Student telethon raises over sixty thousand dollars

by Jack Link

Next year's staggering $900 tuition hike and the MIT football team are inspiring generous alumni donations from across the US and Canada in the second annual MIT telethon, according to the students competing in the fundraiser.

Last year the telethon raised $70,000. This year's goal is $100,000, and $60,000 had been raised as of Wednesday morning, said Brenda Hambleton '79, Special Programs Coordinator for the Alumni Fund.

"We only call those who have donated up to $500 in the past, and we ask them to double the amount they gave last year," said Hambleton.

This tactic sometimes backfired, according to many of the students participating in the telethon, which began Sunday.

"The first few times I tried that I usually got an incrdible response after a long silence," said Lee Motwakel '81 of Alpha Tau Omega (ATO). "I dropped that tactic pretty quickly."

The alumni may designate their donation to any particular fund. Favorites this year are the general operating budget, scholarships, and the Independent Residence Development Fund (IRD). Special emphasis is being given this year to the IRD fund and its dorm equivalent, the Campus Residence Fund (CRF).

CRF and IRDF money is used to help finance dormitory and Independent Living Groups (ILG) housing renovations. The IRD has loaned one half million dollars to thirty houses for sprinkler systems alone. Currently, one house is still looking for new housing and two others would like to move nearer campus.

"The IRD is doing much better than CRF because the frats aren't really plugging for it. They're much more aware of the need than the dorm residents are," said Hambleton.

Over half the ILGs and all of the dorms except Bexley are competing in the telethon for a $100 prize to the group raising the most money. Additionally, if each group raises $1,000, a prize will be awarded. The ILGs receiving the most donations, and Dormcon will be awarding the coveted bronze telephone to the three highest dormitories.

"At this point it looks as if ZBT will run away with the IRC prize," said Hambleton. ZBT raised $11,308 in one night. There are also individual prizes awarded nightly, and free theater passes to the individual receiving the most prize in a system based on the number of definite donations and donation increases.

ATO's Garry Neben '81 has won the individual prize twice. He's also been hang up on several times, and Tuesday was told "It's such a nice day, why don't you go fly a kite?" But the callers wasn't being sarcastic; she really did think it was a nice day, and she and her husband, both alumni, donated $15.

David Lobow '83 of Fiji was surprised to see his physics professor and his own first cousin on his list. Rob Spina '83, also of Fiji, has a technique he claims produces great generosity. "I promise them we won't bother them any more this year and will promised them we won't bother them any more this year and will (Please turn to page 14)