

The Official Newsletter of the Ashdown Community

Message from the Editor

Dear Reader,

A very warm welcome to you whether you are new to Ashdown or returning to stay!

In this issue, we provide a flashback of the summer here at Ashdown. In spite of the sizzling heat, Ashdowners were not discouraged from having their annual Fourth of July barbecue; nor did they, as MIT students who reputedly spend every waking hour toiling in their laboratories, fail to succumb most gladly to the World Cup bug that took the globe by storm.

You may read more about the Ashdown committees that organize events for the community at <http://ashdown.mit.edu/>. There will be many more events this fall and I hope to see you there!

Sincerely,
Liang Jie Wong
Ashdown Newsletter Officer

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Smoothie Night (June 20)

With the unseasonably cold spells of spring behind us, the Ashdown Social and Coffee Hour Committees decided to usher in the sweet summer ahead with a smoothie-themed Coffee Hour.

The event was a major success, with over a hundred attendees and nine contending teams in the Smoothie Contest.



*The nine smoothies in the contest.
Can you tell which came in first?*



*Residents were spoiled for choice
in smoothie ingredients.*

Of particular note were Dheera Venkatraman's smoothie, which contained mint and lime; Alice Lo's smoothie, which contained tofu; and the "Supernerd's Super-green Super-healthy Super-smart Superdrink", a smoothie that an enthusiastic team of four had created from primarily avocado and kiwi fruit.

Making up the panel of judges were housemasters Terry and Ann Orlando, AHEC Chair Matt Haberland, Social Officer André Calmon and Fourth Floor Officer Aalap Dighe. During the judging process, each judge assigned a score from 0 to 9 for each entry and revealed their scores to the audience before moving on to the next entry.

The organizing committees had prepared a veritable spread of fruits, juices, yoghurts, ice cream and other ingredients from which residents may concoct smoothies for their enjoyment and the Smoothie Contest. Contestants were required to submit their recipes along with a sample of their creations, and entries were judged based on a comprehensive set of criteria that included healthiness, originality, the variety of ingredients used and the clarity of recipe instructions.

Because the event had been announced to the Ashdown community in advance, several enterprising residents even came prepared with their own special ingredients, in hopes of outshining the rest and clinching the top prize of a New England Aquarium ticket.



*Alice and husband preparing the only
smoothie that night with tofu(!) in it*



*Dheera getting every last
drop of lime into his prize-
winning smoothie*



*While the inventors of the Supernerd's Superdrink did not win any
prize, they certainly won the most attention!*



The judges delivering their verdict on a smoothie

said that Fanny’s smoothie was not excessively sweet like many of the others, and had just the right balance of sweet and sour.

In third place was Nicole Casanovas, who won a \$10 Toscanini’s voucher. Dheera Venkatraman came in second and won a pair of AMC tickets. The first prize of a New England Aquarium ticket went to Fanny Yang, whose recipe, surprisingly, contained no special ingredients. When asked what he felt made Fanny’s smoothie stand out among the rest, Taste Judge Terry Orlando



Because we’re MIT

The winning recipes:

Fanny Yang

Recipe: pineapples, apples, strawberries, raspberries, strawberry ice cream, vanilla ice cream, passion fruit juice, orange mango juice

Dheera Venkatraman

Recipe: mint, lime, raspberry, blueberry, ice

Nicole Casanovas

Recipe: strawberries, mango, kiwi ice cream, ice, strawberry-kiwi juice

Fourth of July at Ashdown

Ashdown celebrated the Fourth of July this year with a barbecue that lasted from noon to 3 p.m., in the course of which a hefty eight hundred hamburger patties were grilled and gobbled up in the sun-soaked Ashdown courtyard. The event was open to all MIT students, many of whom saw this as a perfect opportunity to socialize and enjoy a free lunch.



Long queues for free food



BBQ attendees sitting around and shooting the breeze

The strong sunlight, however, kept most people off the grass (where there was little shade) and made them seek the shadow of buildings or the cooler recesses of Ashdown, such as the Crafts lounge. Nevertheless, there were some who braved the heat to play sports on the grass.



Some sought the shade; others braved the heat



Icy-cold refreshments

To add variety to the occasion, emcee Christine Sanders posed bits of historical trivia at intervals and winners walked away with AMC movie passes.



We have a taker...



...and a winner!

According to the Social Committee, which organized the event, the barbecue had an estimated five hundred attendees. All in all, it was a very pleasant affair, complete with lively music, and a great way not only of celebrating the anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, but also of exulting in the height of summer at MIT.



Food ran out quickly, in spite of the vast quantities prepared

Ashdown World Cup Fever

From 11 June to 11 July 2010, the world-wide community of soccer fans held its breath as thirty-two countries vied for the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the world championship for men's national association football (soccer) teams. The matches took place this year in South Africa, with the final match being played at the Soccer City stadium in Joahannesburg. In the final, Spain defeated the Netherlands 1-0 after extra time, giving Spain its first world title.*



Before goal



After goal

Rising to the occasion, Ashdown House, Edgerton House, Sidney-Pacific and the Warehouse, with the support of the Graduate Student Council (GSC) Funding Board, pooled their resources to create the “World Cup Central @ MIT”, which organized screenings of World Cup matches and provided food during many of them. For instance, attendees were treated to a hot breakfast during the screening of the Germany vs. Argentina match in Ashdown's Hulsizer Room at 10 a.m. on a Saturday.



Breakfast at a World Cup screening

The final match between Spain and the Netherlands on Sunday, 11 July was screened at the Hulsizer room, with face-paint and flags for more enthusiastic elements of the audience and food and drinks for everyone.



Transfixed by the final match in the Hulsizer room

*Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2010_FIFA_World_Cup

To liven up the World Cup for Ashdown even more, Ashdown residents were also invited to pit their soccer team evaluation skills (or just plain clairvoyance) against one another in the “Ashdown World Cup Challenge”, for which prizes were awarded to the most accurate predictions of World Cup match outcomes. In first place was Carlos Carrero (\$25 gift card); in second place, James Damore (\$15 gift card); and in third place, Jason Sussman (\$10 gift card). When asked about how he had decided on his winning predictions, James Damore said, “I actually had a very simple strategy: I just bet that the expected favorite would win 1 - 0 for every game. Because of the way the bracket points were distributed, I felt that this would give me the most amount of points on average.”

The organizers of “World Cup Central @ MIT” at Ashdown were resident Fanny Yang, Sports Officer Dimeter Ostrev and AHEC Secretary Adekunle Adeyemo.



World Cup decorations in the entrance hallway and at the front desk

Farewell to Cissy Giannino

On 23 June, a small farewell gathering was held in honor of Cissy Giannino, who was leaving to return to her home state of Florida after a long period of service at MIT. Cissy had served at the front desk of Ashdown since June 2003, with a hiatus starting from 2005 when she and her husband moved to Florida. But she missed her work and the people here so much that she returned in time to help with the opening of the new Ashdown in 2008, and stayed on to assist in the smooth operation of Ashdown since.



Cissy Giannino

Cissy was an enthusiastic worker who never failed to stay on top of her duties. When asked about Cissy, Ashdown House Manager Denise Lanfranchi said, “Cissy was the most dedicated staff member! Her work ethic is without parallel. In the old Ashdown she straightened out a terrible messed up front desk: She set up a new and improved mail and key system and ensured all security measures were implemented by all desk staff. She and Kristin set up the front desk and mailboxes at the new Ashdown...no easy feat!”

In addition to her invaluable service at Ashdown, Cissy also worked at other dormitories in MIT. She was instrumental in the opening of Simmons Hall in 2002 and served at McCormick and Bexley too.

Finally, Cissy decided to return home to Florida for good because she missed her husband and pets. We at Ashdown are grateful to have had Cissy and wish her all the best for the future.



Snapshots of Cissy's farewell lunch: among those present to see her off were Ashdown Housemaster Ann Orlando and Ashdown House Manager Denise Lanfranchi

Citizen's Corner: Submission Guidelines

Do you have a flair for writing?

Do you have an experience you would love to share? A cause you want to speak out for? An event you would like publicized and reported?

The ears of Ashdown are thirsting to hear your story!

The "Citizen's Corner" is a section of "3am" aimed at reflecting the lives and perspectives of Ashdown residents. All Ashdown residents are invited to contribute, and all kinds of material are welcome. In the past, we have received everything from overseas exchange program stories to essays about environmentalism. We are especially keen on the views of international students comparing the way of life (in terms of culture, atmosphere, education system etc.) here to the ones they were used to.

Guidelines in a nutshell:

- Submissions should be between 100 and 1500 words.
- No politically sensitive, religiously sensitive or pornographic material.
- Pictures to accompany text are welcome.
- Email title: "3AM SUB: <title of submission>".
- Email Liang Jie Wong ("Liang") at ljwong@mit.edu.



Contact the Editor

Please direct any comments or queries about "3am" to Liang Jie Wong ("Liang") at ljwong@mit.edu