Modi & Wyman take UA top spots in landslide win

By Ana Lyons

Vrajesh Y. Modi ’11 and Samantha “Samm” G. Wyman ’11 were elected as Undergraduate Association President and Vice President, receiving over 80 percent of votes in the spring election. Roughly 40 percent of undergraduates — 1,686 students — voted. The results of the election, which included both electronic votes and results from paper ballots, were announced at 2 p.m. on Saturday March 20 by the UA Election Commissioner.

“I wasn’t expecting [to see] that much of a landslide,” Wyman said. “I was really excited to see how many people supported us.”

Modi said that the pair’s door-to-door campaigning — trying to reach out to as many people as possible — contributed to their success.

Modi and Wyman, who ran under the slogan “we do things,” will start serving their terms at the beginning of next school year in September 2010. Highlights from their platform include improving freshmen advising with an optional mentoring system, creating a system for student to add and drop classes online, and improving SafeRide.

Both running mates have been involved in the UA as dorm senators in previous years. They have been involved with several high-profile UA projects such as the Star Market shuttle, the produce stand, putting a PDF version of the Add/Drop form online, and the soon-to-be installed Safelid monitor outside the Student Center.

Modi is an East Campus resident who is double majoring in Course 2 and 15. Wyman is majoring in Course 10 and lives in Burton-Conner.

To find out more information regarding the UA Election results, including the results of class council positions, visit http://web.mit.edu/elections/Spring10/results.shtml.

UA Exec meetings to be held in dorm

Modi said improving communication between the UA and the larger student body will be a priority. “The UA’s job is to represent all the students, with even more emphasis on outreach. We make sure that people are informed and people’s voices are incorporated in any recommendations,” he said.

“The main centerpiece” of UA Elections, Page 17

By Jessica J. Pourian

“My grrry trainmann” exclaimed Jerry Holkins, co-creator of Penny Arcade after losing an arm-wrestling match to co-creator Mike Krahulik at a Q&A session at the Penny Arcade Exposition last weekend.

“That’s my drawing arm,” Krahulik complained, shaking his arm. Krahulik — known as his cartoon alter ego Gabe online — is responsible for drawing the comic while Holkins, who is known in the strip as Tycho, writes the comic.

Over this past weekend, nearly 60,000 gamers attended PAX East, a huge video game exposition put on by the writers of the popular web comic Penny Arcade. This convention marked the first time that the Penny Arcade Exposition made it to the East Coast. It is usually held in Seattle during the late summer.

Running from March 26 until March 28 in the Hyatt Veterans Memorial Convention Center, the convention featured plenty of new games and demos, humorous panels, and several concerts. Game developers from all over the country, including MIT’s own GAMBIT Lab, had a chance to show off their games to the crowds.

Concerts on Friday and Saturday nights included the Video Game Orchestra, Metroid Metal, MC Frontalot, Paul and Storm, Jonathan Coulton, Protomen, and Anamanaguchi. During the Q&A session with the Penny Arcade crew, PAX East, Page 12

Census forms distributed to living groups this week

Students who live on campus or in a FSILG will receive a census form this week. The census must be filled out as soon as it arrives and mailed back by National Census Day, April 1, 2010. Anyone who does not complete the census form will be fined $100 by the Federal Government, and MIT is legally obligated to provide directory information on them to Census officials, who will visit to ensure completion of the form.

MIT is distributing the census forms to all residents of institute-approved housing. MIT is also keeping a website (http://web.mit.edu/census/) to answer any questions that the community may have about the census; students can find direct contacts about the census in their residence and look at examples of a census form. For more information e-mail census2010@mit.edu.

The U.S. Federal Census is a count of everyone living in the United States, including US citizens, permanent residents, and aliens. Information collected by the census is confidential and will be used for purposes such as the allocation of funds to infrastructure, research and transportation.

— Junsun Fan

Penny Arcade comes to town

Three days of gaming culture, and gaming

By Robert McQueen

The produce market

Robert McQueen

Last Thursday, I found myself standing in the same hall as I had been two years prior when I was accepted to MIT. It was at the Radisson Providence Harbor Hotel in Rhode Island, where the MIT Club of Rhode Island has been hosting its prospective freshmen dinner since 2007.

Over spring break, close to 500 prospective dinners are hosted by MIT Alumni clubs all over the world. From Taipei, Taiwan, to Hawaii, prospective freshmen, current MIT students, and MIT alumni come together to talk about MIT. For some prospective freshmen, this is their first real MIT experience.

I arrived at the Radisson at 5:30 p.m. The front desk worker directed me to a room where I found three people standing outside in the hallway. Alex Lin, a prospective freshman from Westerly, Rhode Island, introduced himself first. Lin was accompanied by his father. Across from him was current MIT student Matthew D. Stokosh ’13, also a Rhode Island native.

While waiting for more people to arrive, all four of us chatted about the available majors at MIT. “By the end of orientation,” I told Alex, “you will know who the MIT numbers stand for.” While Alex said that he did not know what course he wanted to be, he showed a great interest in energy efficiency and business.

At 6 p.m., MIT alumni started to trickle into the Radisson. The total attendance came to be about 30 people, mostly alumni. Only one other prospective, Katherine Sylvestre from Massachusetts, attended the event. She arrived straight from ballet practice.

Event organizer Kevin R. O’Neill ’02 hand-
ed out name tags to everyone. For the next 30 minutes, Matthew and I told Alex and Katherine in response to a request from the audience. Penny Arcade creators Mike Krahulik (left) and Jerry Holkins arm wrestle. After an overly dramatic minute, Krahulik won.
Female suicide bombers blamed for Moscow blasts

By Clifford J. Levy
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Brazen suicide bombings in the center of Moscow on Monday confronted Prime Minister Vladimir V. Putin with a grave challenge to his record of curbing terrorism, and raised the possibility that he will respond as he has in the past by significantly tightening control over the country. The explosions, set off by female suicide bombers in two landmark subway stations, killed at least 35 people and wounded scores of others, raising fears that the Muslim insurgency in southern Russia, including Chechnya, was once again being brought to the country’s heart.

The attacks during the morning rush hour seemed all but designed to taunt the security services, which have been championed by Putin in the decade since he took power in Russia. The first one occurred at the Lubyanka subway station, next to the headquarters of the FSB, the successor agency to the Soviet-era KGB that Putin led in the late 1980s.

Putin, the former president and current prime minister, has built his reputation in part on his success in bottling up the Muslim insurgency in southern Russia and preventing major terrorist attacks in the country’s population centers in recent years. If the bombings on Monday herald a renewed campaign of insurgents in major cities, then that legacy may be tarnished.

The attacks could also throw into doubt the policies of Putin’s prototype, President Dmitry Medvedev, who has spoken in favor of liberalizing the government, increasing political pluralism and dealing with terrorism by addressing the root causes of the insurgency.

While Medvedev has not yet made many major changes, Putin has generally allowed him to pursue his course. More terrorism, though, could cause Putin to shove Medvedev aside and move the security-oriented circle of advisors around Putin to the forefront.

“Putin said, ‘One thing I definitely accomplished was this,’ and he didn’t,” said Pavel K. Baev, a Russian who is a professor at the International Peace Research Insti-

Researchers in health care taxes move, push on provision of health reform

By Steven Greenhouse
THE NEW YORK TIMES

An association representing 300 large corporations urged President Barack Obama and Congress on Monday to speed up the health care overhaul that prompted Aetna, Caterpillar and other companies to announce substantial changes for the current quarter. The association, the American Benefits Council, said the provision — which reduces the tax deductions for companies with drug coverage for their retirees — would “deal a significant blow to corporate profits and would discourage companies from hiring more workers.”

ATR announced last week that it was taking a $1 billion charge because of the provision. Deere & Co. announced a $100 million charge, Caterpillar a $100 million charge, and IBM a $90 million charge.

Many companies said they were taking these changes now, before the current quarter ended, to comply with accounting rules. But some corporate critics asserted that the companies’ rapid response was intended solely to avoid taxes and not to comply with the provision. They said the overall health care overhaul would save businesses more than $135 billion over the next decade by reducing health care inflation.

“We’re confident that the benefits are going to accrue and strengthen businesses’ bottom line,” said Linda Douglass, the communica-

WEATHER

Rainiest March on record?

By Elizabeth Maroon
THE NEW YORK TIMES

As you read this, we are surpassing the record for Boston’s rainiest March in the last century. As of last night, we have received a total of more than 11.2 inches of rain this month, while the rainiest March prior totaled 11.0 inches in 1953. Flooding throughout the region will occur, the NWS has warned. Flood warnings are in place for all of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island, as well as much of New York and New Jersey. Today, a strong southerly low-level jet stream from the E/S/E/S/EI feeds lots of moisture into the region. Rainy interludes with strong winds slowly push the low pressure system directly on top of us, creating a strong region of conve

Fires are blazing over the Massachusetts, Nevada and central Nevada. These fires are burning close to the northern and southern borders of the state and are reaching a maximum speed of 20 mph. But when the rain falls, this too shall pass! This evening the system will start to finally push off to our north. The majority of the rain will be behind us, and we will be seeing clear skies and cool temps tonight and tomorrow.

High temperatures will be comfortable — in the upper 60s on Friday, lower 70s on Saturday and higher 80s on Sunday.

Situations about the time where there is a chain of at-

Extended Forecast

Today: Rainy weather will continue. Rain will taper off by the middle of the afternoon. Highs in the upper 50s (°C) and low 60s (°F).

Tonight: Light rain and clouds with a low near 42°F (°C). Rain will taper off by morning.

Tomorrow: Cloudy with a chance for lingering rain. High near safety as the wind will push away. Cold front at midday. Wind gusts could be dangerous.

Thursday: Mostly sunny with a high in the mid-sixties.
10 Mexican students among dead in drug violence massacre

By James McKinney Jr.

Mexico readied Monday from another bloody weekend of drug-related killings that was made even more horrible by the slump in the narco business of 10 young people and children, including two young children who were attacked on March 13. A few minutes later, Jorge Alberto Salcido, a reputed leader of the Barrio Azteca gang, were attacked on March 18, arresting more than 100 members of the street gang and 21 -- five girls and five boys from Duncan said the two states had won 38 other states and the District of Columbia to a win of $4 billion in a Choose Your School grants, convincing the Obama administration that they have bold plans for overhauling the nation’s education system.

Delaware is to be awarded about $3 million and Delaware Governor Markell said that the competition in January, more than five times the original idea of covering states’ student-data tracking systems and turning around the lowest-performing states.

Officials said in a statement.

that broke up within minutes late Saturday night.

that has been unable to offer a convincing case for the second round of the competition into a third round this year.

Tuesday, March 30, 2010

The Tech

North.

That's impossible to get into

It is not clear what some students at South Hadley High School expected to achieve by subjecting a freshman to the relentless taunting described by a prosecutor and classmates.

A crime-plagued college that's impossible to get into

This is the week when millions of college applicants will find out whether they got into their first-choice schools, were put on the waiting list or were rejected. Anyone whose heart is set on huge universities like the University of Pennsylvania and the University of California, Los Angeles might want to think twice before applying. The new federal advisory board for tobacco regulation plans to meet for the first time Tuesday in Washington. Tipping the agenda will be a key coalition of supporters — including the industry giant Altria, which owns Philip Morris — Congress passed the issue on to the FDA and opponents of smoking, seven former secretaries of health and the Food and Drug Administration to regulate tobacco for the first time Tuesday in Washington. Topping the agenda for the FDA will be a data-heavy week. The Commerce Department said that consumer spending rose 0.3 percent in February, even though household income remained flat.

For the best-seller author who shadows her long-running “Law & Order” shows, “and it’s really hard coming up with a name for a university where the government could also set higher prices for menthol cigarettes.

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By Choe Sang-Hun

The mystery of what caused a South Korean warship to sink in disputed waters may not be solved for months, naval officials said Sunday.

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CORRECTIONS
A Friday, March 19 article about torsional incinerators incorrectly stated that residents of East Campus wrapped their basement smoke detectors in plastic bags to keep the alarms from going off. MTF Facilities clarified the situation, noting that they keep moisture out of electrical connections, not to prevent steam from setting off the alarm. The caption for the photo of the East Campus smoke detector shop on the front page of Friday’s issue misrepresented the cause of the damage. The damage occurred not because of leaks, but because of an air bubble that was left open and let the rain in.

The front page “In Short” section of the Friday, March 19 is seen contained several errors. Faculty committee members are not automatically excluded from voting in the March meeting, as stated in the section. The revised policy on hidden first term grades affects all first-year grades, not just first-term grades, as previously stated. The policy was approved by the Committee on the Undergraduate Program and announced in a statement dated Feb. 9 and at the March faculty meeting; it is not subject to a vote of the Faculty, in April or otherwise.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

New shuttle service is in an awkward spot
I’m so excited about the new shuttle information service that was installed inside of the student center! Now I can sit in the comfortable, climate-controlled environment while the student center while the shuttle tells me exactly when to head out to catch a Sapphire! If used to be a pain such standing outside waiting for the shuttles, especially in the freezing cold of winter or the torrential rains of spring!

—Andrew Freeman

THE ECONOMICS OF ENDANGERMENT

Why (we fail) to protect Earth’s most vulnerable species

By Holly Moeller

VANCOUVER, B.C. — Sealvhores. The last thing you would want to hear on my mind as you walk into the city that just hosted the Winter Olympics, complete with a fuzzy Sasquatch mascot that couldn’t be more unlike the sleek sea creatures. But there is no more appropri- ate place to discuss the economics of endangered species.

The University of British Columbia, where scientist Amanda Vincent leads Project Seahorse, a team of researchers who use environmental pressure threaten many species. It’s easy to forget that seahorses are the only ones out there! Den, it’s easy to identify poached items: the iconic fish to spearhead marine conserva- tion, has so many members (175 countries have individual and goods made from their bodies 30,000 species. Listing protects species by added seahorses to a growing list of over 400 endangered marine animal species. But there is no more appropri- ate place to discuss the economics of endangered species.

Three-fourths of species populate the world’s coastal waters, where they are found in the habitats (sea grasses, mangroves, seagrass beds) that are dynamized to catch fish, or when coastal development covers seagrass beds with silt-laden runoff, for example) and over- fishing. Seahorses are common bycatch in trawling ships, but they’re also netted for use in eastern medicine, or to be dried into colorful souveniers. Environmental trade and environ- mental pressure threaten many species with extinction, yet the charismatic ap- pearing of seahorses (and their razor-sharp teeth, or the most fantastic reproductive strategy in which male parent bears) make their story a compelling one.

Perhaps that’s why Vincent and Pro- ject Seahorse triumphed in 2004, when the Convention on International Trade in En- dangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora added seahorses to a growing list of over 30,000 species. Listing protects species by restricting international trade (as several severe cases, although international trade is not bannin- ing international trade in live indi- viduals and goods made from their bodies (like shark fins, which has so many members (175 countries have signed on since the convention entered into force in 1975), listing a species is a long and painful process with global repercussions.

In the case of the seahorse, the listing is a new precedent by opening the door for protection of commercially important fish species.

It’s a door that many countries would rather have left shut. So, when bluefin tuna and several spe- cies of sharks were considered for listing at the CITES conference in February, there was no more appropri- ate place to discuss the economics of endangered species.

In fact, no marine species were granted protection by CITES at the Doha, Qatar, meeting…a frightening result and a slap in the face to the UN’s International Year of Biodiversity. In fact, no marine species were granted protection by CITES at the Doha, Qatar, meeting…a frightening result and a slap in the face to the UN’s International Year of Biodiversity.

But marine species are being destroyed at an alarming rate. How many rhino ranches would we need to still have standing in the elements in the know when the furs are coming in low? And what happens when you get soaked to the bone, that species, that beacon of Saipan grace, will give me hope.

—Andrew Freeman

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Perhaps...
Finally!

Though it may prove a disaster for Democrats in November, they have done the right thing by passing health care reform.

By Keith Yost

The robust non-group market that this bill provides will better allow millions to insure themselves against one of the greatest financial risks of their lives: the citizens faces and will remove a significant barrier to job switching.

The absence of a public option should not be of concern. Lack of competition is not a defining issue in insurance markets, and according to the Congressional Budget Office has estimated the impact of a public option to be negligible. Furthermore, a public option would have left a back door open for government to take over the provision of health insurance by running the option at a loss to drive out private insurers. By keeping it out, we have preserved our free market system and averted creating a source of regulatory risk for private insurers.

The robust non-group market that this bill provides will provide a small bump to Democratic approval ratings in the short term, do not expect the effect to last long. Between now and 2014, the act does little, and what it does do will likely be seen less as a Democrat's victory than as a victory of sentimentality. Throughout the debate, they referenced the "three-legged stool" of health insurance reform. You couldn't ban discrimination based upon pre-existing conditions without a mandate, and you couldn't in good conscience enact a mandate without subsidizing those who cannot afford health insurance. They pointed out, quite rightly, that ending discrimination based upon pre-existing conditions without a mandate was a recipe for an insurance death spiral. Of the six states that had attempted such a move, all six are now among the eight most expensive insurance markets in the country.

Secondly, as strong as this act is, there is one area Democrats sacrificed their rationality to sentimentality. Throughout the debate, they referenced the "three-legged stool" of health insurance reform. You couldn't ban discrimination based upon pre-existing conditions without a mandate, and you couldn't in good conscience enact a mandate without subsidizing those who cannot afford health insurance. They pointed out, quite rightly, that ending discrimination based upon pre-existing conditions without a mandate was a recipe for an insurance death spiral. Of the six states that had attempted such a move, all six are now among the eight most expensive insurance markets in the country.

Furthermore, during the debate, Republicans were able to successfully link the "doc fix," a perennial vote to avert a large cut to doctor reimbursement rates that has been programmed into the Medicare program, to health care reform by arguing that savings wrung out of Medicare should be used to permanently solve the problem of doctor reimbursement. As a consequence, Demoerats will be open to fresh charges of either harming seniors or growing the deficit every time the issue comes up.

Finally, the experience of individual insurers is an attempt to rein in our rising health care costs, but curbing health care costs is a difficult issue without a simple solution. The health care system as we know it is not capable of as it was stripped out of the debate.

Tuesday, March 30, 2010  The Tech
Who’s in charge here?

By Kevin Liu

This is the first in a series on the graduate student leadership development experience at MIT, brought to you by the Leadership Development Subcommittee of the MIT Graduate Student Council. They welcome comments and feedback at gsc-leadership@mit.edu.

I’m a very top-down sort of person. I’m used to being able to ask “who’s in charge here?” and getting a simple answer. At MIT, the answer to that question is never simple, and that’s the beauty of this place.

When I first arrived here just over a year and a half ago, I was stunned at how anything ever got done. It seemed that everyone I met was working on something completely different, in silos, separated from other departments and projects. Somehow, though, the atmosphere at MIT always seems to evoke progress. Whether it’s the groundbreaking of a new building or the creation of a new scientific knowledge, or the creation of a new student club, it’s hard to turn a corner around campus without seeing something you’ve never seen before.

What does this have to do with leadership? What I’ve learned is that looking for leadership from a top-down perspective simply doesn’t work at MIT. Every leader—from the top; who doesn’t aspire to become the CEO, the big shot with the corner office?—shouldn’t MIT students be charting their path toward becoming top-down leaders rather than wasting time mucking around with peers? Once again, I think MIT is at the cutting edge of what it means to be a leader.

I was always taught that the best view was from the top; who doesn’t aspire to become the CEO, the big shot with the corner office? Shouldn’t MIT students be charting their path toward becoming top-down leaders rather than wasting time mucking around with peers? Once again, I think MIT is at the cutting edge of what it means to be a leader. The clubs, conferences, and activities we get involved in here are not just for practice — they have real impact. They prepare us for the real world of today. What does it matter who has the corner office when your nearest coworker works an ocean away? Does innovation rest in the hands of CEOs, or friends tinkering in a garage? Is it really important to fight for the view from the top, or can you see the details better from the bottom?

The answers to these questions are more blurry today than ever before. Prolific information technology, the spread of common languages, and increasing multilateralism in international relations guarantee a future where peer relationships, not executive management, will separate good leaders from bad.

With that in mind, there are a few ways that we as a community can improve. First, off, we need more participation by faculty and staff in student-organized activities. Due to the nature of their positions and the necessity to interact with students, faculty and staff offer a valuable broad perspective to students. Both on top of that, social settings offer a chance to learn lessons that might not come up in the classroom or lab. Both students and teachers can gain insights from each other, and at least for now, these opportunities are too often not taken.

Second, the Graduate Student Council and Association of Student Activities should support team-building activities for student leaders at the beginning of the school year. Graduate students tend to come up in the classroom or lab. Both students and teachers can gain insights from each other, and at least for now, these opportunities are too often not taken.

Finally, each student group should be required to write annual or semi-annual summaries of accomplishments as a requirement for GSC recognition. Budget breakdowns (which must be submitted for GSC-funded events anyway) should also be made public. These reports would give the MIT community a gateway for looking at what happens here due to student leadership on a daily basis. They would help like-minded groups find each other, reduce duplication of effort, and increase transparency on campus.

Making these suggested changes would help to incentivize student leaders to work with each other and get recognition for their efforts. At the same time, the independence that defines leadership at MIT would be preserved. And keeping this independence while promoting collaboration is very important, as each leader at MIT needs to have room to grow, succeed, and make their own mistakes. Because at MIT, the answer to the question “who’s in charge here?” is you.

Kevin Liu is a second-year S.M. candidate in the Technology and Policy Program (TPP).
Moderating musical tastes

The songs that are too embarrassing to play in public

By Michael Lin

Some of you may have in mind the boy bands and pop stars of the 1990s as your musical tastes. As much as I'd like to take their compliments to heart, it's necessary that I take their praise with a large grain of salt called "the stuff they never hear, because I never play it in public."
The 2010 Harold & Arlene Schnitzer Prize in the Visual Arts

Paintings, prints, sculpture, video, photography, ceramics, art glass - all forms of visual art

All currently registered MIT students may enter the Schnitzer Visual Arts Competition

Deadline: Monday April 5, 2010
between 12noon and 5pm at the Student Art Association (W20-429), please submit:

1) Examples of artist’s work
   a. Three pieces that best represent your entire body of work
   b. Or one piece of original work and visual representations of other originals
      (i.e. slides, photographic prints, etc.)

2) A written statement concerning artist’s intent
   as it pertains to his or her works and art in general

PRIZES & EXHIBITION

Prizes will be awarded for first, second, and third place in the competition

Honorable mentions may also be awarded

Winners must be willing and able to display their work in the Wiesner Student Art Gallery for an exhibition
that will open on May 25, 2010

This includes the installation and deinstallation of the exhibition

The exhibit will be up during Commencement, and close on June 29, 2010

There will be an opening reception at the gallery for the MIT community on May 25, 2010

• FIRST Prize $5,000
• SECOND Prize $2,500
• THIRD Prize $2,000

Please contact cohen@media.mit.edu if you have any questions

http://saa.mit.edu/schnitzer-prize
Steal My Comic by Michael Ciuffo

SO, I’VE BEEN GIVING THIS SOMEBODY’S THOUGHT

AND I KNOW WE HAVEN’T TALKED ABOUT THIS A LOT, BUT...

SUSAN ARTZ, WILL YOU MARRY ME?

Easy Sudoku
Solution, page 18

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Hard Sudoku
Solution, page 18

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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.

Crossword Puzzle
Solution, page 18

ACROSS
1 Butters
6 Infield covers
11 Organ of equilibrium
14 Dubuque man
15 Poker statement
19 Roman gods
20 Brings out
21 Floating mountain
23 Take off
24 Curly’s cohort
25 Scientist Hubbard
26 Singer Carter
29 Zoomed
30 Actor Cronyn
32 Singer Carter
33 Magic bullet
35 “Return of the Jedi” critters
38 French friend
39 Watch the kids
41 Humor
42 Mediterranean republic
44 Wise off
45 Ginger cookie
46 Statesman Waldheim
48 Novelist Lofts
50 Thespian group
52 Long period

54 Blake of “Gunsmoke”
58 Gangster “Dutch”
60 Interrogate after a mission
61 Sch. group
62 Investor’s option
64 Thumbs up for John Glenn
65 Bopped down
66 January in Leon
67 Map dir.
68 Invite
69 Hamlet and Ophelia

DOWN
1 Two-footed animal
2 Esther of “Good Times”
3 Expect
4 Waterfall
5 Tempt
6 Twitches
7 Sawbones’ org.
8 Relative degree
9 Puts
10 Roy Rogers at birth
11 Duck product
12 Quips model
13 Period in power
18 Cornell’s town
22 Muffled

24 Gary Collins’ Mobley
27 Small lumps
29 Touch tenderly
30 Son of Noah
31 Ms. Truman
32 Soda fountain treat
34 Old gas
36 Spectra maker
37 Gas additive letters
39 Saloon
40 Middle East nation
43 Ballerina garb
45 The Knack hit, “My__”
47 Falling blocks game
49 Walked leisurely
50 Senate sessions station
51 Respond to
53 Alabama city
55 “Separate Tables” star
56 Tractor man
57 Bushy toes
58 Capital of Peru
60 Bygone bird
63 Part of IRA

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
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38 39 40 41
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64 65 66
67 68 69
Tech staffers share spring break photos

While some Tech staffers stayed in the area for spring break, others traveled as far away as Amsterdam. Here, they share their experiences in photos.

(near left, above) A stork stands on the coast of Key Largo, Florida.

(near left, below) Protesters gather in front of the Capitol building on March 20 to oppose the new health care bill, which was signed into law later that week.

(near right) From left: Kelly A. Strominger '10 and Deborah C. Markham '10 board the boat after snorkeling in the South West Bay off Nassau, The Bahamas on Tuesday, March 23.

(clockwise from top left) MIT Ballroom Dance Team members Ran Yi and Jing Wang '10 compete in the championship standard at the Harvard Invitational Ballroom Competition the past weekend.

Korean drummers lead the march at an anti-war protest in Washington, D.C. on March 20. The protest against the war in Iraq and Afghanistan was organized by the Act Now to Stop War and Racism coalition and Party for Socialism and Liberation.

Buildings can be seen on the North Miami Beach, located in Key Largo, Florida.


Motorcycles and bicycles are parked outside of Centraal Station in Amsterdam.

A windmill is seen on the eastern outskirts of central Amsterdam.
MIT GAMBIT Game Lab had PAX East booth

Fans packed Hynes to meet Penny Arcade creators and play video games

PAX East, from Page 1

ators, fans begged for a CD of the Video Game Orchestra’s performance and a DVD of the entire convention.

“If he’s so awesome to have a DVD of this,” one attendee said.

At the Q&A session, an incredibly dramat- ic opening sequence of flashing lights and deep bass introduced the two creators, who stood on stage dressed in t-shirts and jeans and opened up the floor for questions.

One attendee remarked on the influence that Mike and Jerry have in the gaming industry, bringing up the Ambassador Award the two recently won at the Game Developers’ Conference.

“We have that power?” Holkins asked.

“I’m sorry for your trauma” said Krahulik, to advice on getting married and moving in together.

“One woman stood to ask a question and began to cry. “I spent the better part of my childhood in the hospital,” she said, as she began telling the audience about how playing N64 used to take her mind off her pain. A number of people had already thanked Penny Arcade for running Child’s Play, a charity that donates video games and toys to children’s hospitals across the country. When she heard of this charity, she knew how much it meant to those children.

“I just wanted to thank you guys person- ally,” she said. The entire auditorium rose in applause and Krahulik jumped from the stage to give her a hug.

Other heartwarming moments from the talk included when Holkins tried to give a man an Intel Core i7 processor as a prize. The gift was in return for some custom PAX themed trading cards that man had created and presented to Krahulik and Holkins. The fan shook Holkin’s hand and returned the present.

“I’m just gonna give this right back to Child’s Play,” he said to warm applause.

The entire second floor of the convention center was taken up by the main exposition which featured companies like EA, 2K Games, Rockstar, NVIDIA, Microsoft, Alienware and Wizards of the Coast. Many people could be found playing Nintendo DS, sitting on the sides of the expo.

The Prince of Persia: the Forgotten Sands booth kept a large crowd around at all times, and crowds flooded to the screening area for Red Dead Redemption, an old Western action-adventure game created by the developer of Grand Theft Auto. Mafia II and Bioshock II were also popular stations, along with Skate 3 and Dante’s Inferno.

The MIT GAMBIT Game lab ran a large booth at PAX displaying two of their games, Dearth and Waker. Stephie Wu ’10, a researcher in the MIT GAMBIT lab, was busy teaching attendees about Dearth, a cooperative game that requires players to coordinate to destroy the monsters chasing them.

“Every game we make has a research ob- jective,” she said. “In this case, our objective was to study the way humans played in two player mode to further our computer players’ AI in one player.”

Upstairs, PAX provided a number of computers to play games like Battlefield II. The Penny Arcade Exposition, a videogame conven- tion, ran from Friday to Sunday.

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Upstairs, PAX featured several rooms full of computers and consoles for free-play and tournaments. In addition to rooms for the standard Halo, Super Smash Bros. Brawl, Counterstrike, and Rock Band games, there was a room setup for Steel Battalion, a fancy mech pilot game with an incredibly detailed control console. Of all of the gaming rooms, this one was among the most quiet: occupying the room were the players with the most intense expressions.

Due to the high attendance this year, when PAX East returns next year it will move in the considerably larger Boston Convention and Exhibition center.

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District judge’s verdict could throw human gene patents into question

By John Schwartz

Tuesday, March 30, 2010

The university of Utah Research Foundation, the company that holds the patents with the most at stake in the case, asked the case to dismiss the claim, arguing that the work of isolating the DNA from the body transforms it and makes it patentable. Such patents, it said, have been granted for decades; the Supreme Court upheld patents on living organisms in 1980. In fact, many in the patent field had predicted the courts would throw out the suit.

About 20 percent of the human genes have been patented, and multibillion-dollar industries have been built...

Sweet, however, ruled that the patents were “improperly granted” because they involved a “law of nature,” and the idea that isolating a gene made it patentable “a ’lawyer’s trick’ that circumvents the prohibition on the direct patenting of the DNA in our bodies but which, in practice, reaches the same result.”

The case could have far-reaching implications. About 20 percent of human genes have been patented, and multibillion-dollar industries have been built atop the intellectual property rights that the patents grant.

If a decision like this were upheld, it would have a pretty significant impact on the future of medicine,” said Kenneth Chahine, a visiting law professor at the University of Utah who filed an amicus brief on the side of Myriad. He said that patents were “improperly granted” because the issues in the case could not be decided within patent law, the constitutional question need not be decided.

The genetic tools to solve the major health problems of our time have not been found yet, “said Edward Reines, a patent lawyer who represents biotechnology firms but was not involved in the case, said loss of patent protection could diminish the incentives for genetic research.

Loss of patent protection could diminish the incentives for genetic research.

“The genetic tools to solve the major health problems of our time have not been found yet,” said Reines, who is with the Silicon Valley office of the firm Weil, Gotshal & Manges. “These are the discoveries that are the basis for all the researchers out there.”

The decision also challenged the patents on First Amendment grounds, but Judge Sweet ruled that because the issues in the case could be decided within patent law, the constitutional question need not be decided.

The decision is likely to be appealed. Representatives of Myriad did not return calls seeking comment. But this month, the company’s chief executive, Peter Meldrum, told investors that “regardless of the outcome of this particular lawsuit, it will not have a material adverse effect on the company,” or its future revenues, according to the Phramacogenomics Reporter, “or on the future revenues of our products.”

Janice Oh, a spokeswoman for the U.S. attorney’s office in Manhattan, which represented the Patent and Trademark Office in the case, had no comment.

One of the individual plaintiffs in the suit, Genene Girard, who has breast cancer and has been tested for ovarian cancer, applauded the decision as a “big turning point for all women in the country that may have breast cancer that runs in their family.” Chris Hansen, an ACLU staff lawyer, said: “The human genome, like the structure of blood, air or water, was discovered but not created. There is an endless amount of information on genes that begs for further discovery, and gene patents put up unacceptable barriers to the free exchange of ideas.”

Venezuela in Latin America: A Glimpse into the Chavez Era

Join us for a talk with Professors Ricardo Hausmann and Leonardo Vivas about the economic, political and social changes in Venezuela and their impact in Latin America

Venezuela has experienced a tremendous transformation over the past decade. The “21st Century Socialist Revolution” spearheaded by President Hugo Chávez has redefined the political, social, military, and economic pillars in the country and, increasingly, the region. The radicalization of Latin American politics, the shift toward highly planned economies, and the precarious interactions of the region with various players in the world arena, has become increasingly relevant topics in the international agenda. In this talk three experts with extensive experience about Venezuela and Latin America will discuss their perspectives on the effects of the Chavez era on the macroeconomic development, political trends, regional conflict, and social cohesion in both Venezuela and Latin America as a whole.

Tomorrow, Wed, 03/30, 5:30pm, 54-100

About the Speakers:

Prof. Ricardo Hausmann is a Director of the Center for International Development and Professor of the Practice of Economic Development at Harvard University. Previously, he served as the first Chief Economist of the Inter-American Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank of the United States, and the Caribbean Development Bank of the Organization of American States. Prof. Hausmann was the lead author of the book After the Miracle. Hausmann is the author of numerous books and articles on economic and political development. His research interests include issues of growth, macroeconomic policy, international finance, and the social dimensions of development.

Prof. Leonardo Vivas is currently a fellow at the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at Harvard University and Co-chair of the Latin American Initiative. He currently teaches Latin American Politics at Universidad de las Américas-Puebla. Leonardo has been a fellow and associate researcher at the World Bank and at the Harvard Project on Latin American Development. He taught a course about the Chavez era at Harvard University. At Tulane University he taught a course about his experiences in Venezuela. He was Director of Industry in the Development Ministry and founder of several nonprofit organizations. Professor Vivas has published two books about Venezuela’s political crisis.
By John M. Broder

The Environmental Protection Agency plans to add bisphenol-A, or BPA, a plastic widely used in food packaging and plastic bottles, to its list of chemicals of concern because of potential adverse impacts on the environment and human and animal health.

The agency will require new studies of concentrations of the plastic in surface water, ground water and drinking water to determine where it exists in levels requiring action. More than a million pounds of the chemical, used to harden plastics, are released into the environment each year, the agency said.

The environmental agency also will require manufacturers that use BPA to provide test data to help evaluate effects on growth, reproduction and development in aquatic organisms and wildlife.

The action follows a Food and Drug Administration statement in January expressing concern about the human health risks of BPA, which the agency had declared safe in 2008. The agency said at the time that it would look into the potential effects of BPA on “the brain, behavior and prostate gland of fetuses, infants and children” and would join other federal agencies in studying the chemical in animals and humans.

Monday’s announcement from the environmental agency indicated that the government is looking to reduce the use of BPA in food packaging, plastic bottles and other sources of exposure.

“We share FDA’s concern about the potential health impacts from BPA,” said Steve Owens of the environmental agency’s Office of Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances.

The moves by the two agencies are part of the Obama administration’s effort to regulate health, food safety and environmental matters more forcefully.

But some consumer advocates said the administration was not moving quickly enough to assess the dangers of BPA and other industrial chemicals. This month, Sen. Charles E. Schumer, D-N.Y., chided the environmental agency for not including BPA on a list of chemicals that would be more strictly regulated. Legislation is pending to ban or sharply curtail BPA’s use in consumer products.

Concerns about BPA are based on studies that have found harmful effects in animals, on evidence that the chemical seeps into food and baby formula and that nearly everyone is exposed to it, starting in the womb.

Health officials have said there is no proof that BPA is harmful to humans, but are urging people to limit exposure by discarding scratched or worn containers made with it (usually marked with a 7 for recycling), not putting very hot liquids into cups or bottles with BPA and using microwave-safe containers.
Want to get free movie tickets? Then write movie reviews for The Tech. (Advance screening opportunities also available!)

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Many UA committee seats open for student advocates

UA Elections, from Page 1

the pair’s plan will be to hold UA Executive Board meetings in dorms.

Modi and Wyman plan to rotate UA executive meetings among dorms and the student center. “We hope that having exec meetings in dorms will have a big impact on the meeting’s focus: the way the meetings are run and the level of feedback,” he said.

Also “we want to make sure that any decisions we make are data driven — that’s something that’s a feature of MIT anyway,” Modi said.

Plans for freshman advising and online Add/Drop forms move forward

Among the projects proposed in their running platform, “improving freshman advising is what we’re the most excited about,” Modi said.

To move forward another major idea — putting the Add/Drop process online — Wyman said that she has already begun talking with the registrar’s office.

UA currently interviewing for committee positions

“We strongly encourage everyone to get involved with the UA,” Modi said. “There are a lot of things going on, a lot of rewarding projects that could shape the future of MIT.”

Among the projects proposed in their running platform, “improving freshman advising is what we’re the most excited about,” Modi said.

To get this project off the ground, Wyman said she has already spoken with the alumni association and Julie B. Norman, director of Undergraduate Advising and Academic Programming and senior associate dean of the Department of Undergraduate Education. Wyman plans to speak with Dean for Undergraduate Education Daniel B. Hastings PhD ’80 in the next couple of weeks to further develop this idea.

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Advice to prefrosh: Visit CPW, dorms
Prefrosh, students, alums share conversation and chowder

Prefrosh, from Page 1

All about MIT. From the nontraditional meal plan to hacking, to the unique dorm culture, to how much sleep MIT students get, we covered as much as we could.

Both Matthew and I agreed that Alex and Katherine will understand better once they spend experience Campus Preview Weekend, starting April 8.

Both Alex and Katherine said that they wanted to get involved in student activities. Katherine, who currently does ballet, was interested in the dancing groups at MIT. Alex said that he would be open to anything, possibly getting involved in a student organization involved in energy.

Although Alex and Katherine seemed excited about MIT, they also had concerns.

Katherine told us that she was interested in biochemistry, but was also had concerns.

Both Alex and Katherine plan on coming to MIT for Campus Preview Weekend. Matthew emphasized the importance of visiting all the dorms and attending as many events as possible. He also told them that they should try not to sleep so much, just enough to get by the weekend.

Alex, who is currently deciding between MIT and Stanford, said that he had already looked at the CPW schedule, which currently consists of more than 700 events. He plans to attend events during all times of the day, including a Vermonter Challenge starting at 3 a.m.

Dinner was served at 7 p.m. The clam chowder, garden salad, and chicken marsala were all delicious. As the apple crisp cake was being served, Professor Franz S. Hover of Mechanical Engineering set up his presentation about his work with autonomous underwater vehicles.

From the nontraditional meal plan to hacking, to the unique dorm culture, to how much sleep MIT students get, we covered as much as we could.

As the apple crisp cake was being served, Professor Franz S. Hover of Mechanical Engineering set up his presentation about his work with autonomous underwater vehicles.

Alex and Katherine will understand as much as we could.
A new printer was installed in the Student Center over spring break.

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MIT curling team sweeps its way to second regional title

By David Tax

Curling? That’s right. That Olympic sport where people slide rocks on ice and sweep like madmen has arrived at MIT. In fact, MIT students have been curling for the almost three years, since the curling club was approved by the ASA.

For the second consecutive year, cutters from MIT competed in college curling bonspiels (tournaments) on both a regional and national level. The first event was the Grand National Curling Club (GNCC) Regional Bonspiel held at Broomstones Curling Club in Wayland, MA on Feb. 20, where MIT looked to defend its championship title. The team comprised of skip David S. Tax, vice Benjamin J. Peters ’11, second Anthony G. Fowler G, and lead Dana B. Sulas ’10 rolled over the opposition with a dominant 8-1 win. The following morning, MIT faced the 2008 national champions and seeded as a Division I team. MIT represented by Tax, Peters, Sulas, and Elizabeth K. Rosalia ’13, as well as the A joint MIT/Harvard team, lead by skip Philip M. Naddeo G and vice Elizabeth K. Rosalia ’13, also participated in the regional event. Their team went on to win the third event with a decisive win over BU, earning them a solid fifth place finish in the 12-team tournament.

The next event on the MIT curling schedule was the annual National College Curling Championship held at the Chicago Curling Club in Glenview, IL, from March 12-14. MIT was represented by Tax, Peters, Sulas, and Jeffrey D. Mo Se G and was seeded as a Division I team. MIT improved on their 2009 result by narrowly defeating a team from Marquette University, 8-1, in only 6 ends. The following morning, MIT faced the 2008 national champion and 2009 runner-up team from the University of Wisconsin. The MIT team battled hard against their talented opponents, but fell just short, losing a close 7-6 decision. Despite the loss, MIT would rebound in a big way that afternoon, closing out the round robin portion of the tournament with a 9-7 victory over a strong team from Lake Superior College. After that round, MIT, with a 2-1 record, was in a three-way tie for first in their pool with LSC and Wisconsin. Unfortunately, the tie-breaker went against MIT, and Tech did not make the playoff matchups; they watched as the LSC team they had defeated went on to compete for gold. Nevertheless, the MIT team was quite happy with their performance, and look forward to medal in next year’s tournament.

The MIT curling club curls on the almost three years, since the curling club was approved by the ASA.

Engineers defeat Harvard and Boston U.

The Tech Tuesday, March 30, 2010

SPORTS

Engineers defeat Harvard and Boston U.

way to second regional title

Boston Architectural College in teams from Harvard and BU be-
lead Dana B. Sulas ’10 rolled over second Anthony G. Fowler G, and
Tax G, vice Benjamin J. Peters ’11, team comprised of skip David S.
fend its championship title. The
Feb. 20, where MIT looked to de-
Curling Club in Wayland, MA on
al Curling Club (GNCC) Regional
first event was the Grand Nation-
regional and national level. The
curling tournament) on both a
year, curlers from MIT compet-
the ASA.
the curling club was approved by
for the almost three years, since
rocks on ice and sweep like mad-
Curling? That’s right. That
By David tax

He is not here; he has risen.

Easter Vigil Celebration and Breakfast

Lutheran Episcopal Ministry at MIT

HOLY WEEK

Wednesday, March 31
Agape Meal with footwashing
Shen Dining Room, MIT, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 3
Solemn Good Friday Service
Shen Dining Room, MIT, 11 a.m.

Sunday, April 4
Easter Vigil Celebration and Breakfast
Shen Dining Room, MIT, 7:30 p.m.

Everyone is welcome at all events.

Lutheran Episcopal Ministry at MIT
http://web.mit.edu/lemin