



**Alumni Get-Together is in April! Check the Ashdown website in February for updates!**

## Greetings and Happy New Year From Ashdown!

Hello Ashdown alumni and happy new year! We hope you have been doing well since our last update. Since that last newsletter, plenty of events—from a 4<sup>th</sup> of July BBQ, to a Thanksgiving dinner celebration, to our first snowfall —have happened in Ashdown. However, in this newsletter, we'll cover just a portion of the events around Ashdown. We'll start off by covering the news of the Orlando's departure and then outline the process for selecting new Housemasters. We will also update you on some of the orientation activities that helped welcome new

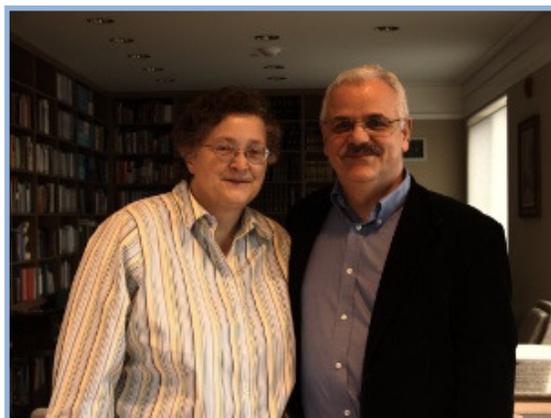


**Ashdown in the snow**

Ashdown residents and finally, we will describe the recent revival of Ashdown's Cherry Pie Society. We hope you enjoy the news and happy new year!

## Farewell to the Orlando's

This year marks the Orlando's last year as Housemasters of Ashdown House. To commemorate their time at Ashdown, we sat down with both of them and asked them to reflect on their experiences. Their thoughts are captured below.



**Prof. Terry & Ann Orlando**

Question: How did you first become involved with Ashdown House?

Answer: In January of 2001, a letter went to the faculty announcing the search for a housemaster for Ashdown House. We thought that maybe at some point in the future we might want to be housemasters, so we decided to apply to see what it was involved in being a

housemaster. The more we became involved in the interview and selection process, the more we became attracted to Ashdown House. We feel very fortunate to have been able to spend the 12 years at Ashdown House.

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## Farewell to the Orlando's (continued)

**Question:** What is your fondest memory as housemasters?

**Answer:** Our fondest memories are spending social time with so many interesting people from around the world. Graduation is also a wonderful, though also sad time. It is delightful to see so many Ashdown residents leaving MIT as accomplished and confident professionals.

**Question:** What will you miss most about Ashdown?

**Answer:** Thursday nights will feel quite lonesome for a while to come. We will miss AHEC and Coffee Hour; our Thursdays have been scheduled around AHEC and Coffee Hour for 12 years. We will also miss special events like pumpkin carving, 4th of July BBQ and Ashdown House concerts. We will also miss the Ashdown House staff. Denise Lanfranchi and the staff members have been a delight to work

with; and in the last two years we have had the added privilege of working with the Associate Housemasters, Yuriy and Katie Roman. Together with them and the other staff members, and AHEC we have a very strong House Team at Ashdown.

**Question:** What are your future plans?

**Answer:** We are looking forward to spending more time with our grandchildren (Owen, 4 years old, and Drew, 1 year old). Terry will continue as a professor in EECS.

**Question:** Any parting words of advice for the new housemasters?

**Answer:** Trust the advice of others in the House, especially the Associate Housemasters, House Manager, staff and AHEC. But mostly, enjoy the time with Ashdown residents; they are a great group of people.

## Selecting New Housemasters

The search for the next Ashdown Housemaster is underway! The official application solicitation announcement has already been published in the Institute's faculty newsletter and current Warehouse and Edgerton Housemasters John Ochsendorf and David Mindell are working to recruit fellow faculty members to apply. The deadline for applications is January 18th and the Division of Student Life expects to announce their final selections by the beginning of April. The Orlandos will transition from their role by the end of June and Ashdown's new housemasters are expected to move into the residence in early July.

The process for selecting the new housemasters will involve input from a formal selection committee, Ashdown residents, and senior MIT leadership. After the initial applications have been reviewed, the selection committee will divide the applications and assign each to be considered either by Ashdown or by Sidney-Pacific, which is also seeking new housemasters. The selection committee will consist of the associate housemasters from both Ashdown and Sidney-Pacific, as well as two student representatives from both residences. Once applications have been assigned to Ashdown, student leaders here will work



## Selecting New Housemasters (continued)

to assess the candidates. It is likely that this portion of the application phase will include tours of Ashdown, meetings with Ashdown student leadership, and informal meetings with the entire community. This portion of the selection process is expected to take place in February and March.

After meeting all of the prospective candidates, Ashdown students will provide recommendations

to the selection committee. Once the selection committee makes a decision, they will forward it to Dean Chris Columbo and Chancellor Eric Grimson for approval. At the conclusion of the process, President Rafael Reif will name Ashdown's newest housemasters; we hope to have the final results for you by the next Alumni newsletter---so stay tuned!

## Welcoming New Students to Ashdown



New (and old!) residents on the Scavenger Hunt

### The Scavenger Hunt

The scavenger hunt is one of Ashdown's traditional orientation events. Each year, residents work in teams to complete a set of tasks and clues that are designed to help them learn more about the facilities and benefits that they enjoy living in Ashdown.

In this year's hunt, students ventured everywhere from Ashdown's computer and laundry rooms, to the home of the Associate Housemasters, who rewarded the hunters by preparing candy prizes for them. At the end of the hunt, each participant won a prize, including extra chips for casino night, to encourage them to stay involved in Ashdown!

This year, over 300 new residents moved into Ashdown. To welcome new residents to Ashdown and to celebrate the beginning of the fall semester with continuing residents, Ashdown held several orientation events, including the Ashdown Scavenger Hunt, Speed Friending, and International Trivia Night. Reports and pictures from these events are included below!



Searching for Clues on the Scavenger Hunt



## Welcoming New Students to Ashdown (continued)



**Ashdown Residents at Speed Friending**

During this year's orientation, new (and old) Ashdown residents were treated to a new event: Speed Friending! Speed Friending is like speed dating....but with friends! At the event, participants sat across from one another at a long table. Pairs of "friends" sat across the table and introduced themselves and chatted for five minutes. At the end of the five minute period, residents rotated down the table to meet new friends. The event lasted two hours and gave each participant a chance to meet over ten new people. At the end of the event, participants exchanged emails so that they could stay in contact with their new friends during the coming school year. The orientation committee got a lot of positive feedback about this event and it is likely that it will be held again next year.

### **Speed Friending**

### **International Trivia & Dessert Night**

Finally, Ashdown's orientation and cultural committee teamed up to host a joint internationally-themed trivia and dessert night. Residents from Ashdown and the larger MIT community gathered to sample desserts from countries around the world (including Canolis, Brigadeiros, saffron ice cream and Halva). Afterwards, students teamed up to compete against one another on questions about cultures around the world and Ashdown sponsored prizes for the winning teams. Overall, it was a great way to meet new friends and learn more about MIT's diverse cultural community.



**Chocolate fountain is the most popular on Dessert Night**



## The Return of the Cherry Pie Society

The Ashdown Cherry Pie Society dates back to the 1950s when a small group of graduate students living at the old Ashdown residence decided to meet up frequently to have intellectual discussions over dinner and cherry pie for dessert, Dr. Ashdown's favorite. The Society eventually disbanded as the original members left MIT, and there have been a number of attempts to resurrect it since it stopped, all eventually failing.

The current reincarnation of the Cherry Pie Society--spearheaded by graduate students Jonas Helfer and Jordan Romvary--attempts to harness the original spirit of the society, a spirit steeped in having compelling discussion in a casual atmosphere. So far, the new Ashdown Cherry Pie Society has had four successful meetings with topics varying from technology's role in society to whether or not democracy will be the dominant form of national government in the future. All meetings are open to the entire Ashdown community and coffee, tea and dessert treats are provided, the cherry pie being chief among the desserts available.

The group is off to a tremendous start with a core group of about 10 individuals who have attended most of the meetings held so far. Jonas and Jordan look forward to holding many more bi-monthly meetings this upcoming spring semester, and have a great topic list already drawn up!



**"Pie" is essential for Cherry Pie Society**



**Students are discussing "Humanity and Technology"**

### Until Next Time...

Thanks for reading, Ashdown Alumni! Please stay tuned for news from us as we plan an Alumni event for the spring semester. Until then, please visit <http://ashdown.mit.edu> for news. As always, if you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact the current Alumni Officers at [ashdown-alumni@mit.edu](mailto:ashdown-alumni@mit.edu).