Fewer frosh to be crowded

By Kenneth Snow

The Dean’s Office estimates that there will only be 63 overcrowded freshmen this year, a significant decrease from last year’s record level of 232.

The new dormitory at 500 Memorial Drive has helped to ease the overcrowding situation. (Photo by Eric Sohn)

R/O organizers optimistic

By Stephanie Pollack

Residence/Orientation (R/O) Week is a time to learn that “the MIT environment as a whole is an education,” according to Assistant R/O Coordinator Ken Dungan.

Dumas and other student organizers of R/O Week are optimistic that the week will be successful. “R/O went very smoothly last year, and we hope that it will go smoothly again,” noted Sara Henderson ’83, Dormitory Council Vice Chairman for R/O.

Several changes have been made in R/O procedures and events. This year, dormitories will participate in Clearinghouse, a computerized system for tracking freshmen during R/O Week. Henderson said that the participation of the dormitories will make the system “a lot more efficient because instead of instructors calling every dormitory to find a freshman, they only have to call one.”

Mark Goldberg ’82, Interfraternity Council (IFC) Rush Chairman, called dormitory participation in Clearinghouse “a new height of cooperation between fraternities and dormitories.” He added that the changes will “certainly be helpful to the freshmen.”

The rules for alcohol use during R/O Week will be the same as last year, according to Henderson and Goldberg. Living groups are permitted to advertise the availability of alcohol at parties. Enforcement of Massachusetts 20-year-old drinking age is left to the individual living groups.

“The fact is that the U.S. is the law,” Goldberg noted. Living groups, which disobey the law “are putting their own necks on the line.”

The time period between Freshman Pieda and Registration Days has been extended by two days this year. This is the first change in the alcohol rules in 20 years.

Student Affairs Robert A. Sherwood said that the availability of alcohol at parties is one cause of the overcrowding situation. Previous years, the 65-person capacity of the Freshman Picnic was the maximum number of people allowed on campus. In 1974, which lasted six weeks, Walker Memorial was the only open dining facility on campus. In a statement released Wednesday, MIT’s chief negotiator, James J. Culliton, announced that the Institute will continue to provide living groups with service and support. (Please turn to page 2)

Voyager 2 outbound from Saturn

By Jack Link

A peanut-shaped moon and a knobby ring are among the discoveries made by Voyager 2 that scientists are analyzing at the Jet Propulsion Lab (JPL) in Pasadena, California, as unmanned spacecraft leaves Saturn bound for Uranus in its “Grand Tour” of the Solar System.

Operating a billion miles from earth, Voyager 2, like its predecessor Voyager 1, performed almost flawlessly until early Wednesday morning. After only 27.2 seconds early and within 38 miles of its planned course, Voyager 2 took a closer look at some of the features discovered by its sister. A problem developed occurred was to tilt the ring plane to a 60-degree tilt, and continue through the planned 600-mile trajectory.

The problem involves the movable instrument platform on which holds the probe’s cameras and several other instruments. To aim the platform, both the elevation and azimuth or rotary direction of the platform are set. When the camera emerged from radio blackout, mission controllers discovered that the platform’s azimuth control was stuck, rendering it useless.

The Plasma Science Experiment, designed and built at MIT’s Center for Space Research, has not been adversely affected by the platform failure, since its sensors are mounted on Voyager’s main body. MIT faculty members and students involved in the experiment are scheduled to present at both the IUP and the Goddard Space Center on Friday, August 26.

If the problem is not corrected, the camera’s view will move away from being enhanced, by the craft flying on Saturn, including the 11 experiments formerly independent of the platform.

The first action taken by ground controllers after the problem occurred was to tilt the platform away from the sun using the 200-foot-long tether. We are committed to protect the instruments, according to NASA spokesman Rocky Ryd. Early Thursday, controllers managed to steer the platform a few degrees, but continued attempts later yesterday were not executed correctly.

“We don’t quite know yet what happened during the blackout,” said Terrence Johnson of the Voyager imaging team. “We expect Voyager 2 to pass at least once over the Uranus.”