

## The Official Newsletter of the Ashdown Community

### Message from the Editor

Hello Readers,

Brr! It's gotten colder! I hope you all are taking some time for yourselves during the long Thanksgiving weekend. I'm back at Practice School until the end of December, and this is the first respite I've had since getting to blustery Minneapolis. I have no free time except to prepare the newsletter for you wonderful readers and to maintain my Twilight fan blog. Yes, I admit it, I am a fan of the vampire series. I am just so fascinated with how the vampires and werewolves bite people in movies... their fangs are so pointy. On my blog, I like to make animated GIFs from clips from my DVD box set. This weekend, I worked on a series of werewolves snarling. When my friends decided that they would no longer wait for me to get dinner, all they could say was "Happy fangs GIF-ing!"

In this issue, we have the sixteenth installment of the Puzzler Twins (costume party!), a different kind of puzzle (you'll see what I'm talking about), a submitted story with a nice message (Thanks, Shabnam!), an interview between cub reporter Ben Berinsky and Associate Housemaster Yuriy Roman (what does he do, anyway?), and the next chance to Choose Your Own Adventure (what will you choose next?).

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

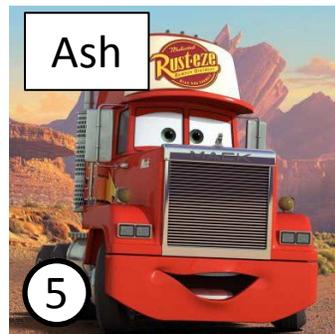
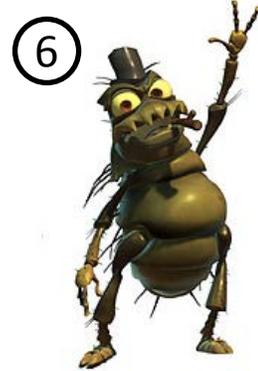
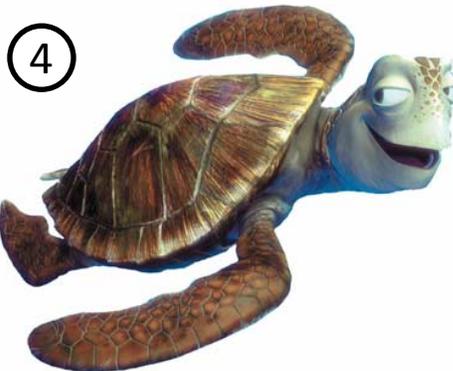
### In This Issue

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## Ash and Dawn, the Puzzler Twins – #16

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](mailto:ashdown-newsletter@mit.edu), not his personal one) the correct **SECRET CODE WORD** by **December 25, 2013**. **ALL CORRECT SOLUTIONS** will be entered into the **SEMESTER PUZZLE RAFFLE**. **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.)

Ash and Dawn hosted a Halloween theme party for their friends, where everybody would dress up as their favorite character from an animated movie. However, someone decided to crash the party in costume, and the Puzzler twins can't figure out who was stealing a free meal.



Ash and Dawn thought they could catch the party crasher during the prize lottery. Each guest was given a ping pong ball with a number on it, and then the numbers would be tossed into a bowl to be randomly drawn for a prize. However, the party crasher also pulled out a ball, and Ash lost the list of legitimate numbers. Who is the odd guest out, and

*What's the SECRET CODE WORD? (Puzzle designed by Sakul Ratanaalert)*

*September 2013 Issue Winner: David Wilson (the only correct solution) for submitting "SOLE" to last month's puzzle (Solution on last page of this publication). Congratulations! You are now in the semester Puzzle Lottery! And thanks to everyone who submitted!*

## A Different Kind of Puzzle

Hey there, it's me again, the Editor. Nice seeing you on the third page.

Anyway, I have a puzzle for you all. As you may know, I offer prizes to puzzle solvers and to article writers. I used to offer Amazon Gift Cards, but MIT is no longer allowing that due to fears of embezzling and such. So, I am now on the hunt for better prizes. It must have the following properties:

- 1) People must want it (so my used gym sock idea is unfortunately out)
- 2) People must want multiple of it (either same or different varieties), so that people are still motivated to solve puzzles and write articles. (Oh yeah, please write articles!)
- 3) It can't be "like money" (so no gift cards or checks or counterfeit bills)

As a starting point, I thought of having Ashdown 3AM coffee mugs, so that there could be some cool design element, but no one really wants multiples of the same mug. (Multiples of different mugs? Still unlikely...)

I look forward to seeing what ideas you come up with!

Thanks,  
The Editor



## 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!**

# Life's Challenges

*This story, anonymously written, has been circulating the Internet for a while. Shabnam Raayai of AHEC fame submitted this to inspire us readers. Happy Thanksgiving everyone!*

## Life's Challenges – Anonymous

Rob is the kind of guy you love to hate. He is always in a good mood and always has something positive to say. When someone would ask him how he was doing, he would reply, "If I were any better, I would be twins!"

He was a natural motivator. If an employee was having a bad day, Rob was there telling the employee how to look on the positive side of the situation. Seeing this style really made me curious, so one day I went up to Rob and asked him, "I don't get it! You can't be a positive person all of the time. How do you do it?" Rob replied, "Each morning I wake up and say to myself, you have two choices today.

You can choose to be in a good mood or you can choose to be in a bad mood. I choose to be in a good mood. Each time something bad happens, I can choose to be a victim or I can choose to learn from it. I choose to learn from it. Every time someone comes to me complaining, I can choose to accept their complaining or I can point out the positive side of life. I choose the positive side of life.

"Yeah, right, it's not that easy," I protested.

"Yes, it is," Rob said. **"Life is all about choices. When you cut away all the junk, every situation is a choice. You choose how you react to situations. You choose how people affect your mood. You choose to be in a good mood or bad mood. The bottom line: It's your choice how you live your life."**

I reflected on what Rob said. Soon thereafter, I left the Tower Industry to start my own business. We lost touch, but I often thought about him when I made a choice about life instead of reacting to it.

Several years later, I heard that Rob was involved in a serious accident, falling some 60 feet from a communications tower.

After 18 hours of surgery and weeks of intensive care, Rob was released from the hospital with rods placed in his back. I saw Rob about six months after the accident. When I asked him how he was, he replied. "If I were any better, I'd be twins. Wanna see my scars?" I declined to see his wounds, but I did ask him what had gone through his mind as the accident took place.

"The first thing that went through my mind was the well-being of my soon to be born daughter," Rob replied. "Then, as I lay on the ground, I remembered that I had two choices: I could choose to live or I could choose to die. I chose to live."

"Weren't you scared? Did you lose consciousness?" I asked. Rob continued, "...the paramedics were great. They kept telling me I was going to be fine. But when they wheeled me into the ER and I saw the expressions on the faces of the doctors and nurses, I got really scared. In their eyes, I read "he's a dead man. I knew I needed to take action."

"What did you do?" I asked. Well, there was a big burly nurse shouting questions at me," said Rob.

"She asked if I was allergic to anything..."

"Yes, I replied." The doctors and nurses stopped working as they waited for my reply. I took a deep breath and yelled, "Gravity." Over their laughter, I told them, "I am choosing to live. Operate on me as if I am alive, not dead." Rob lived, thanks to the skill of his doctors, but also because of his amazing attitude. I learned from him that every day we have the choice to live fully.

**Attitude, after all, is everything. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow has troubles of its own. After all today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday. Enjoy each day, each breath and mostly – each and every friend.**

## Ben's Corner (a.k.a. A Kid Asks Stuff!)

*Hi, I'm Ben Berinsky. I'm writing a new column for the 3 a.m. Newsletter. Each month, I will go up to a random Ashdown resident and ask a few questions. If you would like to volunteer to be interviewed, please email me at [ben.berinsky@gmail.com](mailto:ben.berinsky@gmail.com) or the Editor at [ashdown-newsletter@mit.edu](mailto:ashdown-newsletter@mit.edu). Thank you!*

*This month, I interviewed Ashdown's Associate Housemaster, Yuriy Roman!*

### **B: What do you do for your job?**

Yuriy: I work in the chemical engineering department. I run an experimental group that works on renewable energy

### **B: How do you do that?**

Y: I work with catalysts. Catalysts speed up chemical reactions. They help molecules rearrange into other molecules. [*Ben looks puzzled.*] Let's try this. Did you ever mix baking soda and vinegar? They bubble up. Both react. The Molecules rearrange to form Water and CO<sub>2</sub>. Other things mix and nothing happens. A catalyst is a "helping hand" that pushes it over a hill.

### **B: When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?**

Y: My dad was a doctor and I thought I would be a doctor too. I like math, science, and chemicals. I loved mixing things up. And when I went to college I realized that I wanted to be a chemical engineer.



### **B: What is your favorite part of your job?**

Y: My favorite part is discovering new things that no one has discovered before.

### **B: Have you discovered anything new?**

Y: I have been working on a way to replace the precious metals in a car's catalytic converter. These metals in a catalytic converter takes the gases that come out of a car and converts them to harmless gases. But these metals are very expensive because they are rare. My lab has been working on finding metals that can do the same thing as the precious metals in the catalytic converter, but are more available and less expensive.

### **B: Can I change the subject?**

Y: Sure.

### **B: What is your favorite sport?**

Y: I love to watch football but my parents never let me play because they didn't want me to get hurt. So basketball is my favorite sport to play.

## Ben's Corner (a.k.a. A Kid Asks Stuff!)



**Ben:** Are you good at basketball?

**Yuriy:** In Mexico, I was pretty tall compared to the other people I played with. But when I came to the U.S., I was on the shorter side. SO IO wasn't as good. But I still have fun playing.

**B:** Okay, bye. Thanks Yuriy!



## 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 **Ashdown 3AM Merchandise**. 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 **Ashdown 3AM Merchandise**.

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](mailto:ashdown-newsletter@mit.edu).



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

*Because she procrastinated on fellowship applications! Okay, that probably wasn't very funny, but hopefully the rest is more entertaining:*

**Q:** What sound does a space turkey make?

**A:** Hubble, Hubble, Hubble!

## 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!**



**Also, check out  
Ben's new column!**



## Choose Your Own Adventure, Part 4

*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...*

To her shock and horror, a **vandal was holding a Bunsen burner up against the door!** Using her vast knowledge of the nervous system, she poked the vandal in three locations and he slumped to the ground, unconscious. Before removing the vandal's mask, Annie saw something in the vandal's hand. It was...

- a) a newspaper article about her previous discovery
- b) her backup external hard drive with her research notes
- c) a chicken club sandwich with extra mayo
- d) Something else! Suggest something!

## Solution to Puzzle #15 (Sept 2013 Edition)

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

On the flashcards, nearly all the words can be paired with the word "eye" to make a compound word, either before or after. ("Wallaby" cannot make a compound word with "eye" in either position, and is thus meant to be left blank.)

1) 

	buck	
	sore	
	wear	

3) 

	brow	
	sight	
	witness	

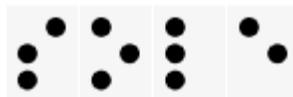
2) 

	ball	
	shut	
	wash	

4) 

	bar	
	sock	
	wallaby	

After filling in the remaining eyes, one may notice that removing the words creates a 3x2 array of possible eye locations. Given a hint to "blind", one may recognize that this resembles Braille, a writing system of the blind.



Translating from Braille reveals "SOLE". SECRET CODE WORD FOUND.

## Contact the Editor

Please direct any comments or queries about "3am" to Sakul Ratanalert at [ashdown-newsletter@mit.edu](mailto:ashdown-newsletter@mit.edu)