

The Official Newsletter of the Ashdown Community

Message from the Editor

Hello Readers,

Welcome Ashdown residents, new and old! For those who have just arrived in this lovely complex, my name is Sakul, and I'm your official Newsletter Officer, responsible for delivering these monthly issues of facts and fun to your inbox. One fun fact/myth: Did you know the calendar used to have only 10 months? That's why September through December have the "wrong" prefixes. They used to be the seventh through tenth months before Julius and Augustus Caesar took power in the Roman Empire. With the Julian calendar reform, two months were added and named after these emperors, July and August. Augustus wanted to make sure his month was just as long as his predecessor's, so he took a day from February, giving August 31 days and blunting February to 28/29. You could say that February was "cut by a pair of Caesars."

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!**

In this issue, we have the fourteenth installment of the Puzzler Twins (Guest Puzzle!), an interview with the new Housemaster family (more new people!), the third installation of Meet your AHEC (it's Misha's turn!), the Kids' Corner (now with more kids to ask!), and a new section to Choose Your Own Adventure (what is Annie Boddy up to now?).

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 – #14

Ash and Dawn are MIT second-year graduate students, and reside in 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, not his personal one) the correct **SECRET CODE WORD** by **September 25, 2013** to enter the **Puzzle Raffle**. **Three** will be **randomly chosen** to win a **prize**. **FIND THE SECRET CODE WORD AND WIN!!** (The **SECRET CODE WORD** can be found on Dictionary.com. No anagramming is necessary unless otherwise stated.)

Ash and Dawn are pretty exhausted from their first year of grad school, and are planning a whirlwind trip around the world this winter. They've even convinced their advisors to let them take the first week of IAP off! Ash took his ideas for the trip to a local travel agency, who put together the following itinerary proposal:



"unravel your travel"

PROPOSED ITINERARY

ARRIVAL DATE	LOCATION
28-DEC-2013	TOP OF THE HOUR? IF IT IS IN NEPAL, IT IS HERE
2-JAN-2014	HOME OF FORBES 2013 MOST VALUABLE SPORTS TEAM
4-JAN-2014	SOUTHERNMOST PROVINCE CAPITAL OF '08 OLYMPICS HOST COUNTRY
7-JAN-2014	NORTHERNMOST STATE CAPITAL OF '16 OLYMPICS HOST COUNTRY
9-JAN-2014	HOME OF WORLD'S LONGEST ELEVATED SWIMMING POOL
11-JAN-2014	LARGEST CITY OF COUNTRY WHERE TRIP STARTED

"No, no, no!" Dawn exclaimed when Ash showed her the itinerary. "This is all wrong!"

Ash was puzzled. "Really? Okay, then, which countries *would* you like to visit?"

"As far away from these places as possible!" Dawn quipped. "Also, can we visit Argentina? I hear they throw a pretty awesome New Year's party down there."

"That bad, huh?" Ash conceded. "I suppose your list *is* a better place to start."

What's the SECRET CODE WORD? (Puzzle designed by Brandon Luders)

July 2013 Issue Winners: Brandon Luders, Cynthia Sung, and Peter Trocha (out of eight correct solutions) won the lottery for submitting "MUFFIN" to last month's puzzle (Solution on last page of this publication). Congratulations! Please e-mail the Editor to receive your prizes. And thanks to everyone who submitted!

Interview with the New Housemasters

Amid settling into their new home here at Ashdown and welcoming new residents, the new Housemaster family found time to answer a few questions so that we can get to know them a little better.

1) Welcome to the Ashdown Community! Please introduce us to the new Housemaster family!

We are a family of four. Adam Berinsky is a native New Yorker who is a Professor of Political Science here at MIT. He loves sports – especially baseball (though maybe not as much as Ben, see below) – and likes to cook (though with 2 kids, he cooks less than he used to). Deirdre Logan grew up in Maine. She is a clinical child psychologist and works at Boston Children’s Hospital in the area of pediatric pain. She is also an Associate Professor at Harvard Medical School. In her spare time she likes to run, read, bake and spend time with her kids. Benjamin is 8 years old, in the 3rd grade, and an avid athlete and sports enthusiast. His favorite sport is baseball. He also likes to read and cook and he’s excited to take part in Ashdown activities of all sorts. Lila is 5 years old and in kindergarten. Her favorite activities at the moment are art, drama, dance and gymnastics.

2) Why did you decide to become Housemasters? Why Ashdown?

We know several other MIT Housemaster families in both grad and undergrad dorms, so we had a bit of a sense of what life as a Housemaster might be like. When we learned of the open positions in two grad dorms, we thought we’d express some interest and see what unfolded. Given our fairly busy lives, we weren’t sure it would really work for us. However, the more people we met in the process and the more we learned about the opportunity, we began to realize the position really suits us well. We love to host events and to be part of a close but diverse community. We thought it would be great to have a way to feel more part of the fabric of MIT life. We requested the Ashdown position because Ashdown just sort of “felt right” to us. We loved the sense of community and also liked many of the traditions that Ann and Terry Orlando had upheld or started in their time as Housemasters. Also we attended an event with a chocolate fountain and the kids insisted that we needed to live in a place with regular access to such things.

3) Are there any events or activities that you are excited to become involved in at Ashdown?

In addition to anything involving a chocolate fountain? We are excited to continue the tradition of entertaining as housemasters, and we are looking for some ways to inject our own personalities and hosting style into those events. We love the brunches, since that’s an event our whole family can attend. Ben is particularly excited for any events that involve playing or watching sports. He’s quite happy to tutor anyone who needs an introduction to American team sports. We also look forward to events that may help the residents get out and explore the area a bit.

(continued on next page...)

Photos courtesy of Aarthy Adityan.



4) Do you have any plans for the future of Ashdown as Housemasters?

We're still watching and learning at this point (having been here just a few weeks and still trying to find our way around the dorm). But we have begun thinking of some ways we can put "our stamp" on life at Ashdown. One new custom we'd like to launch in September is a monthly birthday celebration. On the last Sunday of each month we hope to invite all residents who've had a birthday that month to stop by our apartment for cake to celebrate the occasion. We thought it might be a nice way for residents who may have different interests, live on different floors, etc. to discover something they have in common and to celebrate together. Plus, we love cake.

5) Any other comments to the Ashdown residents, both old and new?

We are new at this and welcome your feedback and suggestions – please let us know if you like what we're doing, but also let us know what you'd like to see more of. We look forward to creating some new traditions together.



Tim the Beaver welcomes everyone to Ashdown!

Event Correspondents Wanted

Are you going to an event (for **FREE FOOD** or whatever)? Do you like to earn **AWARDS**? Try being an

EVENT CORRESPONDENT!

Before an **Ashdown event**, e-mail me saying you are interested in being a reporter for the event. Then, after the event (say, a week or two), e-mail me a small report of what happened at the event! **IT'S SO EASY!** And you'll be rewarded for your efforts (which just involves changing observations to words)!

They don't all even have to be your words! Feel free to get quotes from other attendees about what they think of the event! Take some pictures if you want to add 1000 words to your submission! (Though at least 100 non-picture words would be nice.)

So, if you were planning to attend an event anyway (or now you feel inspired to), spend a few minutes to write a summary and see it in the next issue of the **3AM!**

Meet the AHEC: Misha Sra

This is Part 3 of a series of interviews with AHEC 2013-2014. This issue we are introduced to Misha Sra, AHEC Secretary:

1) What was your involvement in Ashdown before this position?

I was and still am the Kitchen Officer, and I will continue to manage the Kitchen responsibilities until we hire a new one this Fall.

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

Regular kitchen cleanup, food safety, environmental friendly practices like asking people to bring their own utensils and using compostable utensils and tableware.

3) What things do you want to change?

Hosting Kitchen Orientation to educate all committees about Kitchen space and equipment usage. Creating an environment where all committees feel an ownership of the Kitchen and take care of it as they would if it were their kitchen at home.

4) What do you do in your free time?

I like to play video games.

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!*

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.



Why did the graduate student read this at 3am?

Because she got lost on her way to class! Okay, that probably wasn't very funny, but hopefully the rest is more entertaining:

Q: What did the stimulus do to the neuron after they got married?

A: Carried it over the threshold

Kids' Corner (a.k.a. Ask the Kids Stuff)



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

Choose Your Own Adventure, Part 2

In an effort to generate more feedback and hear from you readers, this new section will let you choose what happens to Annie Boddy, a graduate student at MIT living in Ashdown. After a little bit of story, there will be four options, one of which is "Other." E-mail the Editor to pick what happens next!

Story continues on the next page...

She couldn't be late for **the end of the experiment she had been running for days**. If this experiment worked, she could get published in *Nature* or *Science*! Her lungs burned and shrunk to the size of flask as she scrambled up ten flights of stairs to her lab. Annie finally reached the lab door only to discover...

- a) Her PI was glaring at her
- b) A weird smell emanating from the other side
- c) Her hand was glued to the doorknob
- d) Something else! Suggest something!

Solution to Puzzle #13 (July 2013 Edition)

(See the July Edition for the Puzzle Statement, designed by Sakul Ratanalert.)

As the Editor of a reputable Newsletter (cough), it should be obvious that no typos get past me without purpose. So, fixing these typos:

Apologies from the Editor:

Hey Puzzler fans! I'm really sorry, but I haven't had the time to create a puzzle for this month. Being a graduate student is hard work! Hopefully I will get back on track for the next issue, and you will hear more about Ash and Dawn in a few weeks. But in the meantime, this is a good opportunity to bring this up.

Have you ever wanted to create a puzzle for the newsletter? Given that I'm so busy, I could really use the help! If you are interested, e-mail me and we can talk specifics, like what the story surrounding the puzzle will be, the mechanics (a.k.a. the "tricks" of the puzzle), and the SECRET CODE WORD. (As you may have noticed from the previous issue, I do a lot of planning for these puzzles. Except this issue. Yes, I did not plan anything for this issue. Sorry to have failed you!)

Also in the world of fictional Ashdown residents, there is a new section of the Newsletter, "Choose Your Own Adventure"! It details the story of Annie Boddy, and each issue readers can get to select what happens next, by popular vote. Please go check it out!

Anyway, that's all I wanted to say. Sorry again for not having a puzzle this issue. Oh, and ignore the "What's the SECRET CODE WORD?" stuff below. That is embedded in the template and I am too lazy to get rid of it. Have a great day!

Sincerely, a tired Editor.

The question "Do you know what man lives on Drury Lane?" is revealed. The answer, of course, is "MUFFIN". SECRET CODE WORD FOUND.

Contact the Editor

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