Brass Rat unveiled: 2015 Ring Premiere
Ring features Pokémon, Curiosity
By Bruno B. F. Faviero

It was a chilly 37-degrees as the Class of 2015 began to amass along the perimeter of Kresge on Friday. They came in droves — fraternities, sororities, halls, clubs — all individual groups, and yet on this night united for one reason: the premiere of the Class of 2015 Brass Rat.

As one of the few events that brings the whole class together, it almost felt like a tailgating party. Each group entertained itself in different ways: One sang Jason Mraz’s “I’m Yours” to the rhythm of a ukulele, another belted out the “Engineers’ Drinking Song” and some sort of ode to East Campus.

Others were discussing what might be on the ring. “The Curiosity Mars rover and a DeLorean (the future of Back to the Future II) were guessed by a few,” said Yuschenkoff. “AND EXACTLY 11 YEARS AGO...”

As one of the few events that is actually a cert event. The concert will be on April 26 in Johnson, and ticketing is tonight. The deadline for MIT to purchase is this Thursday at the Z-Center. The event is 11 a.m., and come to grab things at 11 a.m.

The Undergraduate Association (UA) Events Committee has announced Macklemore featuring Ryan Lewis as the headliner for Spring Fest 2013, MIT’s annual concert event. The concert will be on April 26 in Johnson, and the tickets will be determined in the coming weeks. A large crowd gathered at the Harvard-MIT Math Tournament on Saturday evening in 26-100.

Macklemore is Spring Weekend headliner
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Macklemore was a “dominant” choice, said Yuschennkoff. “We’re lucky to have him.” Reactions around campus were mostly positive in him. “I made the mistake of sitting on the north side of the arena, near the Alpha Phi and Sigma Kappa sections, and so all I heard for the rest of the night was ‘MEGHAAAAA!” and ‘WE LOVE COLLEEN!” When Ringcomm Chair Matthew T. Abel ’15 and Vice Chair Michelle H. Lee ’15 introduce the rest of the committee.

Small crowd attends first State of the Undergraduate Association address
Monday night marked the first State of the UA address, headed by UA President Jonte D. Craighead ’13. “I am confident in saying that [the UA] is in a much better position than we were two years ago,” Craighead said at the opening of the forum.

About 20 students attended the forum portion of the event, with more students around at the end just to eat the food. Craighead mentioned that the address was meant to be an experimental addition to the periodic UA study breaks that occur throughout the term — he attributed low attendance to the timing of the event, both to being earlier in the evening and falling on a Monday after a long weekend, when students are likely to be inside doing work.

In relation to how the UA’s performance now compared to before the reconstruction, Craighead that it would be “much more difficult in the old structure” to get the things done that the UA has in the past. Craighead said that it is much easier to make validate a statement about student opinion when you have the student leaders of the living groups — each of the dorm presidents and representatives from the IFC, Panhel, and the ILGs — all in the same place at the UA Council meetings.

The speech was given in parts by Craighead, Vice President Michael P. Walsh ’13, Chair of the UA committee on education Naren P. Tallapragada ’13, Secretary General Christine M. Sowa ’14, and Finance Chair Johnathan Kongolet ’14. The presentation outlined what the UA has been doing in the past semester and some of the initiatives that they have put forth, such as the Costco-Target shuttle. The main motivation behind giving these presentations, according to Craighead, was to reach out to the students more and let them know that the UA is actively working to improve life for students on campus.

—Stan Gill

MIT’s Oldest and Largest Newspaper
tech.mit.edu

THE UNVEILING OF THE 2015 BRASS RAT
And another class sees their future Brass Rats!
Inside the 2015 Ring Premiere
PHOTO, p. 8

ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY...
Thomas Edison patented the phonograph on Feb. 10, 1878.
AND EXACTLY 11 YEARS AGO...
NASA’s Mars Odyssey began mapping the surface of planet Mars.
Netanyahu's ice cream budget causes political stir

JERUSALEM — His foreign minister had to resign after being accused of fraud. He was sharply criticized for his government's handling of Prisoner X, who committed suicide in prison. And this weekend: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stands accused of having spent $7,000 a year on ice cream for state coffers for an ice cream budget.

Pistachios, it was revealed by the proprietors of a gourmet ice cream shop who specialize in Passover ice cream, are his favorite (presumably not made with the kind of cream that Mrs. Netanyahu, they said, appears to prefer French vanilla.

In a country facing severe cuts in government spending after an election that included a front-page news story in Israel this weekend, with the prime minister's weakness for artisanal pistachio ice cream raised a national outcry.

Shelly Yakimovich, the leader of the center-left Labor Party, summarized it as a Mafioso moment and noted that Netanyahu was the one who always spoke of cutting the fat.

"If there's no bread, eat ice cream," she wrote on her Facebook page, adding, "Shall we laugh or cry?"

—Isabel Kershner, The New York Times

Russians wade into the snow to seek treasure from the sky

DEPUTATSKOE, Russia — Ever since the meteor plowed a path of devastation across central Siberia on February 15, many people have been searching the sky for something that fell from it.

A fist-size stony fragment, estimated to weigh 30 pounds and travel at 28,000 miles per hour, did just that, striking a residential building near the town of Chechumen, some 2,000 miles east of Moscow.

But by Monday, for many people what fell from the sky had already taken it away anyway. "Now I regret selling it," said Briyukova, a 43-year-old homemaker. "But then, who knows? The police might have come and taken it away anyway.

On Friday, terror rained from the skies, blowing out windows and scaring people over an enormous swath of Siberia. But by Monday, most people who felt from the sky had turned to pure gold, and it touched off a rush to retrieve the fragments, many buried in deep February snows.


Leak in fuel line cause of cruise ship's trouble

A U.S. Coast Guard official said Monday that the fire that disabled the Carnival Triumph cruise ship began when a fuel line connected to one of the vessel's engines sprang a leak.

"It sprayed oil onto a hot surface and caught on fire," the official, Lt. Cmdr. Teresa Hatfield, said at a news conference. "We've determined that the fire suppression system had worked properly.

However, Hatfield said the vessel's generators, apparently because intense heat forced the crew to abandon the engine room. As a result, the ship lost power and electricity, leaving it stranded in the Gulf of Mexico.

Hatfield said it stranded in the Gulf of Mexico.

"We are investigating to determine what caused the fire," Hatfield said. "But in general terms, it was because the fuel line connected to one of the vessel's engines sprang a leak.

Secretary of State John Kerry's first meeting with a foreign leader was with Canada's foreign minister, John Baird, on Feb. 8. They discussed the Keystone pipeline project, among other subjects, and Kerry promised a formal and prompt decision. He did not indicate what recommendation he would make to the president.

But this is also a decisive moment for the U.S. environmental movement, which backed Obama strongly in the last two elections.

For groups like the Sierra Club, permitting a pipeline carrying more than 700,000 barrels a day of Canadian crude into the country would be viewed as a betrayal, and as a contradiction of the president's promises in his second inaugural address.

On Sunday, thousands of protesters rallied near the Washington Monument to protest the pipeline and call for firmer steps to fight emissions of climate-changing gases. Groups opposing coal production and dredging for natural gas, were prominent.

—Barbara White, The New York Times

Pipeline call gives Obama new problems either way

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama faces a knotty decision in whether to approve the much-delayed Keystone oil pipeline: a choice between alienating environmental advocates who overwhelmingly supported his candidacy or causing a deep and perhaps lasting rift with Canada.

Canada, the United States' most important trading partner and a close ally on Iran and Afghanistan, is counting on the pipeline to prop up growth in its oil patch, a vital engine for its economy. Its leaders have made it clear that an American rejection would be viewed as an unAmerican act and could bring retaliation.

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—Barbara White, The New York Times

Situation for noon Eastern time, Tuesday, February 19, 2013

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2013

Weather

Netanyahu's ice cream budget causes political stir

By John M. Broder, Claire Krauss, and Ian Austen

Benjamin Netanyahu’s ice cream budget, a law last year that made it illegal for employers to refuse to consider or hire candidates because they were out of work, and barred advertisements from suggesting that the unemployed need not apply. Laws prohibiting discrimination in job listings have also been adopted by New Jersey and Oregon, a similar measure in California was vetoed by the governor.

"Though businesses are reluctant to acknowledge bias in their hiring practices, some human-resource managers and consultants say privately that unemployment can be a red flag on a resume, signaling that a worker may have outdated skills, or may be a short-timer who is desperate enough to take any work now but will leave when something better comes along. The National Employment Law Project, a nonprofit advocacy group, reported that companies across the country often posted job notices explicitly excluding applicants who are unemployed.

Weather

Rain tonight, followed by a dry week

The Boston area received a quick break of winter weather on Sunday, when Logan Air- port recorded 5.1 inches of snow. The fresh snow on top of the ice-coated snow remaining from the past weekend's snow storm made for slippery conditions. The cold tempera-

tures of Sunday and Monday will make way for highs today in the mid 30s and low 40s, associated with a low pressure system in the Great Lakes re-
ting through our region. It will bring with it showers (mostly rain) this afternoon and evening.

The forecast calls for a high of 40° on Monday and a high of 50° on Tuesday. The National Weather Service said the area could see 2-4 inches of snow on Monday night.

Extended Forecast

Today: Mostly cloudy. High 48°F (9°C). West winds at 8-12 mph, shifting to south winds, gusting to 30 mph.

Tonight: Showers. Low 32°F (0°C). South winds at 8-12 mph, shifting to west winds, gusting to 25 mph.


As Assad holds firm, Obama could revisit arms policy

By Mark Landler and Richard A. Oppel Jr.

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama rebuffed four of his generals who had told him that they wanted to arm the rebels in Syria last fall, it put an end to a debate of several months over whether the White House should respond to the strike on a chemical weapons warehouse in Damascus, a move that now left nearly 70,000 dead.

But the decision also left the White House without a strategy to resolve a crisis that has bedeviled it since the beginning of the war against President Bashar Assad last two years ago. Despite an American policy of backing the rebels with military aid, the troops are not yet able to be the main driver of Syrian government, according to a draft of the legislation that the White House has circulated to lawmakers in both parties.

As the United States struggles to formulate a policy, however, Assad has shown no sign that he is ready to step down and the war by his forces would end up in unreliable hands, particularly to civilians and eastern forces and insurgents.

It has been an effort to get the president to communicate with one another and with the outside world, despite efforts by the White House to target reenactments with equipment support by Iran. An FM radio network is to connect broadcasting operations in several Syrian cities in the next several days. The State Department has also helped train local councils in areas freed from the Syrian government's control.

"Syria," he said, "in the process, not a transitional government, not even the president." On Monday, European Union foreign ministers decided to condemn the use of arms against the opposition by the Assad regime and to approve new sanctions against the Syrian government, according to a draft of the legislation that the White House has circulated to officials in the European Union.

The disclosure of the document was on the condition of匿名ity by USA Today on Sunday night that Obama remains committed to be ready. We have developed each of these proposals so we have them in positions that we can succeed. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., issued a statement late Saturday calling for insight on women. For the Marine Corps, probably more than any other military service, gender integration is a difficult affair. Not only is the corps the smallest of the services, it has only about 7 percent of its slots, but it is also a bastion of the infantry.

Netanyahu defends Israel's handling of prisoner X case

JERUSALEM — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday defended his government's handling of an Australian-Israeli who was reportedly a high-profile model of a terrorist whose bodyguards were not in war can experience: "It's in the Modern Corps' Infantry Office of the State Department. At the 86-day course, candidates had heavy packs and heavy weapons and work up and down steep hills, execute ambushes and endures long marches. The women were the first to enter the course — war dropped on a seaside vacation, and a woman was sexually assaulted and terribly strenuous endurance test but the second woman lasted deep into the second week, when a stress fracture in her leg forced her to quit. "She was tough," Gen. James F. Amos, the Marine Corps commandant, said of the woman, who is now at flight school. "She wasn't going to quit." Amos hopes the experiences of those women, and others to come, will revolutionize the way women view military roles. The project, which could ultimately cost billions of dollars, is expected to be part of the president's budget proposal in March.

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Violent television affects children's behavior, study says

By Catherine Saint Louis

Experts have long known that children imitate many of the deeds — good and bad — that they see on television, but a new study has shown that changing a young child's programming that encourages empathy can lead to improved behavior.

In a study published Monday in the journal *Pediatrics*, researchers reported the results of a program designed to test whether changing preschoolers’ behavior, he added, that no negotiations had been made that it will not negotiate a transition in which he has a role. Even if Assad was overthrow, the correlation could fragment Syria along sectarian and ethnical lines, each group would be out to gain power, and the Assad regime was already attempting to draft a counter of the legislation that the White House has calculated within the administration.

The draft plan says none of the 11 million illegal immigrants currently in the country would be granted permanent residence if they gain a document as a green card up quickly to a far earlier date of 2017, and even if the bill is enacted or until the earlier of two dates: either eight years after the bill is enacted or eight years after 2017, which would be divided among the White House has calculated within the administration.

The plan includes a shortcut path to citizenship for young illegal immigrants who came to the United States as children, said an administration official who agreed to discuss the details only on the condition of anonymity. In many cases, those children could then apply for green cards as soon as two years after the law was passed.

The disclosure of the document's existence, by USA Today on Sunday night, set off a series of political recriminations and questions on Sunday about Obama's promise to the public that the White House would take precedence. The White House on Monday said that draft legislation only as a backup. The administration's existence, by USA Today on Sunday night that Obama remained committed to be ready. We have developed each of these proposals so we have them in positions that we can succeed. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., issued a statement late Saturday calling for insight on women. For the Marine Corps, probably more than any other military service, gender integration is a difficult affair. Not only is the corps the smallest of the services, it has only about 7 percent of its slots, but it is also a bastion of the infantry.

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U.S. Budget Sequestration Explained

The Debt Ceiling Crisis
The U.S. Treasury tells Congress that the government will exceed the maximum amount it can borrow and run out of money to pay its bills on August 2, 2011.

The Fiscal Cliff Crisis
Congress did not pass a deficit reduction law. Along with the expiration of the Bush-era tax cuts, the U.S. faces a sudden and steep shock to the system (the “Fiscal Cliff”) on Jan. 1, 2013.

The Budget Control Act of 2011
At the last minute, lawmakers strike a deal that:
- Raises the Debt Ceiling
- Creates a deadline: A law must be passed that reduces the deficit by Jan. 1, 2013, otherwise:
- There will be an automatic cut in all areas of discretionary spending (the "Sequester").

What 8% looks like:
In terms of body mass:
An arm and a leg

In terms of $3 amounts:
Cuts to NIH: $2.52 Billion
Cuts to NSF: $586 Million
Cuts to NASA: $1.45 Billion
Cuts to DOE: Research: $600 Million
Cuts to DoD: $319 Million

March 1, 2013
Unless there is further compromise, the Sequester will result in across-the-board cuts to Domestic spending, including approximately:
8% cuts to Research Spending

Saturday Stumper by Anna Stiga
Solution, page 12

ACROSS
1 Divine
8 Mobile home
16 Duties, customs, etc.
17 Car collector
18 Camaraderie
19 Word as rhymeless as "pint"
20 See to it
21 Refinement candidate
22 World Team Chess powerhouse
25 QM2 destination
26 Bus patron
28 String __
29 Sales bread-and-butter
30 Tip or top
31 Volvo purchase of 2000
34 Tip or top
35 Like
36 Video player pause control, often
37 Leaves in the pantry
38 See to
39 Dripping more
40 Pops up
41 Hard knocks
42 Came (to)
43 Name on the street
44 Self-taught group
45 Whopper
46 “Gallop apace, you fiery-footed __”: Shak.
47 "What is __" (section of heart.org)
48 "Craft" product
49 Academic addresses
50 Great deal
51 About to fail, perhaps
52 Sink out
53 Discipline
54 Live it up
55 One from Rhodes
56 Punchy?
57 Makes known
58 Part of Bill Gates' full name
59 Whopper
60 Formal compensation
61 Aural guide
62 Trailers and fliers
63 Plane, for example
64 Hollow spot
65 Fit
66 Aural guide
67 Leaves in the pantry
68 See to
69 Dropping more
70 Pops up
71 Hard knocks
72 Came (to)
73 Cauing audience tears, quietly possibly
74 Forerun
75 Fix
76 See to
77 Move slowly
78 Biting
79 Gets in sync
80 Part of academic addresses
81 Halted on dinner
82 Stock
83 Legal article
84 Gets rid of
85 "Gallop apace, you fiery-footed __": Shak.
86 Dot of terra
87 52 Dot of terra
88 54 Show approval, or disapproval
89 56 "What is __" (section of heart.org)
90 57 "Craft" product

DOWN
1 Trailers and fliers
2 Make known
3 Plane, for example
4 Hollow spot
5 Fit
6 Aural guide
7 Leaves in the pantry
8 See to
9 Dropping more
10 Pops up
11 Hard knocks
12 Came (to)
13 Cauing audience tears, quietly possibly
14 Forerun
15 Fix
16 Fat letter
17 Put a blot on
18 Moses' river basket, per Exodus
19 Scrolling band specialty
20 See to
21 Refinement candidate
22 World Team Chess powerhouse
23 Frat letter
24 "What is __" (section of heart.org)
25 "Craft" product

by Jorge Cham
Sudoku
Solution, page 12

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.

Triplet Techdokus
Solution, page 12

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column and row contains exactly one of each of the numbers 1–3. Follow the mathematical operations for each box.
Class of 2015 comes together for Ring Premiere
Sophomores cheer on Ringcomm classmate, discover features on this year's Brass Rat

Premiere, from Page 1

Vice Chair Michelle H. Lee ’15 tried to start the ceremony, each could barely get a sentence out without the crowd interrupting. Michelle’s voice rose to a shout over the rav- ing audience. “This is going to take a really long time,” said Abel into the microphone as the Chi Phis shouted “Abel!”, “Quercus!”, and even “Kalas” as Jeremy J. Kalas ’15 took down names of the giveaway winners in the corner.

When Michael O. Flynn ’15 took to the podium, he asked, “Where has the rum gone?” The answer, it would seem, was that it was con- sumed by the audience.

The presentation of the ring began with the Hacker’s Map, which is — for the first time — cast into the ring, meaning it won’t wear down with years of use.

There was also the usual two sets of crew shells, this year with one and five rowers in the boats, and a sailboat whose sail read “15.” Fenway also made an appearance, this year with a really long time, “ said Abel into the Esplanade in memoriam of Neil Armstrong. The lightning bolt, “IHTFP” engraved in the waves. An astronaut footprint is imprinted onto the screen. “No fucking way, ” said someone close to me, their jaw practically dropping as others in the crowd looked similarly worried.

The real bezel was, as usual, full of small, special features. The Green Building was lit up as in a Tetris game, adorning with a basketball to represent the MIT men’s basket- ball team’s ascent to the Final Four. A lightning bolt in the back heart- ened back to our class’s Harry Potter-themed orientation, though it was also in the shape of a molecule in a chair conformation to com- memorate the International Year of Chemistry in 2013.

One of the more popular ap- pearances, getting a strongly posi- tive audience reaction, was that of Dragonair, the 148th Pokemon, swimming in the corner (the Class of 2015 is the 148th graduating class).

Overall, the ’15s seemed excited about the ring and ring delivery, but I think Abraham 1. Stare ’14 summed up the thoughts of many: “This is the best thing that has ever happened to me.”
The joke bezel is presented before the real design of the ring. In front of the B1W ambulance crossing the bridge, the beaver is wearing a “YOLO” shirt and holding a Sonoma greens salad.

A group of Sigma Kappa members hold up signs with the faces of the two Sigma Kappa members of Ring Committee: Coleen K. Gabel ’15 and Michelle H. Lee ’15.

Audrey A. Sedal ’15 jumps for joy after winning a free brass rat for being the 15th person in line.

A sophomore looks at the sample rings on display in Kresge lobby after the design was unveiled.

Students excitedly welcome the members of the 2015 Ring Committee to the stage.

A line of sophomores waiting to enter Ring Premiere stretches across the front of the Zesiger Center.
As a student, I have a huge amount of work to do to be the kind of mentor that changes lives.

1) It's more of a lifestyle than an activity. Mr. Mal was always there for his students, even after school and before school. He didn't wait for us to come to him; he volunteered his time and energy when it looked like we needed help. He ran our physics Olympics and Science Olympiad teams, which meant he was always in his room surrounded by students building things, doing calculations, or organizing events. He was there to talk to if you wanted advice about careers or managing stress. He let us call him — at any time — about physics problems. I remember calling him in the middle of a snowstorm. Not serving pizza? Even better! He inspired and helped us along the way.

2) It’s a responsibility. Mr. Mal did. In 63 years, he inspired so many students to believe that they could tackle problems we didn’t at first believe we could tackle, and pursue fields like engineering and math. He showed us how to make the most out of life, pushing me to help others do the same, and teaching me how to be a true mentor.

3) Outside stresses can make or break you. I know that I, as a student, have a huge amount of work to do to be the kind of mentor that changes lives like Mr. Mal did. In 63 years, he inspired so many students to believe that they could tackle problems we didn’t at first believe we could tackle, and pursue fields like engineering and math. He showed me how to make the most out of life, pushing me to help others do the same, and teaching me how to be a true mentor.

The Chinese characters for the phrase “Heaven Rewards the Diligent” written in calligraphy by a student lay on a table at the Ashdown Lunar New Year Event.
Get involved!
The possibilities are endless...

From Fellowships to grants, from the IDEAS Competition to teaching a child to read, the MIT Public Service Center puts a world of life-changing opportunities at your feet.

Visit us on the web at http://web.mit.edu/mitpsc

No excuses, only opportunities

INNOVATING: Service Learning   Ideas Competition
MENTORING: Communitech   IMATH   KEYS
LINKS   ReachOut   SciPRO   Giving Tree   Science Expo   CityDays
BUILDING CAPACITY: PSC Fellowships   PSC Grants

MIT Global Poverty Initiative Presents

Poverty Action Week

How students can fight poverty from economic, policy, healthcare, & technology perspectives

Schedule of Events

Monday, February 11
7:30 PM   32-144
ID Hack Info Session & Workshop
Featuring Microsoft representatives and free Windows 8, Visual Studio Software Access, & dinner sponsored by Microsoft

Tuesday, February 19
7:30 PM   4-145
Microfinance to Macrosolutions
Featuring speaker Miguel Herrera, the principal director of Accion Frontier Investing Group. Dinner provided.

Wednesday, February 20
7:30 PM
McCormick Brown Living Room
Policy Makers with a Purpose
Roundtable discussion with professors from MIT & Harvard. Registration required, Hors’deouvres served.

Thursday, February 21
7:30 PM   4-163
Improving World Health
Featuring a panel of speakers from Vecna Technologies & Partners in Health. Dinner Provided.

Friday, February 22
6:00 PM
Microsoft NERD Ctr.
ID Hack 2013
Ends 10 PM, February 23. International development hackathon featuring over $1400 in prizes.

EVENTS FEB. 19 – FEB. 25
TUESDAY
(3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.) Contrasting Secular & Religious Agenda Terror and Guerrilla Warfare: From Che Guevara to Osama bin Laden — E40-496
(5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.) Convergence Journalism?
Emerging Documentary and Multimedia forms of News panel — E14-633

WEDNESDAY
(5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.) Kevin Jerome Everson: “Recent Practice” multimedia presentation — 6-135
(8:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.) FILM + improvisation=FilImprov, live improvisational music — 14W-111

THURSDAY
(5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.) Steve Pinker: The Evolutionary Psychology of Religion lecture series — 32-155
(7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.) Urban Films: Street Fight — 66-110

FRIDAY
(10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.) Using big data to discover tacit knowledge and improve learning DUE Education talk — 3-270
(8:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.) An Evening with Jim Gaffigan — W16

SATURDAY
(7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.) Mocha Showcase 2013 — Kresge Little
(8:00 p.m.) Queen Esther’s Ball — Walker Memorial, Morss Hall

MONDAY
(4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.) Simulating adulthood: Junior republics and the invention of modern youth — E51-095
(5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.) India’s Urban Transformation: The Full Story — E40-496

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NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY!
Charges proposed for Syria
UN panel urges prosecution for Syrian war crimes

By Nick Cumming-Bruce
THE NEW YORK TIMES

GENEVA — The U.N. Security Council should refer Syria to the International Criminal Court in The Hague to prosecute those responsible for war crimes and other abuses committed in nearly two years of conflict, Carla del Ponte, a U.N. human rights investigator, said Monday.

“Now, really, it’s time — it’s time,” del Ponte said. “We are pres- suring the international community to act because it’s time to act.”

Del Ponte was speaking as the U.N. Rights Council com- mission investigating Syria, of which she is a member, reported that violence in Syria was worsen- ing, “aggravated by increasing sectarianism” and radicalized by the increasing presence of foreign fight- ers. It said the conflict was also “be- coming more militarized because of the proliferation of weapons and types of weapons used.”

The panel’s 131-page report de- tailing evidence of war crimes and other abuses in the six months up to mid-January, “The issue of accountability for those responsible for international crimes appears to be raised in a more robust manner to counter the pervasive sense of impunity in the country.”

The top U.N. human rights offi- cial, Navi Pillay, has also urged that Syria be referred to the International Criminal Court. Authority to make such a referral, however, lies exclu- sively with the Security Council or the country concerned.

“It’s incredible the Security Council doesn’t take a decision,” said del Ponte, who had been the chief prosecutor for international tribunals on the former Yugosla- via and Rwanda. A referral must be made urgently, she said, “because crimes are continuing, and the number of victims is increasing day by day. Justice must be done.”

The report released Monday is to be discussed in the Human Rights Council in March, when member nations appear likely to extend the term of the mandate. Diplomats in Geneva point out that the panel is the only U.N.-mandated mecha- nism to probe the conflict and the prospects of a negotiated settle- ment owing to their divergent inter- ests. Where the Security Council and the panel said more than 500 civilians had been killed.

Government forces involved in Harak included the Syrian army as well as other groups, including the Islamic Brigades, the panel said. It said that “this trend risks becoming a strategic purpose but to foment sectar- ian tensions and spread terror among civilians.”

The panel acknowledged that his brigade cap- tured and executed five Alawites, acknowledged that his brigade cap- tured and executed five Alawites, as well as five members of one family whose admissions against their own inter- ests. The position of key internation- al actors remains unchanged. “Indiscriminate and widespread shelling, the recruitment and employment of civilians, mass killing, indiscriminate firing on civilian targets, firing on civilian gatherings, and the con- duct of the government,” the panel said.

Investigations also cited “credible admissions against their own inter- ests” by witnesses of the mass killing of five members of one family whose evacuation was filming and posted on the Internet.

Thus, according to del Ponte, the panel added that “regional and international actors remain unchanged.”

Panel members said Monday that their ability to report on activi- ties of the opposition was seriously hampered by what they called the Asad government’s “persistent re- sistance to any measures to give its investigators access to the country.”

The panel said last year that it had already accumulated a “for- midable and extraordinary body of evidence” against those responsible for war crimes, and it again said that it would provide the U.N. hu- man rights office with the names of leaders who may be responsible for abuses, as well as the individuals and units that carried them out.

Release of the latest report came as President Bashar al-Assad of Syria, who vowed to remain in power at the beginning of January, declared that violence in Syria was worsen- ing, that he would provide the U.N. human rights investigator, said more than 500 civilians had been killed.

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China’s army seen as tied to hacking against US
Mandiant believes sporadic attacks occurred on US corporate & government computers

By David E. Sanger, David Barboza, and Nicole Perlroth
The New York Times

The United States government is planning to begin a more aggressive defense against Chinese hacking groups, starting on Tuesday.

The Defense Department and the State Department were particular targets, the cable said, describing how the group’s intruders sent emails, called “spearphishing” attacks, that placed malware on targets and others emanating from near the same malware, Web domains

The U.S. finds itself in some-what of an asymmetrical digital war with China.
"In the Cold War, we were fo-cused every day on the nuclear command centers around Mos-coe," one senior defense official said recently. "Today, it’s fair to say that we worry as much about the computer servers in Shanghai."

While the Obama administration has never publicly discussed the Chinese unit’s activities, a secret State Department cable wrote the day before Barack Obama was elected president in Novem-ber 2008 described at length U.S. concerns about the group’s attacks on government sites.

"It’s where more than 90 per-cent of the attacks we followed come from," said Mandiant.

Mandiant believes Unit 61398 conducted sporadic attacks on U.S. corporate and government computer networks, the earliest it found was in 2006. Two years ago the numbers spiked.

Mandiant has watched the group as it has stolen technology blueprints, manufacturing pro cesses, clinical trial results, pricing documents, negotiation strategies and other proprietary information from more than 100 of its clients, mostly in the U.S.

China’s army seen as tied to hacking against US
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On the outskirts of Shanghai, in a run-down neighborhood domi nated by a 12-story white office tower, sits a People’s Liberation Army base for China’s growing corps of cyberwarriors. The building off Datong Road is the head quarters of PLA Unit 61398.

A growing body of digital forensics evidence – confirmed by U.S. intelligence officials who say they have tapped into the activity of the army unit for years – leaves little doubt that an overwhelming percentage of the attacks on U.S. corporations, organizations, and government agencies originate in and around the white tower.

An unusually detailed 60-page study, to be released Tuesday by Mandiant, a U.S. corporate security firm, tracks for the first time individual members of the most sophisticated of the Chinese hacking groups – known to many of its victims in the U.S. as “Comment Crew” or “Shanghai Group” – to the doorstep of the military unit’s headquarters.

The firm was not able to place the hackers inside the 12-story building, but makes a case there is no other plausible explanation for why so many attacks come out of one comparatively small area.

“Either they are coming from inside Unit 61398,” said Kevin Mandia, the founder and chief ex ecutive of Mandiant, in an inter view last week, “or the people who run the most-controlled, most-monitored Internet networks in the world are clueless about thousands of people generating attacks from this one neighborhood.”

A recent classified National Intelligence Estimate, issued as a consensus document for all 16 of the U.S. intelligence agencies, makes a strong case that many of these hacking groups are either run by PLA officers or are contractors working for commands like Unit 61398, according to officials with knowledge of its classified content.

Mandiant provided an advance copy of its report to The New York Times, saying it hoped to “bring visibility to the issues addressed in the report” (Mandiant was hired by The New York Times Co. to investigate a sophisticated Chinese-origin attack on the news opera tions, but concluded it was not the work of Comment Crew, but another Chinese group.)

While Comment Crew has drained terabytes of data from companies like Coca-Cola, increasingly its focus is on companies involved in the critical infra structure of the United States — its electrical power grid, gas lines, and waterworks. According to the security researchers, one target was a company with remote access to more than 60 percent of oil and gas pipelines in North America.

The unit was also among those that attacked the computer secu rity firm RSA, whose computer codes protect confidential corpo rate and government databases.

Contacted Monday, Chinese officials at its embassy in Washing ton again insisted that it govern ment does not engage in computer hacking, and that such activity is illegal. They describe China itself as a victim of computer hacking, and point out, accurately, that there are many hacking groups inside the U.S.

But in recent years the Chinese attacks have grown significantly, security researchers say.

Mandiant has detected more than 146 Comment Crew instru sions since 2006. U.S. intelligence agencies and private security firms that track many of the 20 or so other Chinese groups every day say those groups appear to be contractors with links to the unit.

While the unit’s existence and operations are considered a Chi nese state secret, Rep. Mike Rog ers, R-Mich., the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, said in an interview that the Mandyant report was “completely con sistent with the type of activity the Intelligence Committee has been seeing for some time.”

The White House said it was “aware” of the Mandiant report, and Tommy Vietor, the spokesman for the National Security Council, said, “We have repeatedly raised our concerns at the highest lev els about cybertheft with senior Chinese officials, including in the military, and we will continue to do so.”

The U.S. government is planning to begin a more aggressive defense against Chinese hacking groups, starting on Tuesday. Under a directive signed by President Barack Obama last week, the gov ernment plans to share with U.S. Internet providers information it has gathered about the unique dig ital signatures of the largest of the groups, including Comment Crew and others emanating from near where Unit 61398 is based.

The U.S. finds itself in some thing of an asymmetrical digital war with China.

The report is forcing the issue into pub lic view. But Mandiant’s refusal to force the issue into public view.

For more than six years, Man diant tracked the actions of Com ment Crew, so named for the attack ers’ penchant for embedding hidden code or comments into Web pages. Based on the digital crumbs the group left behind — its attackers have been known to use the same malware, Web domains, Internet protocol addresses, hack ing tools and techniques across at tacks — Mandiant followed 144 at tacks, by the group, which it called “APT 1” for Advanced Persistent Threat 1.

Mandiant discovered that two sets of IP addresses used in the at tacks were registered in the same neighborhood as the Unit 61398’s building.

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The Defense Department and the State Department were partic ular targets, the cable said, describ ing how the group’s intruders send emails, called “spearphishing” at tacks, that placed malware on tar get computers once the recipient clicked on them. From there, they were inside the systems.

U.S. officials say that a combi nation of diplomatic concerns and the desire to follow the unit’s ac tivities have kept the government from going public. But Mandiant’s report is forcing the issue into pub lic view.

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Engineers take 6 events out of 7

MIT men's swimming team builds on their previous lead in the NEWMAC swimming and diving championship

By Charlotte Brackett
DAPER STAFF

With day two of the 2013 New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference (NEWMAC) Swimming and Diving championships completed, the MIT men's team held on to the lead that they had established the day before. The Engineers won six of the seven events, bringing their point total to 750. Springfield College took over the second place spot with 438 points.

In the consolation final of the 200-yard medley relay, the MIT B relay touched first with a time of 1:31.98, just half a second off the NEWMAC meet record of 1:31.41. The relay that consisted of Bradley A. Mattix '16, Benjamin R. Bauchwitz '15, Wyatt L. Ubellacker '13 and Kale T. Rogers '16 won the championship final with a time of 1:31.41. The relay easily broke their own NEWMAC meet record of 1:31.41 that had remained untouched since 2009 and earned an NCAA A cut.

With his time of 3:58.17 in the 400-yard individual medley, Alexander I. Lednev '16 broke the NEWMAC meet record of 4:01.05 and the NEWMAC open record of 3:59.64, both from 2012, finishing well under the B cut. Remy A. Mock '14 was second with his time of 4:04.36.

MIT placed five swimmers in the top eight in the 100-yard butterfly, taking the top four spots. Ubellacker touched first in 48.82, breaking his own meet record of 49.15 from 2011 and finishing well under the A cut. Sean R. Corcoran '16 came in second with a 49.83.

Brendan T. Deveney '13 won his second individual title of the weekend when he touched first in the 200-yard freestyle with a time of 1:39.87, just off the meet record and the NCAA A cut. Anthony Chen '13 followed in second place in 1:41.10. Both easily earned B cuts. Maxwell T. Pruner '13 finished in fourth with a 1:41.65, and Daryl G. Neubieser '15 came in fifth place with his time of 1:42.90.

UPCOMING HOME EVENTS

Thursday, February 21

Men's Tennis 3 p.m. DuPont Tennis Courts

An Evening with Jim Gaffigan

8pm Friday, Feb. 22
Kresge Auditorium

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Evan Tenen '15
MIT Birthright, Summer 2012

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