

## The Official Newsletter of the Ashdown Community

### Message from the Editor

Hello Readers,

How are you all today? Enjoying the nice weather we've been having lately? Catch a good movie? Oh, speaking of movies, I saw a video someone posted of the new Iron Man movie. The pirated copy has since been taken down, but I did notice that there was a post-credits clip of Thor, so that should be interesting. With the poor audio and visual, I could barely tell what was going on. But for those who want spoilers, Thor was riding up a mountain on horseback, looking determined and angry at something. When he got to the top, he raised his hammer, Mjolnir, and yelled "I'm Thor!" and lightning struck. At this point his horse replied, "Well, you should have worn a thaddle, thilly!"

Just a reminder that if you have any ideas for stuff you'd like to see in the newsletter, send it in! If you attend or organize an Ashdown event you liked, write about it! **Remember, unsolicited article submissions qualify for a \$10 gift card to Amazon!** Also, I've run out of questions to ask the Roman kids, so send any questions my way so I can ask them!

In this issue, we have the tenth installment of the Puzzler Twins (Dawn sure has a busy schedule), a Citizen's Corner piece about saving money (who doesn't want that?), awards that Ashdown community members have received (congratulations!), the second interview with the new AHEC (have you met Shabnam?), the Kids' Corner (they still say the darndest things!), and more Helpful Information from Kristin at the Front Desk (hello if you're new!).

Wow, that last paragraph was one long sentence. TL;DR is below. If you have any questions, comments, concerns, complaints, or constructive suggestions, I'd love to hear them, so please e-mail me!

Happy reading!

Sakul Ratanalert

Ashdown Newsletter Officer (ashdown-newsletter@mit.edu)

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## Ash and Dawn, the Puzzler Twins – #10

*Ash and Dawn are MIT first-year graduate students, and recently moved into Ashdown. Their stories will be chronicled in the upcoming issues. Each story has a **SECRET CODE WORD**. E-mail the Editor (at [ashdown-newsletter@mit.edu](mailto:ashdown-newsletter@mit.edu), not his personal one) the correct **SECRET CODE WORD** by **May 15, 2013** to enter the **Puzzle Raffle**. **Three** will be **randomly chosen** to win a **\$10 gift card to Amazon**. **FIND THE SECRET CODE WORD AND WIN!!** (The **SECRET CODE WORD** can be found on [Dictionary.com](http://Dictionary.com). No anagramming is necessary unless otherwise stated.)*

Dawn was having trouble deciding which four classes she was going to take next semester. She planned to choose one class from each of these pairs:

Architecture Design Fundamentals I  
*OR* Architectural Design Theory and Methodologies

Organometallic Chemistry  
*OR* Enzymes: Structure and Function

Transport Processes in the Environment (grad-level)  
*OR* Aquatic Chemistry

Measurement and Instrumentation  
*OR* Numerical Methods in Wave Scattering

Dawn decided to ask her advisor for advice. Her advisor was very busy, so he just gave her a copy of MIT's generic advice list, highlighting some passages haphazardly. Some excerpts are shown below:

“... If indecision's got you down, split the difference; do not frown...”

“... The beginning of class is the most important in learning ...”

“... A department's number is not just indicative of its age, it is also indicative of its standing in the natural order...”

“... It is interesting that MIT uses decimal points to separate department numbers from class numbers...”

“... Why on earth are you taking classes from four different departments? ...”

*What's the SECRET CODE WORD? (Puzzle by David Wilson and Sakul Ratanaalert)*

*February 2013 Issue Winners: **Andrea Dubin, David Wilson, and Amanda Zangari** (out of four correct solutions) won the lottery for submitting “EAGLE” to last month's puzzle (Solution on last page of this publication). Congratulations! Please e-mail the Editor to receive your gift card. And thanks to everyone who submitted!*

## Citizen's Corner: Saving Money

### Eating Your Way Into More Savings

by Jane Chui

Who doesn't want to save money? And if you, like me, spend just over 60% of your monthly stipend for a room here on campus at MIT (well the efficiency *is* quite nice ...), then saving money is definitely something that crosses your mind in between those grueling experiments that just never seem to work the way you want them to.

But how? Or, more relevant, how much time is it going to take? Saving money becomes less important if it consumes more time than you are willing to spend (pun intended). For example, it is just not worth your time by going to three different grocery stores to make sure that you got each product at the cheapest market rate available. After all, time is money right?

In the past couple of years I've worked out some money-saving ways that don't add all that much to your non-lab-related time expenses (again, pun intended). You'll notice that all of the tips below are food-related ... this is not a coincidence because aside from room, the highest monthly expense is board (just an interesting fact, the 'board' actually refers to the slab of wood that served as the table back in the day on which food would be served). I enjoy the convenience of my 'room' on campus, so my focus is on the 'board' portion of a grad student's expenses. Not all of these tips may work for you, but some might, and who knows, it just might lead to some extra funds in your back pocket. Here goes ...



**Use your freezer.** The freezer can be your best pal, simply because it allows you to stock up on perishables when they are on sale. For example, if the chicken is on sale for half price this week, get double or triple the portions you need for an average week, and just freeze the rest. Cooking directly from frozen in the oven is easy, a timesaver, and it still tastes pretty good.

**Take advantage of what's on sale.** Nothing is continuously on sale because supermarkets use their sales to attract different types of customers and to turn over inventory. This means that by purchasing whatever is on sale for a given week you can greatly broaden your gastronomical and culinary horizons while saving money. For example, be brave and try that spaghetti squash that's on sale rather than the butternut squash, or eat that different cut of meat than what you are used to. You might be surprised to find new favourites this way!

**Pack a lunch.** Cook extra whenever you do, and portion those into containers for lunch the next day(s). There is not much effort involved in cooking extra (throw in more chicken in the oven, or peel an extra couple of carrots, or just cook that whole box of pasta with that whole jar of sauce ... who likes saving that half used jar in the fridge anyways?). Get yourself a set of microwaveable Tupperware, and voilà! Eating out will always be more expensive than bringing a lunch, and a bonus is that you know exactly what went into it so it will likely be healthier.

**Make your own tea.** I don't drink coffee so I can't speak for the coffee drinkers, but really, you can save a whole lot of money every month if you boiled your own water and added your own tea bag. And yes, it is that easy. So next time you go to the grocery store, buy yourself a box of tea. You can either bring some hot water from home in a thermos, or just boil some if your office has the right apparatus. You will soon find that not spending those \$3 (or more) on tea every day can save you quite a lot over the course of one month.

Well, there you have it. Happy savings!

## 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.

If your contribution is selected, you will be rewarded with a **\$10 gift card to Amazon**.

### 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 Sakul Ratanalert at ashdown-newsletter@mit.edu.



## Ashdown Reviews

*This column, Ashdown Reviews, aims to provide 3AM readers a chance to read what other readers have thought about restaurants and other places around Cambridge and Boston. **You can contribute too!** Submit a review of a restaurant or other recommended locale you have been to recently (pictures would be nice, too), and if it is selected you will be rewarded with a **\$10 gift card to Amazon**. Let Ashdown know where they should go when they have (gasp) free time!*

## Ashdown in the MIT Institute Awards 2013

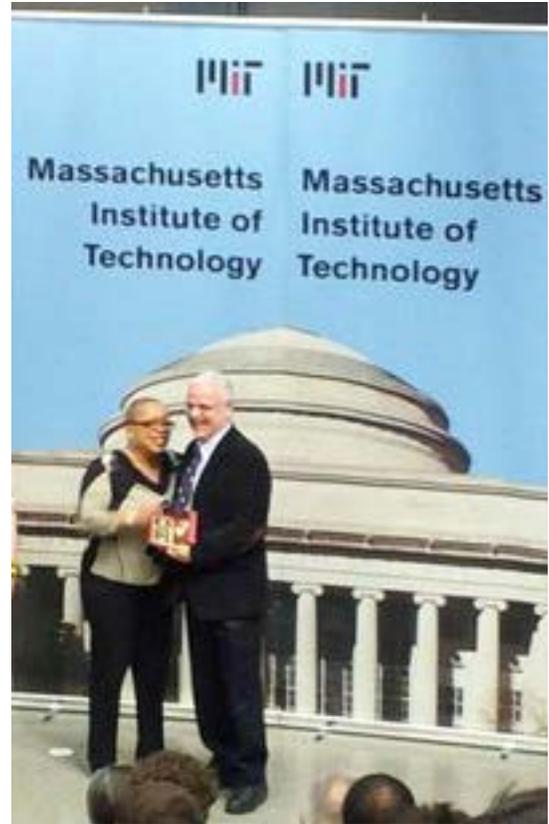
On April 25, four members of the Ashdown Community received MIT Institute Awards at the MIT Awards Convocation 2013. (Photos courtesy of Shabnam Raayai.)

Our Ashdown Housemasters, **Ann and Terry Orlando**, received the **2013 Edward L. Horton Fellowship Award**. The Edward L. Horton Fellowship Award is given to those at MIT who “foster fellowship within the graduate student community. The award is named in honor of Edward L. Horton, a graduate student in Physics, to honor his spirited contributions to graduate student life at the Institute. (Terry shown with the award presenter on right)



**Matt Haberland**, former AHEC chair and current chair of the Thirsty Ear Executive Committee, received the **2013 William L. Stewart, Jr. Award**. This award is “presented in memory of William L. Stewart, Jr., an alumnus and member of the Corporation who demonstrated deep interest in student life at MIT. The Stewart Awards recognize outstanding contributions by an individual student or student organization to extracurricular activities and events during the preceding year. (Matt shown above on left with his fellow recipients).

**Michael Grenier**, of the Thirsty Ear, received the **2013 James N. Murphy Award**. “The James N. Murphy Award was established in memory of James N. Murphy for his immeasurable contribution to community life at the Institute. It is given to a non-faculty employee whose spirit and loyalty exemplify this kind of inspired and dedicated service, especially with regard to students.” (Mike shown with his fellow recipient on right)



## Meet the New AHEC: Shabnam Raayai

*This is Part 2 of a series of interviews with AHEC 2013-2014. This issue we are introduced to Shabnam Raayai Ardakani, AHEC Treasurer:*

### **1) What was your involvement in Ashdown before this election?**

Before being elected to AHEC, I was a member of the Ashdown Cultural Committee (2012-13), which organized several big and small events, including cultural trivia, orientation dessert night, pumpkin carving, and “World Hello Day” contest. In addition, I have been helping around with events done by other committees, such as the Brunch, Coffee Hour, and Social committees.

### **2) What things do you want to make sure stay?**

There are many things that have turned into traditions here over the years, which I would like to make sure to stay. For example, our “Annual Pi Day Celebration and Recitation Contest,” which we had for the sixth time this year; Coffee Hour, which has been going on for decades; and Movie Nights, which bring people together to watch an either old or new movie together.

### **3) What things do you want to change?**

Change..., that is a hard question. I don’t think I have the right to say what I want to change, but there are things I want to improve. This is a funny sentence to say, but we have more than 500 neighbors, and it would be awesome to know all 500 of our neighbors! As an improvement, I would like to make sure that more and more people would become part of the community and get everyone to know each other. It is a hard task, but I hope to be able to at least start the process. Still, changes or improvements are not something that I alone have the right to decide on, and there are things that should be discussed and improved as a group. And for that, I would like to make sure that everyone in Ashdown knows that we are there to hear their ideas for changes, improvements, and other things to be able to make Ashdown better and better every day.

### **4) What do you do in your free time?**

Even though there is always a deadline coming up or other duties which prevents a grad student from being free, there are many things I do in my free time. Part of my free time is spent volunteering in Ashdown events that are not related to my committee. Also, I really like stories, whether in books, TV series, or movies (from all over the world). So, in free times I usually follow different TV series or read different books.

*(continued on next page...)*



## Why did the graduate student read this at 3am?

*Because she was taking a break from writing her thesis! Okay, that probably wasn't very funny, but hopefully the rest of this page is more entertaining:*

**Q:** Why can't you trust an atom student?

**A:** Because they make up everything.

**Q:** Why do chemists like nitrates?

**A:** They're cheaper than day rates.

## Kids' Corner (aka Ask the Roman Kids Stuff)



**Got questions you want to ask Max and Dante? E-mail the Editor!**



Max (after stopping at an ATM to take out some money for our babysitter): "Why do we have to give babysitters all of our money?"

Katie: "Well, we don't have any family that lives close by, so when I go to work, I have to pay someone to take really good care of you guys."

Max: "I have an idea. We could get a step-mom! If Papa wants one."

Dante: "Hmmm...I am very interested in this idea of Max's, a step-mom."

## Meet the New AHEC: Shabnam Raayai (cont.)

*(continued from previous page...)*

I also take care of some plants in my room and always take some time for them. I am usually looking around to find seeds of interesting flowers or vegetables to grow. I used to play the piano in my free time, but with all the awesome pianists we have in Ashdown, I don't dare to play and let people hear the awful sound of me playing.

### 5) Anything else you want to add?

All I would like to say is that as a member of AHEC I would be able to help this community get better and better. I would like to know everyone in Ashdown and hear their ideas about how we could make anything better to enjoy our time while in grad school together.

## Helpful Info for New Residents, Part 8

*Kristin O'Halloran is one of the faces you see at the Ashdown Front Desk. She has prepared some helpful information for new residents (and returning, just in case you need the reminder). While this will be in parts, you can find the full list of information on the Ashdown Website.*

### **Quiet Hours**

Ashdown has a quiet hours policy from 11:00PM (23:00) to 8:00AM (08:00). During that time TV's, music and conversation should be toned down so as not to disturb your neighbors. This includes hallways and common rooms.

If you are disturbed by noise at night you can contact the guard at the front desk at 617-253-2961 or call for the night manager at 617-253-1500.

### **Fire/Smoke Alarms**

If the Smoke Alarm in your room sounds, **DO NOT** open the door to the main hallway. Open your windows as much as you can and air the room out that way. If you open the door to the hallway and there is enough smoke, it will cause the building-wide fire alarm to go off, warrant an evacuation of the building and call the Fire Department to Ashdown.

If you hear the Fire Alarm sounding, listen carefully to the voice commands of the system. You only have to evacuate your building if the command stipulates to do so. Know your building number!

**TechCASH**- Students can use their MIT ID card as a debit card at certain locations.

To do so, you must **Open a TechCash Account** by going to:

<http://web.mit.edu/mitcard/techcash/openaccount.html>

**Adding Funds to Card**- Can be done on-line or by visiting the Card Office.

**On-line:** Each on-line deposit incurs a \$1.50 convenience fee. You may either:

Charge your Student Account (the bill from MIT for tuition, housing, medical, etc.).

Use a credit card (\$25 minimum deposit). TechCASH deposits made by credit card are classified as a purchase (not a cash advance).

**In-person:** Visit the Card Office (to avoid the convenience fee of \$1.50/deposit)

Request the Card Office (Stratton Ctr, 84 Mass Ave, W20-021) charge your Student Account. The Card Office does not accept cash, checks or make manual credit card transactions. They only charge your Student Account to apply funds to your card.

**Lost Card:** As soon as you realize your ID card is missing, you can instantly suspend the TechCASH feature of your card by using the on-line account management tool:

<http://web.mit.edu/mitcard/techcash/onlinemgmt.html>.

If you find your ID card later, you can reactivate your TechCASH instantly on-line by using the account management tool as well.

For a full explanation, visit; <http://web.mit.edu/mitcard/faq.html>

For places that accept TechCASH, visit: <http://web.mit.edu/mitcard/techcash/locations.html?cid=51&>

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## Heat Ventilation Air Conditioning Systems (HVAC)

### Air Conditioning (AC)

The AC automatically works when the outside temperature reaches 70F/21.1C and maintains it for four consecutive hours.

You can set your thermostat by ensuring the thermostat is set to “Auto” and then press the “Hand/Finger” button to reach your desired temperature.

*(continued in Part 9, next issue)*

## Solution to Puzzle #9 (Feb 2013 Edition)

*(See February Edition for the Puzzle Statement, by Angela Liu and Sakul Ratanalert.)*

The prices on the receipt were derived by converting each item into its phone number pad equivalent, i.e. by texting using T9 (“tee nine”) software. If you didn’t notice this right away, you may have noticed the items “TINS” and “WINE” both shared “\_IN\_” and “\_4.6\_” prices, which could have aided you in equating letters and numbers. The complete receipt is shown on the right:



The total of these items is \$76,950.76. According to Ash, it should “add up to romance”, which is \$76,626.23, but it does not due to his gift mishap. There is indeed “a difference between romance and how the evening summed up.”

This difference is \$324.53, which when converted through T9 yields only one solution (in the American English dictionary): “EAGLE”.  
SECRET CODE WORD FOUND.

Ash's Purchases: 2/14	
Bag	\$ 2.24
Bouquet	\$ 26878.38
Card	\$ 22.73
Cream	\$ 273.26
Dinner	\$ 3466.37
Eggs	\$ 34.47
Flour	\$ 356.87
Fruit	\$ 378.48
Giftbox	\$ 44382.69
Jams	\$ 52.67
Milk	\$ 64.55
SHIV	\$ 74.48
Sugar	\$ 784.27
Tins	\$ 84.67
Wine	\$ 94.63

## Contact the Editor

Please direct any comments or queries about “3am” to Sakul Ratanalert at  
ashdown-newsletter@mit.edu