Registration day ordeal destined to continue

By Mike McNamee

Many MIT students hate it. It causes crowds, wait, hassles, red tape, and often problems. But despite the problems and despite changes in procedure - MIT is planning to keep Registration Day.

"Sure it causes problems, and a lot of people don't like to go," said Ralph Smith, Associate Registrar. "But you've got to keep it in focus, and realize that Registration Day gets a lot of things done that would be difficult to do otherwise." The two-annual ordeal of standing in line in duPont Gymnasium, picking up forms, filling them out and making schedule changes is something few undergraduates like to undo. And for a while it seemed as if registration day would become obsolete, thanks to a key change in registration procedure.

The Special Committee on Grading recommended, and the faculty adopted, a new registration procedure which eliminates Roll Cards - cards handed out to each student to confirm registration in a subject. With the replacement this year of Roll Cards with non-required Class Cards, the Registration Day lines at duPont seemed to be unnecessary.

But Smith said the Registrar's Office was not likely to go along with any plans to eliminate Registration Day replacing the duPont procedure with a plan in which faculty advisors would distribute all registration materials.

"You must understand that handing out the forms isn't the main thrust of Registration Day," he said. "The main thrust is in changes in registration - and we handle as many as 200 such changes every semester."

Smith explained that the Registrar's Office at duPont was a centralized station for advising students on changes in schedules. "We make two computer runs for new schedules, deal with many students who don't need to go through the computer at all, sit down and work out the details, and then send the new schedules out as a result, we're able to give students a complete schedule, with any number of changes, all by 5pm on Registration Day."

That completion of Registration Day is all about.

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City won't stop MIT smokers - yet

By Mike McNamee

MIT smokers can relax - at least for a little while.

Despite all the publicity and fuss over the tough anti-smoking ordinance passed by the Cambridge City Council Monday night, MIT officials aren't in too much of a hurry to stick up "No Smoking" signs and force people to put out their cigarettes, cigars and pipes in classrooms, halls, and dining rooms.

For one thing, Cambridge Mayor Walter Sullivan vowed Tuesday that he would move to get the ordinance, not yet 24 hours old, repealed as a first step to amending it. Sullivan explained that the ordinance measure, which provides for a fine of $15 to $250 for smoking in a public place - public buildings, class-rooms, auditoriums, restaurants, hospitals, and so forth - was too extreme.

Secondly, MIT may not be covered by the ordinance. As a private institution, MIT might not be required to comply with all the provisions of the law, especially those regarding class rooms and dining halls. The signs are being delayed while Institute attorneys consider the matter.

And many MIT officials feel the whole matter is more than a month which covers the same ground as the Cambridge ordinance - without the fine.

"We fully expect they'll change it," William P. Dickinson, director of MIT Physical Plant, said. "If they don't repeal it or change it, then we'll have to find out what it means to us. And since we're already working on the state law, it probably won't be all that different anyway."

The new law is "in limbo status," according to Joseph Collins, Special Assistant to the Chairman of the Corporation.

"We haven't even got a copy of the ordinance yet. And when I called the city to ask for one, everybody told me, 'Don't worry too much about this, don't act on it like it's gospel.'"

Even Cambridge's attorneys are playing down the effects of the sweeping ordinance passed by the Council. Andy Trodden of the Cambridge Law Department said his office wasn't worried about enforcing anything yet - "just wait until we see what happens after Monday" when the Council will consider Sullivan's move to repeal the measure.

"But even if MIT doesn't have to worry about what the city does, it still has to consider the state law which (Please turn to page 2)

Fire sparks queries; buildings called safe

By Peter G. Balbus

The first fire at Tang Hall this summer has set off a blaze of questions about the safety of other Institute Houses.

The new Institute houses, such as McCormick, MacGregor, and New House were constructed according to stringent safety codes. And the renovation performed on the older houses (such as Barton and Ashdown) brings these structures up to current standards. The Institute, however, has a habit of exceeding current safety stipulations whenever possible. Thus, even Harvey, often referred to as "MIT's resident stickler" features a complete automatic sprinkler system and other

Life's minor aggravations: stickers that do not stick

By Stephen Blatt

"If the registration stickers don't stick, apply some more moisture," is the manufacturer's advice on how to solve this term's problem with the ID card.

In addition to not sticking to ID cards, the registration stickers for the fall term are too long to fit properly on the card and too narrow in many cases. "Invalid unless current registration sticker is affixed above".

According to Associate Registrar Ronald Smith, this year's method of printing class cards and registration sticker on one card is, despite the problems, "far more cost-effective" than preparing the packet of comple- ments: roll cards and ID sticker used in previous terms.

"I apologize for this term's problems," said Smith, who added that the problems should be solved in time for the next Registration Day. Because the class card/ID form was new, only enough rolls were printed for one term, allowing changes to be made for future terms.

Last year, both term's stickers were printed in one run, but the printer forgot to change the date on the green second term stickers, thus necessitating a special replacement sticker, distributed in March.

In order that the same type of self-adhesive be used on the new forms as was used in previous years, Smith said, the manufacturer claimed the ad- ditional cost was too high to be applied by hand, thus driving up the cost. This year's form, for printed, costs as much as last year's form containing the ID sticker and instructions. In addition to printing the ID sticker, other costs in past years in- cluded preparing roll cards and collating the set of forms into a packet.

"Just because MIT is private doesn't mean we can serve salmonella with the food."

-See "Smoking" below-