Preferred Dining Cost Will Increase Again

By Valery K. Brobbey

The fee for the Preferred Dining program is set to increase $25 in the fall, drawing student criticism of din-
ning at MIT. The announcement coinci-
ded with the introduction of buff-
fe-style dinners at Pritchett Dining last Monday. The cost of Preferred Dining has already jumped $75 since fall 2005, setting the current price at $306.

In addition, the long-awaited Subway in the Lobdell Food Court is expected to be completed by the end of this month. Construction was started in January 2007 after delays. The vendor was originally expected to arrive in late August 2006, according to a June 9, 2006 Tech article.

Anne W. Wilson, marketing specialist at the Campus Activities Complex, said that the fee “increases incrementally with inflation.” The increase is to cover subsidies and increasing costs of wages and food, according to Richard D. Berlin III, director of campus dining.

“We’ve been increasing [the cost] by $25 for a number of years . . . and the increase as a percentage of the total fee is dropping,” Berlin said. He added that the Institute subsidizes the program by about $500,000 a year and he said he hopes that stu-
dents will take up part of the cost.

The major complaint about Pre-
ferred Dining is that people who live in dormitories that require the pro-
gram cannot leave the contract with-
out moving to a different dorm. “Students should not be forced out of the dorm they feel most com-
fortable in just because they cannot afford the Preferred Dining fee,” said Batya A. Pellman ’08, chair of the Undergraduate Association Committee on Dining. Dormitory Council Dining Chair Allison M. Jacobs ’08 said that “MIT students are economically minded and there comes a point where it is just not fi-
nancially worthwhile to buy into the plan.”

Berlin said that the Preferred Dining program is very concerned about students. Next Housing dining, for instance, stays open until 9 p.m. to cater for athletes and other stu-
dents who come home late although in purely economical terms it makes little sense to keep Next House din-

Dining, Page 3

Newly Elected GSC Officers

President Leeland B. Ekstrom G
Vice President Johanna D. Powell G
Secretary Ozz Nie G
Treasurer Mireille K. Akilian G

Elections for 2007–2008 Graduate Student Council officers were held Wednesday, April 4. The new officers will be inaugu-

rate at the May 2 General Council meeting.

SOURCE: GSC GSD, CURRENT GSC PRESIDENT

Ivy League Applications Boom, Selectivity Follows

Top Students Turned Down From Elite Universities

By Sam Dillon

Harvard tuned down 1,100 stu-
dent applicants with perfect 800 scores on the SAT math exam. Yales rejected several applicants with per-
fected 2400 scores on the three-part SAT, and Princeton turned away thousands of high school applicants with 4.0 grade point averages. Need-
less to say, high school valedictori-

ans were a dime a dozen.

It was the most selective spring in modern history at America’s elite schools, according to college admissions officers. More applications poured into top schools this admiss-

ions cycle than in any previous year on record. Schools have been sending decision letters to student applicants in recent days, and rejection letters have overwhelmingly outnumbered the acceptances.

Stanford received a record 23,956 undergraduate applications for the fall term, accepting 2,456 students, meaning the school took 10.3 per-
cent of applicants.

Harvard College received appli-
cations from 22,955 students, another record, and accepted 2,058 of them, for an acceptance rate of 9 percent.

The university called that “the lowest admittance rate in Harvard’s history!”

Applications to Columbia num-
bered 18,081, and the college ac-
cepted 1,618 of them, for what was certainly one of the lowest accept-
ance rates this spring at an Ameri-
can university: 8.9 percent.

“There’s a sense of collective shock among parents at seeing ex-

traordinarily talented kids getting rejected,” said Susan Gresh, whose

Admissions, Page 13

Dining, Page 11

The Weather

Today: Partly sunny and breezy, 40°F (4°C)

Tonight: Partly cloudy, 3°F (−17°C)

Tomorrow: Mostly sunny, 47°F (8°C)

Details, Page 2

The recent reduction in the stu-
dent Center Coffeehouse’s operating hours can be traced to homeless peo-
ple using the location during early morning hours, according to Phili-

lip J. Walsh, director of the Campus Activities Complex, which runs the Coffeehouse.

The space, which is usually open 24 hours a day, has been closed be-
tween the hours of 1 a.m. and 8 a.m. starting Monday. The Coffee-
house will return to a 24 hour sched-

ule.

Walsh pointed to the poor weather as a possible cause for the influx of vagrants into the space.

A student raised concerns about the reduced operating hours this week to the CAC advisory board, sparking the decision to reopen the venue for 24 hour operation. “We were going to do it anyways around [the] second or third week of April,” Walsh said.

The CAC tried to work with the Campus Police and CAC employees to deal with the influx of homeless people, according to Walsh, but ul-

timately chose to reduce the Coffee-

house hours.

Walsh said that the recently reno-

vated Student Center reading room is an alternative space for students to go during the early morning hours to study. Before the reading room be-
came more popular after renovation, the Coffeehouse served a greater role in providing a 24 hour study location for students.

According to Walsh, the Coffee-

house will be re-opened this sum-

mer, although no specific plans are set. Possibilities include the addi-

tion of more lighting and windows.

The Coffeehouse last underwent a renovation in 2000, controversial be-
cause of the addition of more mod-

ern decor.

First open in the 1970s, the Cof-

ffeehouse once served as one of the primary food vendors in the Student Center. Since then, the Coffeehouse has diversified to a unique study area for the MIT com-

munity with a comfortable furnish-

ings and music.

In 2002, the Coffeehouse re-

duced operating hours, the first change in schedule since its incorp-

oration. The Coffeehouse closed in De-

cember 2003 because of increased competition with other food ven-

ues in the Student Center. At that time, the student-run operation was bringing approximately 15 dollars a day.

In addition to serving as a loca-

tion for students to study and so-

cialize, the Coffeehouse also hosts events varying from musical perfor-

mances to cultural gatherings.
French Presidential Candidate Skips Visit as Protesters Gather
By Elaine Sciolino
THE NEW YORK TIMES

The conservative presidential candidate Nicolas Sarkozy abruptly canceled a campaign visit to a neighborhood of the eastern city of Lille on Thursday as demonstrators gathered there and warned that he would not be welcome.

About 100 demonstrators gathered in the Croix-Rousse neighborhood in central Lille, some brandishing signs that read, “Sarkozy, you are not welcome here!” others, the usual “Ons, Oui!” and “Karcher.”

Some supporters of Sarkozy shouted, “Sarkozy, President,” but were shouted down by the demonstrators.

The words “scam” and “Karcher” have come to be both identified with Sarkozy and emblematic of his difficult relationship with France’s ethnic Arab and African population. As France’s law-and-order interior minister, a job he left last week, Sarkozy alienated a huge swath of inhabitants in the troubled ethnic pockets of France.

In 2005, he vowed to clean out young troublemakers from one Paris suburb with a “Karcher,” the brand name of a high-powered hose used to wash off graffiti and also pledged to rid poor neighborhoods of their “scam.”

Britain Moves to Exert Moderating Influence on Muslim Institutions
By Jane Perlez
LONDON

The British official in charge of reaching out to disaffected Mus- lims today said that the government intended to take some steps to regulate and try to influence the affairs of Muslim religious institutions and mosques.

The Home Secretary, Ruth Kelly, the minister of local government and com- munities, said imams working in government hospitals and prisons would be required to meet certain criteria, including a good group of English.

Speaking at the Muslim Cultural Center, a mosque in a relatively affluent area of London, she also said the government planned to offer financial benefits to mosques that registered as charities and charted themselves willing to take a stand against extremism.

Kelly said she was determined to “isolate and push out a tiny mi- nority who spread hatred and intolerance.” The government would do this, she said, by emphasizing the need for Muslim immigrants to be British as well as Muslim.

Judge to Seal Psychological Files in Astronaut’s Trial
By Amy Green
THE NEW YORK TIMES

A judge said Thursday that he would seal any psychological evalu- ations of Capt. Lisa M. Nowak, the former astronaut accused of trying to kidnap a romantic rival.

He also ordered lawyers in the case not to issue press releases, and he scheduled a hearing for Monday to determine whether additional documents should be sealed.

The judge, Judge L. jubet of Orange County Circuit Court, warned that continuing communication by lawyers with the news media “will keep our eyes off the defendant” and he said he would like to keep the trial in Orange County “as if all possible.”

Nowak, of the Navy, was arrested in February and later fired by NASA for what military authorities said was consensual adultery, she confessed a rival for the attentions of a fellow astronaut in an Orlando airport parking lot and confessed to having left her car with a spray. The police said she said she had driven all night from her home in Texas, wearing a diaper so she would not have to stop to relieve herself.

Wealthy Conn. School District Confronts Racial Imbalance
By Alison Leigh Cowan
THE NEW YORK TIMES

More than half a century after a landmark desegregation ruling in Brown v. Board of Education, this overwhelmingly white and wealthy town is beginning to confront the yawning racial imbalance in its core, well-groomed neighborhood schools.

Every year since 2006, the Con- necticut Department of Education has sent Greenwich — along with other towns like West Hartford and, more recently, Fairfield and Groton — warning letters citing specific schools in danger of violating state laws on racial balance by having stu- dent bodies far less diverse than their districts overall.

Two districts and a dozen others are bracing for another round of warn- ings after the Education Department reviewed this year’s list on Thursday. But little changes from year to year, and the state has rarely, if ever, fol- lowed through with sanctions like withholding money to force changes.

The state education commissioner, responsible for enforcing the ra- cial balance law — has vowed to get serious about spreading minority stu- dents more equally among the district’s 14 elementary and middle schools, ranking many parents for whom top-notch education without widespread busing was a major in- centive to buy expensive homes here. The superintendent, Betty J. Stern- berg, has convened a 44-person task force to tackle the problem, quixotically declaring, “Our schools are becoming more segregated.”

Though Greenwich’s population of 61,900 is 90 percent white, according to the census, nearly a quarter of the public school system’s 8,800 students are black, Hispanic or Asian. Yet their representation in many elementary and middle schools is laughable. At the Old Greenwich School, in a neighborhood on the east side of town near Stamford where moder- nist Four-square can fetch $1 million, school officials say the student body is roughly 95 percent white. On the west side of town near Port Chester, N.Y., an increasingly Hispanic area where there is a large housing project, the Hamilton Avenue School is 59 percent minority and the New Lobj- non School is 33 percent minority, according to district officials. Both are in violation of state law by being more than 25 percentage points off the district average in terms of racial mix. (Old Greenwich, meanwhile, is likely to be found in “impending” violation for deviating from the state average by at least 15 points.)

The state law mandates that a dis- trict must develop a plan to diversify the student mix more than 25 points off the district average. Greenwich has committed to spend $29 million on a new building for Hamilton Avenue and has made it a magnet school in hopes of attracting white students from throughout the district.

But Sternberg said such efforts — along with past attempts to im- prove the heavily minority schools by reducing class sizes — did little to address the looming issue of ra- cial isolation in a district where test scores show a significant gap be- tween racial groups. In both elemen- tary and middle schools, the propor- tion of white students meeting state goals in reading is 40 percentage points higher than the proportion of black students and 25 points higher than Hispanics. The gaps in math are even larger.

Sailors and Marines Released After Two Week Captivity in Iran
By Sarah Lyall
THE NEW YORK TIMES

The 15 British marines and sailors who sailed on board a small Bavar- ian-built helicopter in Iran were shown on television wearing outfits issued by the Iranian regime — ill-fitting business suits for the men, and a headscarf-and-head- covers ensemble for the lone woman, Leading Seaman Faye Turney. But when they arrived at Heathrow air- port on Thursday, they were dressed in civilian clothes and the women were sipping cups of tea, acc- essible to the media of the world.”

The images were jarring, verg- ing on the bizarre; the men and women of the British navy, as they confessed to and apologized for having准则ed on Iranian territorial waters.

The images were jarring, verg- ing on the bizarre; the men and women of the British navy, as they confessed to and apologized for having准则ed on Iranian territorial waters.

The Tech
By Sarah Lyall
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Perhaps the most startling weather event of the past week was the batch of heavy snow that paid us a visit Wednesday afternoon. Fortunately, it was too warm for any significant accumulation or ice hazards. As it turns out, the snow did little more than cool the city’s temperatures. By Thursday, temperatures will be near 50°F (10°C) with lows around 30°F (-1°C), so it wouldn’t put away your winter coat just yet.

Extended Forecast

Today: Partly sunny and breezy. High 48°F (9°C).

Tuesday: Mostly cloudy. Low 45°F (7°C).

Wednesday: Mostly cloudy. Low 45°F (7°C).

Thursday night: Mostly cloudy. Low 30°F (-1°C).

Friday: Mostly sunny. High 55°F (11°C).

Saturday: Mostly sunny with high 60°F (16°C).
Companies Reopen Debate on How to Fix Health Care System

By Mitt Romney

The controversy surrounding the World Jewish Congress, the tiny nonprofit organization that won billions for Holocaust survivors, continued yesterday when its president, Edgar Bronfman Jr., announced that the group’s former leader, Israel Singer, of misusing funds and concealing "significant information."

The controversy was triggered by a report in the New York Times that Singer, a former leader of the World Jewish Congress, had in the past 15 years used $10 billion in investments, mostly in infrastructure, in Israel. The Times alleged that the money had been spent on unrelated projects, including a $10 billion base in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

The controversy was renewed by a letter from the World Jewish Congress to the New York Times, which alleged that the group had not been sufficiently transparent about the use of the money, and by a statement from Singer, who denied the allegations. The Times had also reported that Singer had been investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation for possible criminal activity.

The controversy has sparked a debate about the role of nonprofit organizations in the United States, and the extent to which they are subject to scrutiny. Singer, who was once a powerful figure in the Jewish community, has been at the center of a number of controversies in recent years. He was removed as head of the World Jewish Congress in 2006, and was later convicted of fraud and money laundering.

The Times had also reported that Singer had used the money to fund a variety of projects, including a $10 billion base in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, and a $10 billion base in the Palestinian territories. The Times had also reported that Singer had used the money to fund a variety of projects, including a $10 billion base in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, and a $10 billion base in the Palestinian territories.

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Corrections

Dwight M Chambers

There is wisdom in the old saying, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” The Reverend R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, is arguing that presumptuous inferences and technological advancements (advances in hormone therapy) allow for identification and alteration of fetuses that will grow up to be gay. We can all afford to let his ideas stand unchallenged.

Mohler, who also serves on the board of the evangelical leader James C. Dobson’s conservative group, Focus on the Family, said in an article for “Is Your Baby Gay? What If You Could Know?” “What If You Could Do Something About It?” addressing the implications for a world where sexual orientation is a matter of genes and not choice.

In the article, he summarizes and accepts scientific evidence to date, showing that there is a genetic component to the determination of a baby’s sexual orientation. He argues that it would be a moral obligation to “terminate” fetuses with hormone packages to prevent them from developing “into homosexuals,” although they have not been cited extensively in the technological sophistication of the government and even parents) to destroy the government and even parents) to destroy.

There is a long history of treating homo- sex as a disorder or disease. In a perverse tactic that dresses its bigotry in the garb of science, the elimination of LGBT people. Critics are quick to point out that his position on engineering sexual orientation is an obvious attempt to substitute his judgments for God’s or Nature’s. But beyond the hubris, his plan is also a form of genocide.

It might be difficult to think of an act as genocide when there are no bodies, no bull- letin board, and no bystanders. But Mohler — merely underlines the difference in the technological sophistication of the leadership that Mohler has proposed for us as compared to previous tyrannical regimes.

Throughout history, there have been at- tempts to eliminate people based on various characteristics. Even so, the seemingly obvious analogies are fraught with dangerous intellec- tual concepts that fail to convey the true danger of the situation. In Europe, millions of people were exterminated with an elaborate system of ovens, camps and guns. The Khmer Rouge had the education component. In contrast, the proposed “treatment” of gay fetuses would be conducted in quiet, sanitarial hospital rooms by professionals whose oath is to do no harm. Protected by the confidentiality of medical care, only a biased conversation between mother and doctor and a small hor- ror show would watch as a woman is forced to intervene in the use of ultrasounds to reduce the gravity of the moral crime proposed.

There is no moral ground for any actor (especially the government and even parents) to destroy all fetuses based on the actor’s preferences for characteristics such as gender, physical ap-pearance or even IQ. We must love our children as people, not property.

We live in the twilight of the coming eugen- ics nightmare. We can’t let those who speak of “treatment” use sanitary language today to dis- pute fetuses as different or diseased. It is time to turn down the offer. MIT has enough pres- idential candidates for one Commencement. The faculty on the Selection Committee are probably going to be here for decades. Judging by the fact that no senior one Commencement Speaker, even if the faculty on the Selection Committee is too busy or too lazy to do so, then they should at least explain their decision publicly. Meanwhile, as much as we hate to compare MIT with Harvard, the senior Commencement Speaker at Harvard (you may not like the decision, but it will be President Bill Clinton and Microsoft founder Bill Gates. We don’t know about you guys, but it sounds better than Dr. Mohamed H."

If you want to read more student opinion, we suggest you visit the “I would rather have beloved Chuck Vest who has left home. Don’t get us wrong, we like Chuck Vest — nice guy, good President, did some great things for MIT. But a commencement speaker is supposed to be uplifting and bring new insight and outside perspective to graduates who are about to enter the world. Vest has barely left the — I mean, he’s still a professor here. If you want to hear him speak, go any day of the week, and knock on his office door at 32-306. Moreover, he was President for the majority of our years here, so we already know him quite well.

The fact is, this is one step short of just hav- ing Heckfield speak twice at our graduation — is a major cop-out on MIT’s part. It’s almost as if MIT is feeling parental attachment to their son or daughter. Even a parent typically toler- ant of gay rights arguments will find too many seemingly reasonable personalizations for this “treatment.” We live in the twilight of the coming eugen- ics nightmare. We can’t let those who speak of “treatment” use sanitary language today to dis- pute fetuses as different or diseased. It is time to turn down the offer. MIT has enough pres- idential candidates for one Commencement. The faculty on the Selection Committee are probably going to be here for decades. Judging by the fact that no senior one Commencement. The faculty on the Selection Committee are probably going to be here for decades. Judging by the fact that no senior one Commencement. The faculty on the Selection Committee are probably going to be here for decades. Judging by the fact that no senior

To Reach Us

The Tech’s telephone number is (617) 235-1541. E-mail is the easiest way for people to contact the Tech. Once submitted, letters become the property of The Tech, and will not be returned. The Tech makes no commitment to publish all the letters received.

Letters to the Editor should be addressed to: Chairman Michael McGreal Herd ’08 Editor in Chief Marie Y. Thibault ’08 Business Manager William J. Hoff ’08 Managing Editor Austin Chu ’08 Executive Editor Rosa Cao G

The Tech reserves the right to edit or condense letters; shorter let- ters will be given higher priority. Once submitted, letters become the property of The Tech, and will not be returned. The Tech makes no commitment to publish all the letters received.

Guest columns are written by members of the MIT or local community and have the author’s name in italics. Columns without italics are written by Tech staff.

The URL given for the Zinn4U Web site was incorrect in the Tuesday, April 3 article “Black and You’ll Miss It.” The Web site is at www.renamed.org/Z4nU, not at www.renamed.org/2fast4u.
ACROSS
1 Drag-net dragger
8 Convertibles, casually
15 Get
16 Tumbler
17 Breaks free
18 Bowzer
19 Bauman’s group
20 Funny
21 Swung around
22 Chinese dynasty
24 Nauseated
25 Incessantly
26 Weightlifting exercise
27 Tremor
28 Cribber and flan
30 Gentle breeze
31 One Stooge
32 Taro paste
33 Rendezvous
37 Nothing to talk about?
42 Map book
43 Grow weary
44 Mandikova of tennis
45 __ Pei (winkly dog)
46 Schoolbook
47 Boyle or Sellers
48 Trumpet blast
50 ‘The Little Foxes’ playwright
51 __ fixe (obsession)
52 Pro tem
53 Extant
54 Turn one’s back on
55 Bees
56 Kind of trailer
57 Drop-off
58 Pig tails
29 Kiwi cousins
30 out
32 Cement that hardens under water
33 Old English guard dog
34 Gasohol ingredient
35 Plush Hyundai
36 Most tangy
37 Veto
38 Trounce
39 Glut
40 Still in the fridge
41 From the heart
43 up
44 Forklift operator, at times
45 Forklift operator, combined
46 Tot rod?
47 Ear and spark
48 Part of U.A.R.
49 Part of U.A.R.
50 Kiwi cousins
51 __ fixe (obsession)
52 Pro tem
53 Extant
54 Turn one’s back on
55 Bees
56 Kind of trailer
57 Drop-off
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36 Most tangy
37 Veto
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40 Still in the fridge
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43 up
44 Forklift operator, at times
45 Forklift operator, combined
46 Tot rod?
47 Ear and spark
48 Part of U.A.R.
49 Part of U.A.R.
Figure 7. This graph illustrates the mean perceived fun (in laughs per nonsense comment per minute or equivalent units) for a human population selected at random. The initial exponential increase is followed by a slowly decreasing plateau accompanied by slight nausea and somnolence. At 0.3%, fun becomes negative as the stomach regurgitates. At levels <0.5%, unconsciousness and numbness cause fun to vanish completely. Studies in other species (e.g., rats) were performed with similar results, though these were reported in appropriate units (e.g., runs into wall per hour).
COURSE 16.5: AERO-DISASTRO
THE MIT STUDENT JUGGLING CLUB
WANTS YOU!

JUGGLE FOR A COOKIE
EVERY FRIDAY 4-6 PM in Lobby 10
Free Lessons

Juggling has been shown to improve all major facets of life. It stimulates the brain, creates new brain gray matter, increases memory capacity, improves coordination, provides a great study break, emboldens the user, makes you more attractive, entertains your friends, gets you smarter, allows you to accomplish your dreams, gives you something to do while your code is compiling, should be one of the 101 things you should do before graduating and indeed can make you rich.*

*results may vary

Check out this emboldened request written from one frequent user of juggling:

To My Lovely Princess Jennifer

You are the most amazing woman I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. Your smile makes me smile and your laugh makes me laugh. I have been blessed beyond belief just knowing you. I was wondering if I could make a great request of you. May I be so bold as to request the great honor of your accompaniment to the Senior Ball on Saturday the fifth of May in the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Seven?

Your Prince Charming David
Having only heard “Here It Goes Again,” (the emotionally packed lyrics against a “soft-core” rock backdrop that gives them a unique sound in mainstream popular music.) OK Go opened for Snow Patrol in Boston. Having only heard “Here It Goes Again,” (the song that has the really cool video with the1,600 illusions) I was unsure what to expect from OK Go, and I found out that most of their songs sound very similar. With off repeated lyrics, such as “Television,” “What You Want.” OK Go opened for Snow Patrol’s concert at Agganis Arena on March 28.

Snow Patrol opened with “It’s Beginning to Rain,” and they started out getting comfortable as they danced around the stage and managed to crack some smiles. The live version of this song was mixed so that there was more emphasis on the instrumentals than the vocals, which added depth to this piece about a failing relationship. While their generally more dramatic songs, such as “Chasing Cars,” “Headlights on Dark Roads,” and “Run” were played at faster tempos with more bass and drums, the emotional impact was not lost, particularly in “Run.” Maybe Gary Lightbody, the lead singer, is just a great actor, but when he sang this last song, he actually looked like there was meaning for him in the words he sang, and it added to the impact of the performance. And when they performed “You’re All I Have,” and “Hands Open,” they were so energetic that the audience just came alive, even at the end of the three and a half hour concert.

Snow Patrol’s performance was enhanced by the visual effects on stage. These included nets of lights which complemented and changed according to the music. I particularly liked when the lights on stage pointing at the stage were dimmed so that the band members appeared as black shadows against a multicolored drop. This effect let the music speak for itself in a visually pleasing manner. Beyond the visual effects, Lightbody made the concert even more enjoyable as he interspersed anecdotes with the music. The group’s only flaw was its song endings, or lack of them. Usually, songs fade out with an instrumental chorus, but often the songs in the concert just ended. In fact, one song ended so abruptly that the audience was not sure if it was over, so that Lightbody humorously commented “You weren’t sure whether to clap along or Terrifies the shit out of me, but that’s fine.” I could go on and on about how great this performance was, but I won’t. I just encourage all of you to see Snow Patrol live if you get the chance. But if you can’t, at least get their CD because they’re a unique group that only improves the more you listen.

MIT to Movies
Alum Talks About Life Creating Visual Effects

By Jillian A. Berry

One of the things I like most about MIT is finding out about the varied career paths that alumni take. Mark Driscoll ’92 is one who took the path less traveled. Mr. Driscoll started the Hollywood based Light Effects, a visual effects company that has worked on films including “Apocalypse”, “Blood Diamond”, “The Fountain,” and the upcoming “Next” and “Gone Baby Gone.” I talked with Mr. Driscoll a few weeks ago about what he actually does and how he went from MIT to making movies.

The Tech: What year did you graduate from MIT and what was your course?

Mark Driscoll: I graduated in 1992, and it was a course 2A major and a concentration in architecture — a little bit of architecture/indus-

trial design/product design, which is what my thesis was.

TT: Why did you go into visual effects and not special effects, which would seem to fit more with your background?

MD: Well it’s actually probably un-MIT related (which is rather unfortunate) but I had been doing lighting design and stage work for properties, which a few years through high school and college. I came out to LA on a whim and started working on what we call Pixar, or production animation, which is kind of a whatever needs to be done type of job on feature film or television. I ended up actually hooking up with an independent feature that happened to be doing a fairly large amount of computer graphics and visual effects at a company called Digital Domain, which is about the largest visual effects company in town. … I went from there to a company called ZFX Effects, which did a lot of major feature films like “Armageddon” and “Volcano.” I started to look with a handful of friends, we found that there definite- ly was a niche missing in the independent film scene. Independent film is basically as defined as really low budget movies that are not necessar-ily funded by the studios … We built this com-

pany around doing visual effects for that indus-
try, which is what we do today. However, you find out if you dig into it more, financially it’s the most lucrative way to do things.

TT: A press release noted that you did the special effects for “Pirates of the Carib-
bean: Dead Man’s Chest.”

MD: Industrial Light and Magic (ILM), which is [George] Lucas’s company, did all of them. ILM farmed out some overflow work to us, and we did some work for them. I mean, I can’t say that we did it, but we enjoyed helping them out on the work.

TT: I know you worked on “Little Miss Sunshine” and I didn’t even know that “Little Miss Sunshine” had visual effects.

MD: You actually hint at a really interesting trend in the industry, and that goes as well for films — large and small — and television. What you’re finding these days — we did about 30 shots in “Little Miss Sunshine” such that none of which you’ll ever notice, and that’s the whole idea. You don’t notice them because they were designed around what we call location-based visual effects. So you’re shooting your locations in or around some gravy neon street in Cambridge, and you want to get the feeling that you’re in Chicago. So instead of flying the crew to Chi-

cago, you may come to a company like ours and say “Hey look, you know, I have this view down some side street in Cambridge, can you stick it out in the sky the Sears Tower for me?” You take it. You put in the Sears Tower, you shoot it, and you come back. And you have this kind of shot that goes by but no one notices, but subconsciously you say “Oh, that’s Chica-
go” because you’ve seen the Sears Tower, or some other recognizable architectural element. We do a lot of this stuff, especially visually.

TT: Do you do even any of the more “glam-
orous” visual effects?

MD: [laughs] Like eye-popping stuff that we all talk about? Yeah, I shouldn’t downplay what we do. There’s actually a movie coming out next month called “Next” … and we did this huge sequence [of Nicholas Cage] running down this hill with all this debris that falls around him. Rocks, boulders, a huge old steam engine, big old barrels of dice, huge log piles that all tumble down the hill around him, over him, next to him, and all of it is built in the computer. None of it is real. That was done that way so they could get their first unit actor at the location, in camera, doing the stunt, running down the hill, and then we created all the chaos around him to give the illusion that he is in and all around this debris.

TT: Does it make it harder to watch movies knowing the secrets behind them?

MD: It makes it very difficult because … being in this industry, you just notice this stuff. It’s really hard to separate yourself from that work that’s done by other people in your town. … You find that you get really, really excited by really good work, and the bad work, you scratch your head wonder why the hell that was ever done.

TT: If you would like to know more about what Mr. Driscoll does, you may contact him at markdriscoll@ilm.com
**MOVIE REVIEW ★★**

**Kibbles 'n Bits Do Not a Good Film Make**

**Year of the Dog** Dishes Ambiguity

By Alice Macdonald  

By Ali Macdonald  

**Year of the Dog**  

Written and Directed by Mike White  

Starring: Molly Shannon, John C. Reilly, and John Dugan  

Rated PG-13  

Now Playing

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The story is simple: Peggy (Molly Shannon) has a pretty uneven and unfulfilling life as a secretary with obnoxious friends, family, and boss. The only thing she lives for is her terrier, Pencil. She does everything with the dog — they watch TV, eat, and sleep together. One day, her life is turned upside down by Pencil's mysterious death. This event leads her to befriended her neighbor, Al (John C. Reilly) and Nest (Peter Saarsgard), a kinder spirit in that he also only trains animals. Nest inspires her to volunteer with an animal adoption group, become a vet, and get involved with lots of animal charities. Meanwhile, she becomes suspicious that her neighbor, Al poisoned Pencil and is to blame for his demise. The movie chugs along in an episodic fashion without any strong story arc as Peggy's life spirals out of control. The ending is not what one expects, but not in a good way — it is unsatisfying and ambiguous.

From the outset, “Year of the Dog” is instilled with a strange aura, which could be attributed to several factors. Primarily, there is very little camera movement — there are lots of still shots of static things such as building boards or building exteriors. Often the camera is stationary and we observe two people conversing. One shot that was implemented frequently is a medium zoom of someone centered in the frame talking to someone else, but it almost feels like the actors are talking to the camera, not the other person. This stillness combined with the simplistic soundtrack was interesting, but not convincingly original enough to either add to or detract from the overall film.

The performances were definitely the high-light of the film. Molly Shannon gives a surprisingly muted and convincing performance as the middle-aged and sad Peggy. Thankfully, Shannon refrain from doing her crazy shock that she became famous for on SNL, and mostly she just makes faces — lots and lots of faces. “Year of the Dog” contains countless moments where there is a shot of someone saying something mildly ridiculous followed by a cut to Shannon making a funny face. Overall, Shannon’s performance is good, but lacks the energy of her supporting cast. Performances by Laura Dern, Peter Saarsgard, and Josh Pais are the only things that make “Year of the Dog” memorable. Dem plays Peggy’s sister-in-law you who find amazing, quirky, and lov-able all at once. Josh Pais is brilliant as Peggy’s boss, Robin — there is just something so perfec-t about the way he says, “What were you thinking, Peggy?” As far as I am concerned, however, the real star is Saarsgard. When his character enters the film, things instantly get 237 percent better. He uses a slightly effemi-nate accent and facial expressions to perfec-tion — not going too far, but remaining comic and lackadaisical.

In the end, “Year of the Dog” doesn’t appeal to a mainstream audience. If you go to the movies expecting excitement and straightforward storytelling, you may want to steer clear, otherwise, give it a try.

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**INTERVIEW**

Writing, Directing, and Molly Shannon

Mike White Discusses ‘Year of the Dog’

By Alice Macdonald  

By Ali Macdonald  

You may not be familiar with his name, but you are almost certainly fami- liar with Mike White’s work. He has written such indie fics as “Chuck & Buck” and “The Good Girl.” He also penned the hit-budget “Orange County,” “The School of Rock,” and “Nacho Libre.” White has also written for television’s “Dawson’s Creek” and “Freaks and Geeks.”

I met with Mike White while he was on a press stop in Boston promoting his latest film, “Year of the Dog,” which he both wrote and di-rec ted. In a lot of ways, White mirrors the main character Peggy in the film. He is introverted and completely unpretentious (even while sip-ping a Fiji water). Throughout the interview, he seemed a little unsure of himself, peppering his speech with “like” and “you know.”

White is also a nice guy. As I left his hotel suite, he said, “See you later,” like he really meant it. Like I would see him at a barbecue later in the week, even though I would obviously never see him again. It was a perfect illus-tration of everything White does; the moment was a strange mélange of the tragic, the comic, and the awkward.

The Tech: Dogs really form the main focus of “Year of the Dog.” Do you have dogs your-self, or what was the inspiration for the film?

Mike White: It’s kind of more inspired by a cat.

MW: Really? Why not “Year of the Cat”?

MW: Well, cats don’t really lend themselves to the cinema in the way that dogs do.

MW: It’s true. It’s easier to train a dog. Although, during the film, the trainers said that it is easier to train a cat, but I don’t believe it.

MW: Not my cats.

MW: Yeah, not my cats either. But, I had a cat that died. It was a stray cat that I had inher- ited and I was really bummed out about it… I was really stressed with work at the time … and I felt really sorry for myself and for the cat. It was one of those things where I got behind in the scripts I was doing and like, this show, TV show I was doing, basically kind of shut down because I had just gotten so behind on stuff. If the cat hadn’t died, I don’t think it would have happened. So I was thinking, well, that’s kind of interesting. When the dust had settled and I had some distance on it — it was an interesting experience, and maybe there’s a movie in it.

MW: One thing that struck me while watch- ing the movie was the music. I didn’t recognize it — could you tell me a little about it?

MW: Well, the music was done by a com-poser who is awesome. He’s this guy who’s done a lot of comedies and he started his TV show “Buffy,” I just wanted to do something that felt very, very, in its own world. And I just saw her [Peggy] as this woman who has this sort of idealistic view of things — almost a naive, child-like view, and I wanted to reflect that.

MW: Did you write the part of Peggy for Molly Shannon?

MW: I did. I had done a show with her that ended really badly and that was a bummer. That was the show that I was doing when the cat died and I was just like, Molly is such a great actress and she is so fun and it would be so much fun to work with her on something that wasn’t such a nightmare. I am just going to write something small that I know I can get made and push to get Molly in it and we can just have a good time and I got lucky and was able to do it.

MW: It was not what I expected. I was anticip-at ing the larger-than-life Molly Shannon from SNL, but here she was toned down.

MW: One of the things I was excited about was for people to see how much of a range she actually has.

MW: I could write stuff like that. Just that I don’t think I would direct it. I would prob- ably get more second guessing: “will everyone make my days and everything, I realized it was actually pretty fun.

MW: I just might write stuff like that. Just that I don’t think I would direct it. I would prob-ably get more second guessing: “will everyone like this?” or “will this be fun for the whole family?”

MW: What are you working on next?

MW: I am supposed to be writing this movie with Edgar Wright, the director of “Shaun of the Dead” and “Hot Fuzz,” which is just com- ing out.

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**The New England semi-finals of the International Championships of A Cappella were held on Saturday, March 24 at Kresge Auditorium. The event was hosted by one of MIT’s a cappella groups, Resonance. (Above) Members of Resonance do a cheer before opening ICCA. (Right) Amherst College’s Zymbies won the competition. Photography by Christina Kang**
Learn how wavelets deconstruct sounds and images into a mathematical analog of a music score, and how they can be used in a multitude of ways, from the restoration of old recordings to the study of birdsong, fingerprints, and earthquakes.

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Surfing with Wavelets

A talk by Ingrid Daubechies

Talk begins at 7:00pm. Social hour from 6:30pm.

February 4, 2007

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Cover letter and resume should be dropped off by April 21 to: MIT Admissions, 3-108, Attn: Edmund Jones
Student Concerns Remain With Pritchett’s All-You-Care-To-Eat

Dining, from Page 1

ing open until 9 p.m., he said.

Preferred Dining fee increase is not the only campus dining program facing disapproval from students. The all-you-care-to-eat buffet-style arrangement at Pritchett Dining introduced on Monday is already under criticism. For $8.50, students may eat as much as they want from 6–9 p.m. Monday through Friday at Pritchett Dining. A la carte service is no longer offered, students cannot take food out, and must stay within the dining hall if they wish to go for more rounds of food according to Wilson. Students on the Preferred Dining plan pay $5.25.

Jacobs said that the buffet-style plan at Pritchett will turn away students who don’t want to spend $8.50 on a meal. “Pritchett used to pride itself on being $6 or less,” Jacobs added. She said that this will encourage students to overeat and fears that the quality of food will decrease since it will be cooked in mass quantities and not individually.

Berlin stated that the food quality at Pritchett will not change. East Campus President Sarah C. Hopp ‘08 said that the changes at Pritchett were implemented without notice to East Campus residents. “Spraying things like this upon students unannounced and without input shows what appears to be a lack of respect for students by the administration,” said Hopp.

Jacobs said that she only found out about the buffet-style arrangement at Pritchett on Monday when she “looked at the campus dining Web site.” According to the campus dining Web site, Simmons Late Night Café and for locations, at Pritchett Dining, the purchases at the four House Dining facilities are charged on a prorated basis for students who move residences and are charged on a prorated basis for students who join the program later in the term. McCormick Hall students are also not required to students who move residences and are charged on a prorated basis for students who join the program later in the term.

“Preferred Dining Members enjoy a 50 percent discount on most purchases at the four House Dining locations, at Pritchett Dining, the Simmons Late Night Café and for Friday Sabbath dinners at Kosher Dining,” according to the campus dining Web site.

Survey to be released

“We will be introducing a survey early next week that will, among other things, helpfully understand the effect of these fee increases, as well as student preference for a variety of other ideas MIT Dining is considering for some of the dining halls, including AYCTE,” said Fellman. Baker House Dining Committee is also conducting a survey of Baker House residents and will release a report on Monday, said David Dryjanski ‘07, a member of the committee.

These surveys come at a time when some students believe campus dining is not seeking student input. Jacobs said that she feels the changes at Pritchett “will make students less trusting of Campus Dining because this decision was made without student feedback… I personally have been trying to set up a feedback session about Pritchett to see if students want it to be AYCTE or not,” she added.

Hopp also expressed concerns that campus dining does not take student opinion into account. “Students complain of high prices, but the prices still go up. Students complain that the dining Web site doesn’t have useful up-to-date menu information so they’d rather go to campusfood.com, but the Web site remains stagnant,” she said.

Preferred Dining membership is open to all students and is mandatory for undergraduates in Baker House, McCormick Hall, Next House, and Simmons Hall, with the exception of seniors in McCormick. Berlin said that Preferred Dining was not required of McCormick Hall residents when the current senior class moved in as freshmen in 2003. “Each year another class is added,” hence Preferred Dining will be required of all residents living in McCormick next year. McCormick seniors who moved in after program membership became mandatory for McCormick Hall students are also not required to be in the program. Berlin said that the Preferred Dining fee is refunded to students who move residences and are charged on a prorated basis for students who join the program later in the term.

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son Max Rothstein is a senior with an exemplary record at the Laboratory School, a private school associated with the University of Chicago. Max applied to 12 top schools and was accepted outright only by Wesleyan, New York University and the University of Michigan.

“Some of his classmates, with better test scores than his, were rejected at every Ivy League school,” Ms. Gzesh said.

The brutally low acceptance rates this year were a result of an avalanche of applications to top schools, which college admissions officials attributed to three factors. First, a demographic bulge is working through the nation’s population — the children of the baby boomers are graduating from high school in record numbers. The federal Department of Education projects that 3.2 million students will graduate from high school this spring, compared with 3.1 million last year and 2.4 million in 1993. (The statistics project that the number of high school graduates will peak in 2008.) Another factor is that more high school students are enrolling in college immediately after high school. In the 1970s, less than half of all high school graduates went directly to college, compared with more than 60 percent today.

The third trend driving the frantic competition is that the average college applicant applies to many more colleges than in past decades. In the 1960s, fewer than 2 percent of college freshmen had applied to six or more colleges, whereas in 2006 more than 2 percent reported having applied to 11 or more, according to The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall 2006, an annual report on a continuing long-term study published by the University of California, Los Angeles.

“Multiple applications per student,” Mr. Hawkins said, “is a factor that exponentially crowds the college admissions environment.”

One reason that students are filing more applications is the increasing use of the Common Application, a form that can be completed and filed via the Internet.

The ferocious competition at the most selective schools has not affected the overall acceptance rate at the rest of the nation’s 2,500 four-year colleges and universities, which accept an average of 70 percent of applicants. “That overall 70 percent acceptance rate hasn’t changed since the 1980s,” Mr. Hawkins said. But with more and more students filing out ever more applications, schools like the California Institute of Technology received a record number of applications this year — 3,595, or 8 percent more than last year — and admitted 576 students. Among so many talented applicants, a prospective student with perfect SAT scores was not unusual, said Jill Perry, a Caltech spokeswoman.

“The successful students have to have shown some passion for science and technology in high school or their personal life,” Ms. Perry said. “That means creating a computer system for your high school, or taking a tractor apart and putting it back together.”

The competition was fierce not only at the top universities, but at selective small colleges, like Williams, Bowdoin and Amherst, all of which reported record numbers of applications. Amherst received 6,668 applications and accepted 1,167 students for its class of 2011, compared with the 4,491 applications and 1,030 acceptance letters it sent for the class of 2002 nine years ago, said Paul Statt, an Amherst spokesman.
MIT South Asian American Students present...

Desi Pardesi

Culture Show 2007!
April 6 – Kresge Auditorium
7:00PM – 10:00PM
Tickets ($5) on Sale: April 6, Lobby 10 & at the door
Questions? Email saasboard@mit.edu

Application deadline: April 6, 2007
Contact: Susan Cohen at cohen@media.mit.edu
Appplication: http://web.mit.edu/arts/do/funding/grantguide.html

Not ULYSSES Grant
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It’s Council for the Arts grant!
The Mental Health Service offers many different therapies, support, and discussion groups. Mental health clinicians will listen to the needs of students, discuss the various types of treatment available, and make appropriate recommendations.

Is everything in a mental health visit really 100% confidential?
Everything that a student tells a mental health clinician is privileged information. This means that the information cannot be given to any other person without their permission. There are a few exceptions: 1) if the student is in serious danger of harming his or herself or someone else, then the clinician can notify other people in order to prevent harm; 2) if the student is involved in the abuse or neglect of a child or an elderly person, then the clinician is mandated to inform the appropriate agency.

Who should use mental health services?
Any student who is having troubles with stress, substance abuse, or mental health issues, should feel free to come to the mental health service at MIT Medical.

Typical mental health issues include difficulties with relationships, family stresses, school stresses, break-ups, anxiety or worry, questions about sexual identity, eating issues and depression. Often these things are affecting the student’s ability to do his or her school work or enjoy things that usually are a source of pleasure.

What services does the MIT Mental Health Service provide?
The MIT Mental Health Service works with individuals, couples, groups, and families. Services include evaluation, treatment (both psychotherapy and psychopharmacology), referrals, and urgent care.

The Mental Health Service staff is comprised of a diverse group of clinicians from different disciplines and different approaches to psychotherapy including psychodynamic and cognitive behavioral therapy.

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**SPORTS**

**MIT Cycles Up 3 Spots in ECCC Standings**

By Eric Edlund 10:02 a.m.

This past weekend, the MIT Cycling Team jumped from fifth in their division to second by placing highly in three different road races at the Boston Beanpot Cycling Classic, the largest collegiate cycling race in the nation.

MIT placed Army, Bucknell, and Yale to move into second in the Eastern Collegiate Cycling Conference Division II standings.

The event began before dawn on Saturday morning, when the MIT team began preparing disc wheels and aero helmets for the team time trial (TTT), an event in which teams of up to four riders race against the clock. MIT had the biggest showing, fielding nine squads covering every men's and women's category.

The Women's A squad (Caitlin Beyer G, Jana L. Beito G, Martha W. Buckley G, and Sonya J. Cates G) rode to third place, only 13 seconds behind first place University of New Hampshire and ahead of fourth place Princeton by almost a minute. Operating with less than an hour of formal training, the Men's Intro squad (G. Issao Fujiwara '07, Adam J. Grafton '08, W. Buckley G, and Sonya J. Cates G) knocked out a first place finish. These results were backed up by five other top 5 finishes.

Despite their tired legs, MIT went up against the other schools again. Fujiwara finished strong in the Intro Men's field, placing third in the pack sprint.

On Sunday's Tufts Criterium, a short road race.

For nine members of the MIT field teams trained and competed in Florida over spring break. With the help of his teammates, Anthony J. Schmauch took third in the blisteringly fast Men's C race.

For nine members of the MIT team, it was their first race weekend ever. One of them, Trincocca, said afterwards, "I really liked the road race, especially because I could apply some of my drafting skills and stay near the front of the first pack."

MIT's best event. Nick C. Loomis G put many months of hard training to work and took home his first win in the Men's D race. Jason A. Sears G launched a powerful attack in the Men's D race. Jason A. Sears G put many months of hard training to work and took home his first win in the Men's D race. Jason A. Sears G launched a powerful attack in the Men's D race.

Mindy Brauer 3:00 p.m., duPont Tennis Courts

Despite a game-high seven points on three goals and four assists for the Blue (7-5, 2-0 NEWMAC), Laura C. Watson '08 and Casey M. Flynn '10 paced the Engineers' lead with an unassisted tally which was followed by a goal from Watson, making the score 3-0.

Wellesley ended the shutout at the 19:19 mark on a goal by Maxine Brownstein that was set up by Casey Logan. Tech extended its margin to 4-1 almost three minutes later on an unassisted strike by Watson.

The Blue responded by outscoring the Engineers, 5-1, to close the game on Tuesday.

Rachel M. Nienhaus '07 crosses the finish line after running the anchor leg of the women's 4x400m relay, which finished first with a time of 4:37.41. The MIT men's and women's track and field teams trained and competed in Florida over spring break.

**Lacrosse Falls To Wellesley Despite 3-0 Start**

By Mindy Brauer 3:00 p.m., duPont Tennis Courts

Seven second-half goals by Wellesley College helped power it to a 13-7 victory over MIT in a New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference (NEWMAC) women's lacrosse game on Tuesday.

Haley Geller posted a game-high seven points on three goals and four assists for the Blue (7-5, 2-0 NEWMAC). Laura C. Watson '08 and Casey M. Flynn '10 paced the Engineers (2-4, 0-1 NEWMAC) with two goals apiece.

MIT quickly got on the scoreboard when Flynn converted a free position shot after only 45 seconds had elapsed in the first half. She extended the Engineers' lead with an unassisted tally which was followed by a goal from Watson, making the score 3-0.

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