Non-students in LSC

To the Editor:

To anyone who read Richard Salz’s May article about LSC, it is not surprising that last week’s column (“Keeping it pure”) was full of inaccuracies and erroneous statements. The clear impression given was that recruiting students is the chief responsibility of student organizations. They are run by “old-timers” and that some are even “benefit of students.” As LSC was the most frequently mentioned organization in the column, I thought a clarifying response was appropriate.

LSC has the largest active membership of any activity on campus. Of the approximately 160 active members this term, fewer than 20 are non-students. Our officers (cumulatively known as the Executive Committee), as elected last November consisted of ten students and only one non-student (Class of ’79). None were “old-timers.”

Contrary to the implication in his column, LSC members do not have to make money from our publicity facility (LSC does not pay its members for anything; however, press operators and designers may use LSC facilities for outside organizations and charge them for their labor). In fact, “old-timers” enjoy working for LSC and take pride in having worked for what we believe is the best-run and most responsible activity on campus.

For an organization the size of LSC, having “old-timers” around has some distinct advantages. Old-timers can serve as a “corporate memory,” supplying not only information on the way things have been handled in the past, but (hopefully) the reasons for doing so as well. Often, conditions have changed such that prior considerations have become irrelevant. As frequently, however, the knowledge of an old Execomm member can save the committee from major mistakes, embarrassment, or worse. The current Execomm may choose to either use or ignore such knowledge. Making it unavailable seems rash and counterproductive.

Long-time members are also invaluable to major projects, such as the recent improvements to the 25-200 projection booth and sound system. Without people willing to make such a long-term commitment, most large projects would either never get started or remain incomplete. It has always been our goal to get students involved in every aspect of such projects, sometimes without success. It should be noted that the Projection Subcommittee, which makes use of all of LSC’s new sound and film equipment, is run by and is composed exclusively of students.

Mr. Salz correctly points out that student organizations are primarily for students. However, the Association of Student Activities (ASA) has determined that an activity need only have 50% undergraduate membership to be recognized. It is neither illegal nor unusual for activities to have members from the MIT community at large. In that the major responsibility for decision-making at LSC rests primarily with students, I think it incredibly small and sanctimonious of Mr. Salz to wish to remove those people whose time and effort have helped make their organizations more successful and respected, thereby benefiting the entire MIT community.

Marc Blum ’75
Former Classics Director, LSC


good friends

Friends sometimes question your taste in movies. But they'll see them with you anyway.

Electric Boat is the world's foremost designer and builder of nuclear submarines — one of the great engineering challenges of this century. With a $3 billion backlog and long-term contracts, Electric Boat offers career opportunities in nearly every engineering discipline (including electrical, mechanical, civil, etc.), top pay and benefits, long-range stability and an unmatched lifestyle on the southern New England seacoast.

U.S. Citizenship required — an Equal Opportunity Employer

General Dynamics Electric Boat Division
The Best Shipbuilding Team in America
Groton, CT 06340

Friends sometimes question your taste in movies. But they'll see them with you anyway.

It sounded fantastic in the newspaper. But only to you. Still, you had to see it, and with a little arm-twisting your friends agreed to see it too.

You've already heard a barrage of tales about your taste in movies since the curtain came down. And, knowing your friends, it'll go on for weeks.

So, to make it up to them and show them your taste isn't bad in everything, you do something a little special. Tonight, let it be Löwenbräun.