

## HAPPY NEW YEAR!



“Write it on your heart that every day is the best day in the year.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

And the year has begun! With our many initiatives and resources, we (the Ashdown Officer Team) are looking forward to helping you make this year a great one!

What’s in this issue? Updates from some of the officers on upcoming events (and a re-cap of events past); a letter from the AHEC office hour updates, restaurant reviews, an excerpt from Jordan Romvary one of the winners of the 2014 Ashdown Short Fiction Competition 2014; and more!

**Remember: This newsletter is for you!** Have an idea for a new section/ article? Love to draw cartoons/comics? Let us know (and you will receive TechCash for doing so!).

As always, if you have suggestions to improve the newsletter - please email me, I’d love to hear them!

Sara Dolcetti  
 Ashdown Newsletter Officer  
 ashdown-newsletter@mit.edu



Sara Dolcetti

## JANUARY/FEBRUARY: UPCOMING EVENTS!

- Jan 12-16** GSC Dissertation Bootcamp  
Hayden Library Basement
- Jan 24-25** Beginner Tango Bootcamp  
36-112
- Jan 9-29** getfit@mit  
<https://getfit.mit.edu/>
- Jan 24** Graduate Ice Skating Social  
Johnson Skating Rink
- Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Sat.** Yoga in Hulsizer Room @ 11:15am (starting Oct. 4th)
- Wed @ 8pm** Board Game nights in the Hulsizer Room
- Thurs @ 9pm** Coffee Hour in the Huslizer Room

## IN THIS ISSUE

- **“A message from”** Housemasters , AHEC (office hours!)
- **October & November events / September re-caps +** Committee updates
- **Short Story Contest Winners!**
- **Time for a Review** (in Jordan)
- **Ask the Kids Stuff**  
 ..... and **MORE!**

## A message from ...

### AHEC



Orpheus  
Ashdown's Operations Officer

Dear Ashdown Residents,

My name is Orpheus and I am Ashdown's Operations Officer. I am certain you have received at least a couple of e-mails from me, informing the house whenever a new in-house lottery is open. If you ever have questions about the lottery, feel free to contact me at [ahec-ops@mit.edu](mailto:ahec-ops@mit.edu).

In this Newsletter issue, I want to talk to you about two important matters. The first one is fire alarms, the second deals with the graduate residence security overhaul. Let us begin with the first.

Now, I think it is safe to say that nobody really enjoys stopping everything they're doing and getting dragged out of their room due to a fire alarm, especially during the winter months. So, in order to save ourselves and our fellow residents the trouble of having to spend time outside and running the risk of being turned into popsicles, please allow me to give you a couple of important reminders.

All fire alarms in recent months were the result of burnt food. Whenever you cook, pay special attention not to leave your cooking unattended (especially when using a common kitchen), as this can be the source of accidents. Even if you burn your food and there is smoke, please let the smoke out by opening the window. If you try to air your room by opening the door to the corridor, the building smoke detectors will sense the smoke and sound the fire alarm, resulting in the building getting evacuated.



Of course, in the event of an actual fire your first priority should be to evacuate your room. Please take care to follow these instructions and help Ashdown reduce the frequency of false fire alarms.

## A message from ...

### AHEC (cont'd)

The second matter that I want to talk about is far more important. You might have heard that there is going to be a security overhaul in all the MIT graduate residences. In the case of Ashdown, this overhaul mainly takes the form of additional cameras to be installed throughout Ashdown.

These cameras (along with the existing ones) will monitor the entrances/exits, something which the administration feels will enhance security in and around Ashdown. We in AHEC have been in contact with the administration and have given them feedback on their original security proposal. Based on these initial discussions, the administration has developed a revised security proposal, which will soon be presented to the residents at a special "Town Hall" session, on December 1st, at 7:00 PM.

The purpose of this session is to inform residents of the changes in Ashdown and present how the new security systems will operate, as well as solicit feedback from the residents. We in AHEC, and I personally, would like to urge you to attend the "Town Hall" session so that you can know more about the proposed changes in Ashdown, voice your opinions and give feedback on the security proposals.

We would like to remind you that the proposal to be presented is not the finalized version and that your opinion and feedback matters and will be useful in formulating a security plan for Ashdown that both accomplishes its goals and takes the residents' interests into account. For your information and as a first step in enabling you to take an active role in this matter, MIT Residential Life & Dining has provided graduate residences with a list of FAQs on the Video Security System, which we are also publicizing in this Newsletter issue.

To conclude, let me remind you that AHEC meets in the Crafts Lounge every Thursday from 7:30 PM to 9:00 PM and can be reached at [ahec@mit.edu](mailto:ahec@mit.edu).

Orpheus  
Operations Officer  
Ashdown House Executive Committee



## A message from ...

### AHEC - Video Security System FAQs-

**1. What is a video security system?** As part of the enhanced security systems, policies, and procedures being implemented during fall 2014 and spring 2015, the existing video security systems will receive technology upgrades in all the graduate residence halls except Tang Hall and the Westgate Apartments, which received these enhancements last year. These cameras will be handled in strict accordance with MIT Security and Emergency Management Office (SEMO) video policy.

**2. When will the video security systems be activated?** The existing systems are already in use. Technology upgrades will be completed on a house-by-house basis after we have finished meeting with all of the graduate communities to review any changes.

**3. What locations do the cameras capture?** The cameras are fixed on building access doors and lobby entrances only. They do not zoom in or out and cannot be remotely redirected. Cameras cannot see into residence hall rooms.

Intercoms with cameras (AI phones) are installed at certain entrances in each building and are designed to allow professional desk attendants and Nightwatch staffs to see the person they are talking to on the intercom. These cameras are only active while the button at the desk or the intercom is pushed. Video from these cameras is not recorded or saved.

**4. Do the cameras record audio?** No. In accordance with federal and state law, all audio capabilities have been disabled.

AI phones also do not record any audio.

**5. Who monitors these cameras?** Professional desk attendants or Nightwatch staff monitor the cameras in real time only.

**6. How will video information gathered by the security systems be treated?** The data from these cameras will be handled in strict accordance with SEMO policy:

<http://web.mit.edu/semo/security/policies.html>

**7. How can I make a suggestion about the dorm security pilot programs?** Please send comments or questions to [dormsecurity@mit.edu](mailto:dormsecurity@mit.edu).

## Looking forward (& other updates)

### Cherry Pie Society

On September 16<sup>th</sup>, about 17 people assembled for the first CPS meeting of the fall to discuss on how political correctness affects public discourses. The discussion started with the definition of political correctness and how it varies among different societies. It then moved towards some examples from real life like Lawrence Summers (former Harvard President) and Thilo Sarrazin (member of the German Social Democratic party) and how their respective politically (in)correct claims were received by the respective audiences. We finally concluded the discussion debating on the claims made by the book, "The bell curve" and whether there were situations when it is ok to be politically incorrect.



Sai Gautam  
Gopalakrishnan



Ludwig Schmidt

### Inventory & Facilities Committee



Garrett Ryan  
Dowdy

#### New DVDs

The following DVDs have been added to the front desk: Muppets Most Wanted, X-men Days of Future Past, How to Train Your Dragon 2, The Fault in Our Stars, & Maleficent

#### New Settlers of Catan

In response to complaints about missing pieces in the old Settlers of Catan game, we've purchased a new one, designating the old one as the "Spare Pieces" box.

#### New Exercise Equipment

At resident request, we bought some resistance bands. There are three bands: light, medium, and heavy.



### Contribute to the next newsletter and earn TechCASH!

Went to an amazing restaurant / show / lecture / world-cup match etc. recently? Write about it in an **article / poem / short-story / review!** (300-500 words, \$10 TechCASH).

Any other contributions are also welcomed!  
Email us with suggestions / thoughts!

**Write-on!**

## Looking forward (& other updates)

### Art and Theater Events

There's a lot of artsy events this Winter!

#### Ashdown Writing Competition

Tired of writing research papers?  
Want an outlet for your creativity?  
The

Ashdown Writing Competition is now under way. Short stories (up to 1000 words), novellas (up to 500 words), poetry, and creative writing pieces (up to 5000 words) welcome. So let those creative juices flow and WRITE!

#### Ashdown Art Competition

Have a nice photograph lying around? Looking for an excuse to paint, draw, sketch, etc? The Ashdown Art Competition is now under way. Winners will not only get TechCash prizes, but will also have the opportunity to display their art around Ashdown walls. Calling on all you artistic residents to help beautify the walls of Ashdown!

#### Ashdown Art and Music Night

Showcase your music, dancing, and art skills at our very own Art and Music Night. Come show your peers your talents or support your peers with theirs. Light refreshments and dessert will be provided.



Ina Kundu



# Looking forward (& other updates)

## Floor 3 Officer



Brian Seifried

### Table Tennis League (mid-October)

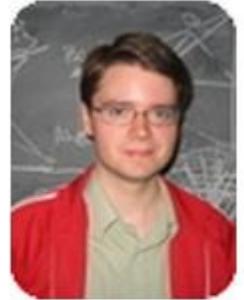
I will organize a table tennis event over the semester with prizes. The event formate will be dependant on the number of participants

### Dumpling Night (mid November)

I will be cooking lots and lots of dumplings in the 3rd floor kitchen for everyone to enjoy.



## Floor 4 Officer



Martin Copenhaver

### Pie Breaks!

Look forward to pie breaks that we will enjoy together in the floor kitchen.

I will also have other desserts as well. This will be a good way to meet fellow fourth floor residents.

### Cooking class!

October 26, 2pm, 4th floor kitchen: The fourth floor will meet up to learn how to cook something new! I will send out a poll to the floor two weeks in advance so we can decide what we want to make.

### Ice skating

November 14, 7pm, Z Center Ice Rink

If it's already cold outside, why not stay inside and move around on a frozen block of ice? We'll m fu



## Ashdown Short Fiction Competition 2014 Winning Submissions!

**Congratulations to the winners of and all contributors to the Ashdown Short Fiction Competition 2014!**

Name	Title	Place	# Entries
Ritsu Chan	Carnation	1st	9
Gwendolyn Vines	Sagittarius	2nd	6

Name	Title	Place	# Entries
Jordan Romvary	Trajectory	1st	5
asdf	Aliens and computer viruses	2nd	3
Changhoon Oh	A story that never sold	3rd (tie)	2
Gwendolyn Vines	ITEMIZED INVENTORY OF JAMES MALONEY'S GREEN 1993 JEEP WRANGLER - OR - A CAUTIONARY TALE	3rd (tie)	2
Chronusfree	The Dark Side of the Moon: Confessions of a Scientist	5th	1

Name	Title	Place	# Entries
Jordan Romvary	Hands	1st	7
Petunia Weatherby	A masterpiece denied	2nd	4
Gwendolyn Vines	(t)his song	3rd	3

### Trajectory (part 2)

By: Jordan Romvary (1<sup>st</sup> place)

•“...We have conquered the secrets of the mind, achieved mastery over biology and discovered the laws of the Universe. Never before has Man known more about his world and accomplished so much...”

•

•It was a warm jacket. A thick jacket. Blue with yellow stripes. Had a soft hood you could sleep on the hard pavement with. *Can't get one now*, he muttered to himself as his gaze finally found what it was looking for. The City had closed the last soup kitchens and shelters months ago, and the donation services dried up as people stopped giving things away.

*Right from their 3D printers into their home recyclers, with a couple days of use in-between*, he grumbled as he trudged deeper into the alley. Not that most people had much use of coats anyway. They spent nearly all their time within atmosphere-controlled buildings, happiness palaces or those whirring personal vehicles he saw dashing between the buildings every now and then.



## Time for a Review

### Thelonious Monkfish

By Edward Kim

If you haven't passed by Thelonious Monkfish on Mass Ave., take a look the next time you're on your way to Central. With subtle signage, it's an easy one to miss. If you pause to look a little closer, you'll notice that it's often bustling with customers.

Although it styles itself as a fusion restaurant, I was more interested in their classic sushi and sashimi offerings. I've often found that good sushi can be had in nearly any major city – but often at steep prices commanded by high-end traditional restaurants. At any rate, I've found that the more interesting metric is the quality-to-price ratio. As a student, I'd happily take slightly less fancy sushi at a notable discount.

I went with a party of three, and we ordered the maki boat and sashimi platter (and in retrospect, it was a mistake to neglect ordering nigiri as well). The presentation was well done, and the bonus seaweed salad was an appreciated free add-on. The wasabi paste and ginger were spot on, with about the right amount of spiciness and tanginess, respectively – a good sign, since poorly textured (or too-mild) wasabi is a sure sign of impending sushi-related doom.

The maki were well wrapped with a variety of classic and modern fillings, and the sashimi was cut in generously thick portions. However, having some 'meatier' selections of maki (with higher fish-to-rice ratios) would have been nice.

Service was notably prompt, even with a relatively large order and a full restaurant. The employees were all very polite, and the atmosphere of the restaurant was perfect for a relaxed dinner with friends.

After tax and tip, the total for feeding three people (with beers) was a flat \$100 – quite a solid price for a very respectable sushi meal. I'd highly recommend this restaurant to anyone looking for good sushi at a reasonable price.



## Time for a Review

### Restaurant Review: Rangzen Restaurant

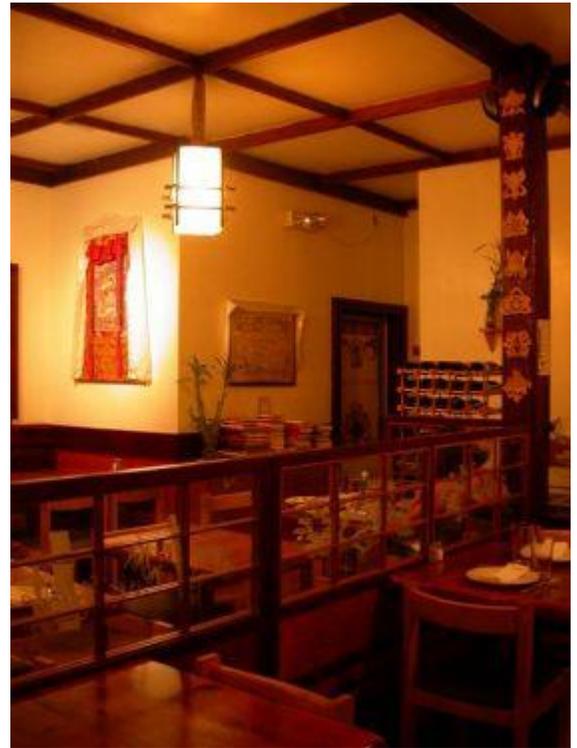
By Alice Kao

Located in Central Square, Rangzen specializes in Tibetan and Asian fusion cuisine. On a recent Saturday night, a group of friends and I (eight total) wanted to try out Thelonious Monkfish but it was too crowded and the wait too long so we checked out Rangzen, which was conveniently right around the corner next to Pepper Sky (Thai restaurant).

We arrived shortly after 5:30pm and were promptly seated. The interior is decorated with dark wood furniture and a huge print of the Tibetan mountains lined one way. Our table was right in front and I stared at the mountains all evening. Soft tranquil music also played in the background. At first I was a bit concerned that we were the only people there but soon people trickled in and the place was filled up in 30-45 minutes.

In terms of food, we ordered several dishes family-style to share. There is a wide variety of selection from stir-fried noodles, soup noodles, vegetable dishes, beef, pork, chicken, and curry. Our order included po tsel (with mushroom), langsha chow, langsha deynago, and langsha (beef) and chhasha (chicken) momos, lentil soup. The momos are like Chinese dumplings and were the favorite among the group, so in the end we went back for another round of momos.

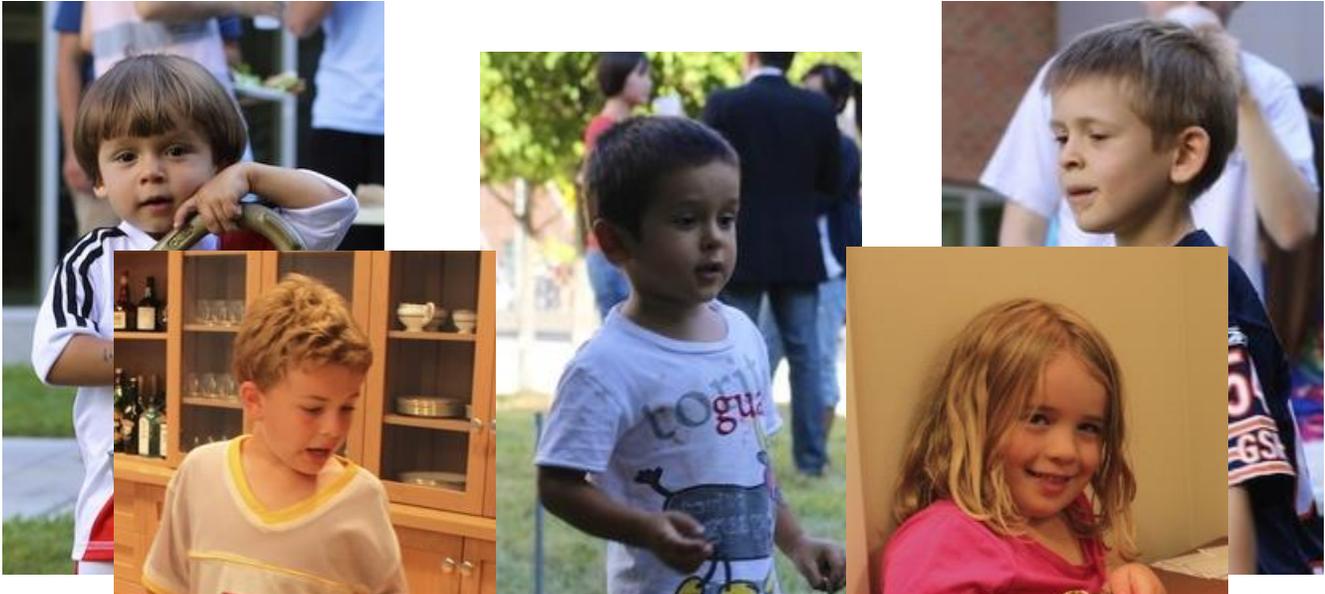
The portions were good sized and everyone was quite stuffed in the end. Price-wise it is a little more expensive but I was satisfied with trying out Tibetan food for the first time. Other Yelpers have repeatedly mentioned the lunch buffet so perhaps I will try that in the future.



## Quotes at 3am ...

"Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference."  
 –Winston Churchill

## 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!**

### What are the qualities that make a good friend?

Max: Not being in charge of everything and playing together and being happy.

Dante: People who are kind.

Apolo: I'm not telling you.

### If a genie would give you only one wish, which would you pick, and why?

Max: I would ask to be with my cousins more often.

Dante: I would pick a star. I would do the things stars can do, like circle around and flip around.

Apolo: I am wishin' for nothin'. I'm not telling you it.

## Contact the Editor!

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