, who was the only senator to vote against the original bill when it was passed shortly after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. "They want both security and liberty, and unless we give them both — and we can if we try — we have failed."

The Senate voted overwhelmingly today to extend the Patriot Act, clearing the way for the House to follow suit and send the anti-terrorism bill to President Bush before it expires on Mar. 10.

The 89-to-10 vote was somewhat measure were too modest.

Wisconsin, who was the only senator to vote against the original bill when it was passed shortly after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. "They want both security and liberty, and unless we give them both — and we can if we try — we have failed."

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Israel Leader Warns of Harsh Measures to Counter Terrorism
By Steven Erlanger
THE NEW YORK TIMES
March 3, 2006

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel said on Thursday that he might employ harsh measures to stem the terrorist threat, warning that he had learned of a new militant group that was planning to attack the Jewish state. The announcement was made shortly after the country’s security cabinet met to discuss the increased threat to Israel’s security, with a new wave of suicide bombings and rockets fired from Lebanon. Olmert said that he had ordered the military to prepare for a major operation against the militant group Hamas, which is believed to be planning attacks on Israeli targets.

The prime minister also said that he would not rule out the possibility of deploying troops to the Gaza Strip, where Palestinian militants have been launching attacks against Israeli forces. He added that he would consider a variety of options, including the imposition of a naval blockade of the Gaza Strip, to stop the flow of arms and ammunition into the territory.

The announcement came as the security cabinet met to discuss the government’s response to the terrorist threat, with officials saying that they had received intelligence suggesting that Hamas was planning to launch a major offensive against Israel. The cabinet was also expected to discuss the possibility of deploying troops to the Gaza Strip, as well as other options to stop the flow of weapons and explosives into the territory.

The prime minister’s statement was greeted with mixed reactions, with some politicians expressing concern that it could lead to an escalation of violence and a further deterioration of the already tense situation in the region. Others, however, welcomed the statement as a necessary and appropriate response to the increased terrorist threat.

The security cabinet is expected to meet again on Friday to discuss the government’s response to the terrorist threat, with officials saying that they would consider a variety of options, including the imposition of new sanctions against Hamas and the imposition of a naval blockade of the Gaza Strip.

Panel to Expand Inquiry On Surveillance
By Eric Lichtblau
THE NEW YORK TIMES
March 3, 2006

Security officials in the Bush administration on Thursday announced a new plan to expand the inquiry into government surveillance of Americans. The administration has been under pressure to justify its policies, which have been criticized for violating the constitutional rights of American citizens.

The new plan, announced by Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, would expand the inquiry to include all forms of government surveillance, including the use of wiretaps and electronic surveillance. The administration has been criticized for its policies, which have been viewed as excessive and intrusive, and for violating the constitutional rights of American citizens.

The new plan was announced in response to a growing public outcry about government surveillance, which has been criticized for violating the constitutional rights of American citizens. The administration has been under pressure to justify its policies, which have been criticized for violating the constitutional rights of American citizens.

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Letters To The Editor

Ficking the Wrong Battle

I find it disturbing that Mr. Vyasa aims to force his ethical considerations onto the greater MIT community through a ban on Coca-Cola products (The Tech, Feb. 28). If Indian and Colombian consumers still demand Coca-Cola and make it economically feasible for the company to operate in those areas, despite being cognizant of “receding water tables” and other environmental concerns, Vyasa should not presume to speak for them or impose on their rights to freedom of choice. Neither should he attempt to reduce the freedom of choice for the MIT community, either.

Ruth Miller

Oxymorons 101: MIT Planning

Some people think that campus planning is an oxymoron. They're wrong — MIT is not only capable of planning, MIT is its own oxymoron.

Picking the Wrong Battle

Put Your Money Where Your Mouths Are

Letters to the editor, columns, and editorial cartoons are written by individuals and represent the opinion of the author, not necessarily those of MIT. All letters should be addressed to the Tech, 397029, Cambridge, MA 02139. Letters to the editor should include name (and school), address, and phone number. Unsigned letters will not be accepted.

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Executive Summary Submission Deadline

ON OR BEFORE
12 NOON
WEDNESDAY
March 8, 2006

REGISTER AND SUBMIT ONLINE: http://50K.mit.edu

Semi-finalists and Finalists will be chosen from submitted executive summaries

http://50K.mit.edu
“if i touch it to this rod here, maybe it’ll discharge a little bit.”

-8.02 professor

The Chorallaries of MIT’s Nth Annual Concert in BAD TASTE

saturday 4 march . 10:59:59pm . 10-250
Trio

Look... a few unkind words... a cold shoulder or two...a couple tears... I can handle those if I have to. But, the alternative... being alone... I’m not strong enough to handle that...

After all, there’s NOTHING a girl wants more in life than to find her special someone... that variant prince who will come to rescue her! And, we’d do anything to keep him by our side...

Hmph. I don’t think you give your fellow woman enough credit...

And, I’m gonna prove it. C’mon.

OHMYGOSH, OHMYGOSH, we’re actually holding hands again!

Moons of Uranus

Spanish House Moments

Hey, you see if anybody wants to go to Target?

Everyone wants to go!? We can probably use the U-Haul truck to drive there. We’ll just fit everyone in the back!

20 Minutes Later...

Are we there yet?

Piled Higher and Deeper

www.phdcomics.com
Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column, row, and 3 by 3 grid contains exactly one of each of the digits 1 through 9.
EVENT REVIEW
Chinese New Year's Feast of Plenty

Association of Taiwanese Students Provides Delicious Meal and Talented Performers

By Jillian Berry
Somerville Theatre
Somerville, MA 02144
Feb. 22, 2006, 7-11 p.m.

Although the food was the main attraction, the ATS provided some traditional Chinese performances as well. Before dinner, Gloria Chao '08 opened with an upbeat Chinese dance that set the mood for the evening. After dinner, Angie Chiang '09 played three pieces on the Chinese bamboo flute. Although the second song ended rather abruptly, the third piece, accompanied by Yi Huang on the piano, filled everyone into a trance-like state of relaxation. Next, Andy Lin '06 and Daniel Feng woke up the crowd with Chinese yo-yo tricks. They dropped the yo-yo a few times and were not perfectly coordinated, but these mistakes did not detract from the exciting and crowd-pleasing routine. Finally, Serenus Hsu '07 left us awed by his violin performance. He is one of the best violinists I have ever heard, and the power of his music mesmerized the room, providing a splendid end to a wonderful night.

CONCERT REVIEW
Je Ne Veux Pas Travailler …

Pink Martini Plays a Show Fit for Dancing at the Somerville Theatre

By Katherine Ingel
Pink Martini
Somerville Theatre
Somerville, MA 02144
Feb. 25, 2006, 7-11 p.m.

Together with a stellar ensemble of ten other musicians, they create and revive music that makes you want to jump out of your seat and start dancing. Pink Martini is a band that is as visually striking as it is musically talented. On the night of the concert, the lights came on, and I was sadly hit with the realization that I had work to do. Racing home on the T, I held onto the t-shirt I thought “Discover Oregon … with Pink Martini,” and sang to myself, “Je ne veux pas travailler …”
The real focus of the event, however, is the film nominated: a quiet, subdued group, for the most part. Mostly pessimistic and downcast, the lauded films this year explore dark themes like revenge and corruption, often with a satirical angle. A hallmark of global arms trafficking in “Lord of War” to a sinister portrait of familial dysfunction in “The Squid and the Whale.” Many excellent films, from “Syriana” to “Munich” to “Paradise Now,” also portray the conflict in the Middle East.

I dislike the way one unswerving film sometimes manages to gather some attention from a few critics each winter and have that praise snowball into predictions of that film’s commercial success. Often this occurs before the film has even been released. “Chicago” was one such underdog whose Best Picture victory stripped the award of credibility that even the recent worthy victors “The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King” and “Million Dollar Baby” have not been able to completely restore. Having won countless awards leading up to this Sunday, “Brokeback Mountain” is the unswerving film this year. The best surprises are usually slow and the pacing stagnant. “Brokeback” isn’t a terrible film, but it just can’t stand up to the other Best Picture nominees.

There are some interesting numbers for the 78th Annual Academy Awards. First, all five nominated for Best Picture have directors and screenplays that are also up for awards. “Brokeback Mountain” has the most nominations, a total of eight. George Clooney has three nominations, for acting, directing, and screenwriting. Online betting currently favors Philip Seymour Hoffman as Best Actor at 1 to 6 odds. Finally, this Sunday, late-night talk show host Jon Stewart will be the first time, before a world-wide audience of hundreds of millions, host the ceremonies that award twenty-four golden statuettes.

Best Picture

“Brokeback Mountain” and “Good Night and Good Luck” should be replaced by “Memories of a Geisha” and “King Kong.” Nonetheless, “Brokeback” is most likely to win, given its streak of recent awards. However, “Munich” is the worthiest recipient — this is Spielberg’s masterpiece about a team of Israeli intelligence agents who set out on a mission of revenge against Palestinian terrorists who murdered athletes at the 1972 Olympic games. Spielberg shows that violence is a self-destructing, and, with nuance, subtle, and expert film-making, he humanizes both the terrorists and the Israeli agents who hunt them. “Munich” is unlikely to take the award, however, because Spielberg has already done his best work in “Schindler’s List,” which did win.

“Crash” is an engaging and thrilling tale of a number of strangers whose lives are linked simply through their coexistence. Recently, it has gained some attention, and is the only contender to “Brokeback.” “Capote” is an excellent character study of the writer Truman Capote, but its coldness and detachment make it inaccessible. Finally, “Good Night, and Good Luck” is a quiet film that is less direct in its message and might have been more powerful if it were more engaging.

Best Director

Philip Seymour Hoffman will win, and rightly so, for nailing Truman Capote’s quirky manners. The audience can feel the confusal and self-hate amongst Capote as the character manipulates a death row inmate to gain material for a novel. Heath Ledger is not to be underestimated for Capote, and admirably so, does well as a quiet, withdrawn shepherd in “Brokeback,” however this role is less challenging than Hoffman’s more emotional one. Terrence Howard, Joaquin Phoenix, and David Strathairn all give performances worthy of nomination, but Hoffman is the one who truly deserves the prize.

Best Actress

Keira Knightley portrays Elizabeth Bennett excellently in “Pride & Prejudice,” but Reese Witherspoon is the strongest choice as Johnny Cash’s wife in “Walk the Line.” Charlize Theron won two years ago, and Judith Dench has received seven nominations as Judi Dench. Faye Dunaway is just a bore in “Brokeback.” William Hurt is unlikely to win for “Syriana” and Jake Gyllenhaal is just a bore in “Brokeback.” He’s nominated this year as Russell Crowe’s boxing trainer in “Cinderella Man.”

It is a strong race with a slight edge to Halle Berry’s Angelica Stonestrom in “Akeelah and the Bee” for her portrayal of a transgendered cross-country traveler in “Transamérica” and the next likely winner after Witherspoon.

Best Supporting Actor

The biggest acting blow-up at last year’s Oscars was the absence of nomination for Paul Giamatti, who gave the finest performance of his career as a depressed onopophile in “Side-ways.” He’s nominated this year as Russell Crowe’s boxing trainer in “Cinderella Man.”

I’ve only seen one of the nominees, Shane Acker’s brilliant “9.” Having won many film awards including Best in Show at the Siggraph computer graphics conference, “9” is set in a futuristic world where rag doll creatures must battle a giant mechanical beast that has lied waste to most of their kind. The dark and gritty sci-fi feel is unique among most other shorts, which have been overly cartoony. I haven’t seen Pixar’s nominated short “One Man Band” but I expect it’s the other likely competition.

Contemporary editor

I am a couple of days, we’ll see some of the world’s most recognized faces, carefully primped and outfitted by teams of coiffures, precariously traverse a stretch of ground that will test their strength, agility, and instinct. Those who falter risk bringing complete ruin to their careers. Indeed, the red carpet at the Academy Awards can be a dangerous place.

Hollywood celebrities have much to contend with if they are to enter Los Angeles’s Kodak Theatre unscathed — at the recent Golden Globes in January, fashion designer Isaac Mizrahi publicly groped Scarlet Johansson, among other lewd behavior he exhibited. And, the media will no doubt again pose outrageously rude comments — at last year’s Oscars, Chris Connelly of ABC told Orlando Bloom, “Before you were a movie star, you were a serious actor.”

What to Look for at the 78th Academy Awards

By Kevin Der

March 3, 2006

THE TECH

ARTS

Continued on Page 11
motion animation “Corpus Bride,” a twisted fairy tale involving the undead (again, typical for Tim Burton). It is, however, the stop-motion “Wallace and Gromit: From Dreamworks Animation that’s most likely to take the Oscar home. The nominees provide a refreshing reminder that animation was a two-dimensional art long before CGI came along.

Best Musical Score

John Williams is nominated twice, making his total Oscar nominations 45. His “Memoirs of a Geisha” is the strongest nominee by far, featuring solos from Yo-Yo Ma and Itzhak Perlman, both of whom have collaborated with him in the past. Williams captures the simultaneous beauty and heartbreak of the geisha through a blend of orchestral and Japanese instruments. He crafts themes using the solos to represent the two lovers, the geisha Satomi and the man she yearns for, the Chairman. Williams’ mastery of orchestration and understanding of storytelling make “Memoirs” one of his strongest scores this decade.

He also wrote a much more subdued score for Spielberg’s “Munich,” employing haunting female vocals to portray the tragedy of the perpetual violence in the story. It’s an effective and beautiful score, recalling the mood of “Schindler’s List.” On the other hand, “Memoirs” sounds like nothing Williams’ previous work; it could have been traditional Japanese compositions. Williams hasn’t won the Oscar since “List,” despite nominations almost every year, so it will be a joy if he finally accepts the statuette this year.

The potential tragedy at the Oscars this year is the chance that “Brokeback” will win best score. Gustavo Santaolalla wrote a handful of extremely short acoustic guitar motifs that are heard sparsely throughout the film essentially unchanged. They effectively convey the barren and subdued nature of the film but are nowhere near the level of the other nominees. Alberto Iglesias mixes African instruments, mostly percussion, with orchestra, but his score is less effective at merging the two than Williams’. Finally, Dario Marianelli’s “Pride & Prejudice” soundtrack is built around solo piano works reminiscent of the Classical style. These three scores, however, should have been replaced by New Zealand Howard’s work in “King Kong.” Patrick Doyle’s score for Harry Potter and Alexandre Desplat’s compositions from “Syriana.”

Best Adapted Screenplay

The screenplay categories are difficult to predict, given that each of the five nominees for Best Picture has been nominated for one of the two categories. Historically, the quiet, smaller films tend to win these awards. I’d choose “Match Point,” Woody Allen’s intimate drama that takes a turn to the dark and supernatural. As is typical of Allen, a great deal of the picture is simply the characters sitting around talking, and that’s where he excels. He creates tension using the things the characters hide from each other. Any of the other nominees have a chance, too.

The 78th Academy Awards airs this Sunday, March 5, at 8 p.m. on ABC.

Steven Spielberg’s “Munich” portrays Israeli intelligence agents sent to assassinate Palestinian terrorists who murdered Israeli athletes at the 1972 Olympics. The film deserves to win Best Picture, but is likely to be overlooked.
Asgard Offers Unique Brunch Close to Home

Dark Atmosphere and Poor Service are Balanced by Tasty and Eclectic Menu

By Chen Zhao, Erica Koval, Jill Gu, Sally Lee, and Yaoling Tu

The Asgard
350 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617)757-5100
www.classicirish.com

This past Sunday, the five of us decided to go to The Asgard, an Irish restaurant and pub, because of its reasonable prices and convenient location in Central Square. A common location for business lunches as well as student outings, The Asgard is known for featuring live music on weekends and team trivia on Tuesday nights. However, judging by the many empty tables when we arrived, a few seemed aware that they also have a full and slightly unique brunch menu, served Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.
On the walk to Central Square, The Asgard is easily recognizable by the Irish banner hanging outside. The interior is styled like an Irish castle, with high, dark wooden beams and sparse lighting. On weekend mornings, slow jazz plays in the background above the drone of the TV’s near the bar. This atmosphere would be fine for diners but was much too dark and gloomy for a noon-time brunch.
The menu offers a variety of brunch items, ranging from $6.49 for a typical breakfast sandwich with home fries to $9.99 for a very eclectic Full Irish Breakfast which includes eggs, tomatoes, baked beans, sausages, and potatoes constituting most of the offerings, however this is not surprising for an Irish restaurant.
Ji ordered the Egg’s Benedict ($8.99), served with home fries. Unfortunately, the Canadian bacon that was promised on the menu was served with the table, but the Hollandaise sauce made this classic brunch entrée enjoyable overall. The home fries, extraordinarily well seasoned roasted potatoes sautéed with various vegetables, were universally praised. This delectable side is served with all but two entrées on the entire menu, and if one wants more (because it really is that good), it can be ordered as a side dish.
Erica ordered an English muffin ($1.49) and the Mexican Omelet ($8.99). A potatoes-laden and tasteless Irishman’s Omelet was accidentally substituted initially, but after this mistake was corrected, she found the Mexican Omelet to be very similar to a breakfast burrito. The omelet was very flavorful, but on the greasy side.
In contrast to the food, the drinks were very run-of-the-mill. The coffee was certainly not anything spectacular, and the orange juice lacked pulp and had an overly sweet aftertaste, resembling the usual store-bought stuff. For those wanting something stronger in the morning, The Asgard offers a variety of alcoholic drinks, typically over $5.
The service was slow due to the open seating policy, three mistakes were made on our orders, and drinks were slow to come. However, the waitresses were very kind and happily answered all our questions about the menu and some of the unusual foods.
Overall, The Asgard delivered a well-priced and eclectic meal. However, this location is probably better suited for late lunches and dinners because of the dark atmosphere and types of meals offered. Despite its location, which we reviewed last week, is better for breakfast, but The Asgard offers a convenient and enjoyable enough brunch.
New Course VI Pre-Orientation Program to be Gender-Balanced

By Yi Zhou

This fall, 30 incoming freshmen will participate in a Gender Pre-Originatation Program that will have the opportunity to participate in a new course, called “Gender Pre-Orientation Program.”

Program to be Gender-Balanced

“…to take more courses in the depart ment.”

Reginald Edwards ‘19 agreed: “…to take more courses in the depart ment.”

Gender balance will be a priority when selecting participants. Hunter said. The EEC’s department head. For example, few students know that course VI has a long history of being gender-related, and that over a quarter of the current faculty are involved in that field. The Department of Biology (Course 7) has one of the highest female percentages.

One freshman, Morgan Scully ‘19, feels strongly opposed to the idea of forcing a balance by gen der. “In gender-balancing this pro gram, MIT is only further adding to the problem by making it seem as if women need special attention in order to enter the field of EEC,” she said.

Several other departments offer pre-orientation programs, including Course 1 (Civil and Environmental Engineering), Course 5 (Mechani cal Engineering), 7 (Biology) and 22 (Nuclear Engineering).

Subcommittees to Address Issues Surrounding New Grad Dormitory

Ashdown, from Page 1

dated weekly. “People can now focus on getting this building built,” said Benedict. Four Subcommittees to guide input Subcommittee One, with the tightest schedule, is charged with ad dressing “types of rooms and amount and cost of common space” in the new building. It will be chaired by Karen A. Nelson, director of housing, and OSC president Sylvain Brun, and will include members of the Undergraduate Associate Dean. As well as Ashdown Housemate Terry P. Orlando and members of the grad uate student body.

The remaining three subcommittees are charged with the more in tangible issues. Subcommittee Two, chaired by Steven R. Lerman, house master of NW30 (the Warehouse), will deal with issues of graduate community building, and with security and a longer time scale; such as dining options and the new location of the Thayer East Café.

While the Northwest Corridor has been promoted as the new locus of graduate community, officials have expressed concern about its distance from the main campus. Benedict, who is the directo r of Central accommodation.

“You’re isolating all the grad students who have a career, ” said Benedict, who is also a former chair of the OSC Housing and Community Affairs Committee, and an HCA meet ing Thursday. “How do you open up the Northwest and connect it to the rest of the campus?”

The third subcommittee, to be chaired by Orlando, is charged with “preserving the spirit of the Ashdown munity,” with events like Coffee Hour and other activities tradition ally associated with Ashdown.

What the Ashdown name will continue to be associated with a graduate dorm, according to Benedict, is also in question. “The Corporation names buildings. We don’t. Right now it’s NW30,” said Benedict.

In acknowledgment of the need to keep the dorm harmonized with the approaching progress and process, the fourth subcommittee, chaired by Benedict, will discuss any issues that are not covered by the other committees.

During the construction of Sid ney-Pacific, the OSC held informal discussions as to how to keep commu nities and future residents of the dormi tory and community from breaking down over the delay. “There was a lot of complaints about the building. Though the past six months have been a similar lack of communication and resulting dissatisfaction, “what happened in the fall happened,” said Benedict, partly because of progres s-related turmoil. “I hope we could get things coiled in such a way that wouldn’t have to repeat such a process again.”

Four resolutions were presented at a GSC general council meeting on Wednesday: a joint resolution with the Undergraduate Association regarding the importance of student input on dormitory projects, student rent high pressure on the housing budget comes from rising utility costs. Housing needs “to address systematically the possibility of very large, unexpected increases in utilities” in a way that can’t be in the rents, said Dean of Graduate Students Isaac Colbert. The resolution is not to create an efficient building that would be a model for others at comparable cost. A statement of MIT’s environmental goals on the Environmental Program Office Web site reads, “MIT has determined that new proj ects (including, renovations and new construction) and programs will be designed to meet or exceed the “LEED Silver Plus” (environmental) standard.” Such buildings are expected to reduce energy costs. Although all proposals are still in preliminary discussion and research stages, other possible suggestions include creating three-to-four person suites sharing a bathroom and kitchen. The Cambridge zoning or dinance for that area requires that each “dwelling unit” contain at least 650 square feet.

Concurring with the results of analyses done by the Housing Of fice, AHEC president Sadaswatha Srinivas said, “There is a demand for cheap housing, but it turns out there is a demand for expensive housing as well.”

“We’re not advocating for all the rooms to be Ashdown style or Tang style,” said HCA co-chair and stakeholder committee member An drea Schmidt at the HCA meeting.

At the weekly Ashdown coffee hour Thursday night, the response to progress on input to the new dorm was subdued. “It gives me some hope as a g raduate student that maybe we won’t lose everything if we’re forced to move out, but I’m still very much in favor of keeping Ashdown,” said current Ashdown resident Sian Kleindienst.

“My heart is for that too,” said Orlando. “You can’t deny that there’s a loss here, but this way we can graduate students as a whole.”

The survey, not sponsored by the Ashdown House Executive Comm ittee (AHEC), showed that keep ing Ashdown as a graduate dorm i tory was “important” or “extremely important” to 99 of the 149 Ash down residents who responded.

If you were on our business staff, you’d be getting paid to fill this space. join@the-tech.mit.edu

Map

No excuses, only opportunities

This space donated by The Tech

Official Undergraduate Association Candidates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UA President &amp; Vice-President</td>
<td>Dwight M. Chambers ’07 &amp; Victor C. Cabral ’07</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007 President</td>
<td>Susan J. Shin</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007 Vice-President</td>
<td>Grace C. Lu</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007 Secretary</td>
<td>Shiujia M. Joshi</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007 Treasurer</td>
<td>Raymond R. Wu</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007 Social Chairs</td>
<td>Sarah J. Chak &amp; Jessica J. Huang</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007 Publicity Chairs</td>
<td>Yahili H. Becker &amp; Justine I. Liu</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008 President</td>
<td>Marian F. Holmes</td>
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<td>2008 Vice-President</td>
<td>TingWei Zhu</td>
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<td>2008 Secretary</td>
<td>Jonathan A. Birnbbaum</td>
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<td>2008 Treasurer</td>
<td>Phu T. Ho</td>
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<td>2008 Social Chairs</td>
<td>Ada Lapkin</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008 Social Chairs</td>
<td>Anamita Y. Massekar &amp; Daniel R. Stone</td>
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<td>2008 Publicity Chairs</td>
<td>Vacant</td>
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<td>2009 President</td>
<td>Akash A. Chandrasekar</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009 Vice-President</td>
<td>Aarti Ramanasaran</td>
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<td>2009 President</td>
<td>Samantha O. Firkere</td>
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<td>2009 Secretary</td>
<td>Deepika Singh</td>
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<td>Jingwen Tao</td>
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<td>Alexander G. Alford</td>
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<td>Rachel Koloskius-Lindley</td>
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<td>2009 Social Chairs</td>
<td>Shreyu H. Dave &amp; Catherine E. Marcus</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009 Secretary</td>
<td>Amarni N. Khan &amp; Tina P. Srivastava</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009 Vice-President</td>
<td>Ting Ting Luo &amp; Wendy Wen</td>
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The UA Election Debate, hosted by The Tech, will take place at 6 p.m. on the first floor of the Student Center. Additional students can run as write-ins, but their names will not appear on the ballot.

March 3, 2006
The only operating elevator at Next House was shut down again on Wednesday, March 1 and Thursday, March 2 from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. so that electricians could fix wiring. It will also be shut down for the same time period today.
Survey Shows Students Don’t Look at Market Data

By Kelley Rivoire

earnings.

Grad student stipends next year will outpace inflation, with base stipends increasing 3.5 percent across the board, in comparison to two percent inflation. The increase will bring science and engineering doctoral students who have passed qualifying exams to a salary of $2121 per month and master’s students to $1939 per month.

Contact teaching assistants, who are students heavily involved in their classes, will earn base stipends of $2174 per month, and teaching assistants, who provide limited support such as grading alone, will earn $1960 per month, according to Dean for Graduate Students Isaac M. Colbert. Departments can vary the base stipend by plus or minus 10 percent, Colbert said. Setting stipends is a “delicate balance between the real and perceived needs of graduate students,” focused on “trying to make life comfortable” for graduate students without pushing too much cost onto faculty, Colbert said. Base stipend numbers are set by MIT’s Academic Council, a group that includes MIT’s executive officers and academic deans.

Additionally, graduate students with families will see a break in their health insurance, with the family contribution decreasing 16 percent to $2660 per year. The single student health care rate will remain the same at $1440 per year, Colbert said.

Members of the Graduate Student Council urged MIT to reconsider the costs to graduate students with families, leading to the health insurance change this year. Colbert said, “We have more unmet needs on the family side than we do on the individual side,” he said.

Only two years ago, the family contribution was over $4000, Colbert said. This year marks “another small step forward,” he said, as there is a “need to try to help student families bear the cost a little better.”

Andrea E. Schmidt G, co-chair of the GSC’s House and Community Affairs Committee, wrote in an e-mail that this year, the GSC felt that the students with the greatest needs were those with children of spouses who cannot work because of visa regulations. “Last year, the GSC focused on the fact that ‘Many graduate students with children go into debt thousands of dollars each year to cover their expenses of child care,’ ” Schmidt wrote. “Schmidt wrote that many female graduate students are advised that the best time in an academic career to have children is during their graduate years, so “if one of MIT’s goals is to increase the number of women in academia, then it is one of MIT’s responsibilities to give graduate student mothers the support they need.”

Though MIT has made significant improvements in its resources for students with children, including a need-based child care scholarship and a maternity leave policy, “many parents in need of formal child care end up juggling their children between friends, neighbors, and babysitters because they can’t afford day care,” Schmidt said.

Going to school online at http://s-p.mit.edu/CGDR, and the group can be reached at cgdrr@csail.mit.edu.

Rent and Utilities (Dollars per Month)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rent and Utilities (Dollars per Month)</th>
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<tr>
<td>$1,269 Edgerton 1-bed</td>
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<tr>
<td>$1,038 Edgerton Efficiency</td>
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<td>$1,435 Tang 4-bed</td>
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<td>$1,765 Easton 1-bed</td>
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Housing prices for single off-campus graduate students. Note: 41 additional graduate students reported paying more than $1,500 per month. Representative dormitory rents are shown for comparison.
Course 4 (Architecture), said that most of his interactions with undergraduates have occurred “in the lab.” He has spent years developing and teaching his laboratory course, 4.411, Building Technology Laboratory, and said that building experience has been key to his success as a teacher — the first time he taught it, he said, no one would have said he was a good teacher. Now, students are helping to design AIDS clinics in Zambia and commend his teaching efforts.

Course VI (Electrical Engineering and Computer Science) Associate Professor Dennis M. Freeman PhD ’96 has only been on the faculty for ten years, but has “been at MIT forever” as a research scientist. He credited his long experience supervising graduate student thesis work with giving him a head start in teaching.

Since becoming faculty ten years ago, Freeman has been involved in teaching 6.021. Quantitative Physics, a course where two projects, one of which is primarily experimental, now constitute the bulk of the workload.

Samuel A. Bowring, professor in Course 7 (Biology), who rounded out this year’s class of MacVicar fellows, also provided copious hands-on experience for his undergraduates — for the last several years, Bowring has co-organized an environmental earth science field trip to the American southwest during the Independent Activities Period.

“There is nothing that can compare to hiking up a volcano and discussing the thermodynamics of melting the marble or seeing active faults in the field,” he wrote in an e-mail.

Projects help students learn

Both Freeman and Norford discussed projects and case study-based learning to teaching through problem sets alone. Freeman said MIT has “too much emphasis on homeworks — I think they’re a little depressing.” In his experiencing many courses, he said, only the more gifted students benefit from doing lots of problem sets, since many students get discouraged by them.

Incorporating projects into 6.021 and his other courses was a success, said Freeman, because “as a result of the projects, every student knows what’s going on.”

Norford praised MIT’s undergraduate teaching system, saying that “at any university there are some who feel they are too busy to get involved teaching undergrads,” but “on average, there is more devotion to undergraduate education here than at other places. One of the strengths of the core, and the balance within it, is that it provides building blocks useful to be able to touch on later.”

Nonetheless, Norford, Bowring, and Freeman all said that MIT’s core curriculum needs revision. Norford, in advocating change, said that “more emphasis on project-based education” would improve the core.

Freeman agreed, naming 2.000; How Machines Work, 10.000; Introduction to Aerospace Engineering for the life sciences, and 8.000; Introduction to Aerospace and Design, as enormously successful programs for involving freshmen in project-based learning. “We’d like more students to have those options,” he said.

Whether incorporating projects into the freshman year should be optional or mandatory is still being debated, said Freeman. Last year, Dean of Science Robert J. Silbey, head of the Task Force on MIT’s Undergraduate Educational Commons, reported that mandatory project-based courses will likely be added to the freshman curriculum.

Freeman, Norford, and Bowring were selected from a field of 11 nominees based on the strength of recommendation letters from their department heads as well as many of their former students.

Final decisions are made by a faculty committee which includes several MacVicar Fellows. Choosing this year’s winners was “pretty easy,” said Joanne Straggas, an administrator with knowledge of the committee’s decision-making process.

Both Freeman and Norford plan to use their funds to develop courses for freshmen. Freeman recently received a de’Arbeloff grant to develop freshman projects in microscale engineering for the life sciences, and plans to apply his annual $10,000 MacVicar award to similar projects. Norford, in turn, is planning a freshman-level physics of energy course, and said he hopes to get de’Arbeloff support as well.

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Undergraduate Association Presidential Debate

8 p.m. Monday, March 6
Stratton Student Center, first floor
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Combat tested.

join@the-tech.mit.edu
W20-483, x3-1541
Springfield College won an unprecedented sixth consecutive team crown with Wellesley College finishing 140 points behind the Engineers for third in the standings.

During the three-day competition, the Engineers set 10 Institute records and qualified four swimmers and a diver for the NCAA Championships.

Swimmer wins at NEWMAC

MIT senior Matthieu Fuzellier grabbed an NCAA “B” qualification with a dominating victory in the 200 back at the 2006 NEWMAC Men’s Swimming Championships. Fuzellier led from start to finish and won by nearly seven seconds, clocking 1:52.13.

The Cardinal and Gray posted its biggest score of the three-day meet in the 200 breast. The Engineers placed four swimmers among the top seven, led by junior Matthew G. Angle, who broke Bruce J. Di Bello’s 2002 school record with a time of 2:08.47.

MIT closed out the championships, as a strong anchor leg by senior Grady Snyder propelled the Engineers to victory in the 400 free relay. The Engineers were in a distant second midway through the event, when senior Josiah Rosmarin split 45.89 to throw Tech right back in the mix. Snyder followed with a swim of 45.83 as MIT finished with an NCAA “B” cut time of 3:05.85. The final clip was just off the Institute record of 3:05.21 set in 1993, although the final time set a new championship record.

Katz Leads Rifle Team

Junior Anton Katz earned All-Conference accolades from the Mid-Atlantic Rifle Conference after an outstanding season in which he led the Engineers in both guns in nearly every competition.

Katz earned First Team All-Conference honors in smallbore, closing with the fourth-highest scoring average in the league (577.00). He was also an honorable mention in air rifle as his average total of 577.43 ranked ninth among MAC competitors.

Ball Wins Pole Vault

Nathan B. Ball G earned the Engineers 10 points in the pole vault for Tech’s track and field unit at the 2006 Men’s All-New England Championships. He won the event with a clear of 16.3.

Senior Uzoma A. Orji followed with two top-notch performances of his own. Shortly after the vault, Orji launched six throws over 61’ with his career second-best and season-best toss of 64’ 7-3/4”, winning the weight throw by nearly six feet. The following day, Orji finished second overall in the shot put, falling only to Division I rival Derek Anderson of Northeastern University.

Fencing Competes in IFA

This past weekend, the MIT men’s fencing team competed in the 112th IFA Championship, the oldest collegiate championship in the country. The Engineers finished sixth out of 11 teams and sent Igor Kopylov ’09, William T. Walsh ’06, Spencer R. Sugimoto ’08, Trevor T. Chang ’07, and Michael N. Beregovsky ’06 to the championship bracket.

The field included Boston College, Brandeis University, Brown University, Columbia University, Harvard University, New York University, University of Pennsylvania, Princeton University, Vassar College and Yale University.
Men’s Volleyball Defeats Lasers With Huge Hitting Percentage

By Mindy Brauer
Assistant Director of Sports Information

Behind a solid hitting performance, the MIT men’s volleyball team defeated NECVAC New England Division foe Lasell College 30-18, 30-18, 30-16 on Monday night. With the win, the Engineers improved to 14-8 on the year and 6-1 in conference play while the Lasers dropped to 4-11 overall and 1-5 in the NECVAC New England.

D’Auria Named Player of the Year, Bartolotta Given Rookie Honors

By James D. Kramer
Director of Sports Information

Senior Michael W. D’Auria ’06 was named the New England Women’s and Men’s Athletic Conference (NEWMAC) Men’s Basketball Player of the Year by the league’s coaches in all-conference voting announced on Tuesday. D’Auria placed in the top six in five different NEWMAC statistical categories, including scoring (19.0 ppg, second), steals (2.4 spg, second) and assists (3.5 apg, fifth).

D’Auria takes home the top honor after being selected First Team All-NEWMAC a year ago and Second Team in 2003-2004.

MIT made a clean sweep of the individual awards as freshman James M. Bartolotta ’09 was selected as NEWMAC’s Rookie of the Year, while Larry Anderson garnered the conference’s Coach of the Year honor.

Bartolotta posted the single-game high in scoring for MIT this season with 31 points in a win over Clark University. Anderson guided the Engineers to a second-place finish in the regular season, their first appearance in the NEWMAC Championship, and a program-record 21 wins.

Swimming coach honored

Dawn Gerken was named NEWMAC Women’s Swimming Coach of the Year after leading MIT to a second-place finish at the NEWMAC Championships.

UPCOMING HOME EVENTS

Saturday, March 4, 2006
Varsity Men’s Tennis vs. Bentley College
2 p.m., Tennis Bubble and Courts.

Swimming, Page 19