

The Official Newsletter of the Ashdown Community

Message from the Editor

Hello Readers,

It's Sakul again, how are you all? I heard the other day that a panda had escaped from a nearby zoo and had gone looking for food. But every time the panda had been spotted and the zookeepers were alerted, all they came to was a disheveled restaurant with bullet holes in everything. Finally, one zookeeper fixed a comma in the panda display, and then they were able to recapture the panda. The zookeepers then apologized for the panda that "eats shoots and leaves."

In this issue, we have the fourth installment of the Puzzler Twins (Oh, that Ash), an invitation to join fellow members of Ashdown on Game Night (I like Scrabble!), another installment of Ashdown Reviews (from an Institute of Technology to one of Contemporary Art), the Kid's Corner (this time they take on Coffee Hour), the first submission to the Citizen's Corner (So when you say it's "40 below" outside, do you mean Fahrenheit or Celsius?), and more Helpful Information from Kristin at the Front Desk (say hi to her!).

Wow, that second 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

- ❖ Ash and Dawn, the Puzzler Twins – #4
- ❖ Game Night, Ashdown's Newest Tradition
- ❖ Ashdown Reviews: Institute of Contemporary Art
 - ❖ Kids' Corner (a.k.a. Ask the Roman Kids Stuff)
- ❖ Citizen's Corner: Fahrenheit and Boston Weather
 - ❖ Helpful Info for New Residents, Part 2

Ash and Dawn, the Puzzler Twins – #4

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**. The first **three** people to e-mail the Editor (at ashdown-newsletter@mit.edu, not his personal one) the correct **SECRET CODE WORD** by **October 31, 2012** will win a **\$10 gift card to Amazon**. **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 just started research in his lab, and, being a first year, was given the prestigious honor of ordering supplies. He had ordered some gold particles for the nanowire project he was working on, but he hadn't heard anything from Elements 'R' Us for over a week, even after he sent seven letters, two at a time. He decided to go to their website and hack into their delivery database to see what was taking so long.



After getting past the homepage above, Ash found that several shipments to capital cities in the United States were delayed indefinitely. Ash sighed and went to call the Nigerian Prince to see if he had other vendors to replace the one that he first recommended. The queue is shown below:

1. Nobelium shipment to Sacramento: *Delayed indefinitely.*
2. Gold shipment to Boston: *Delayed indefinitely.*
3. Astatine shipment to Tallahassee: *Delayed indefinitely.*
4. Lutetium shipment to Madison: *Delayed indefinitely.*
5. Iridium shipment to Honolulu: *Delayed indefinitely.*
6. Indium shipment to Montgomery: *Delayed indefinitely.*
7. Curium shipment to Concord: *Delayed indefinitely.*
8. Hafnium shipment to Little Rock: *Delayed indefinitely.*

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

August 2012 Issue Winners: **David Wilson, Amanda Zangari, Brandon Luders, Megan Fuller, and David Flowers** for being the first five to correctly submit the secret code word "GORILLA" 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!

Game Night, Ashdown's Newest Tradition

by Andy Wright

Ashdown's first Game Night of the year was September 25th. Two weeks later was the second Game Night. Two weeks after that will be the third. Hopefully you see where this is going: Every two weeks we are going to be hosting a Game Night in the Hulsizer room. Who's we? It's just me right now, but I'm looking for people with good ideas for game nights to contribute.

Before this fall, the last time Ashdown had a game night was also the last time a hurricane was threatening to hit Boston. In Fall 2011, around orientation time, Hurricane Irene was coming up the East Coast causing MIT to close and cancel orientation events. Some officers from Ashdown decided to open up the Hulsizer Room and moved over some of the board games from the front desk. They had a good attendance, and people were playing games to wait out the storm.*



So how does Game Night work now? Most people normally show up about five minutes late. They stare at the boxes of games, and they try to decide what they want to play. After a few minutes of deliberation they choose a game that one person knows, but the others that are interesting in playing may not know it. They set up the board, go over the rules, and then play. The first two nights featured games such as Settlers of Catan, Ticket to Ride, Carcassonne, Scrabble, Jenga, St. Petersburg, Risk, and more.

How is Game Night going to work in the future? I'm going to keep reserving the Hulsizer Room every two weeks for a game night, and I'm going to keep asking for suggestions for games that Ashdown should buy. Other than that, no specific plans. As I said above, I'm looking for people with good ideas. I have a few ideas of my own for future game nights. One of them is to feature Mario Kart on the projector for a Mario Kart game night. Also there could be collaboration with the cultural committee to make a cultural game night.



Thank you everyone that came to the past two Game Nights to make them a success. Hopefully Game Night will stay successful and continue to improve through the year. If you haven't come out to a Game Night yet, keep an eye out for e-mails so you can come out to the next one.

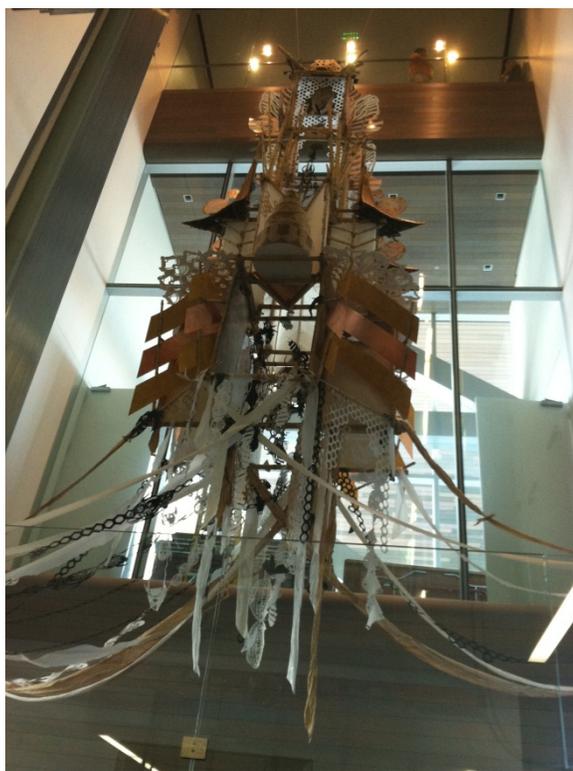
*If you would like more information or would like to join the mailing list for Game Night, please e-mail acwright@mit.edu. Photos courtesy of Aarthy Adityan. *Editor's Note: That day saw the longest game of Taboo possible, going through both sides of all cards. That was five hours well spent.*

Ashdown Reviews: Institute of Contemporary Art

*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!*

This issue's contributing writer: Cole Shaw

If you've been to the Boston waterfront, you've probably seen a squarish-looking building that overhangs the water; in fact, the new student orientation cruise leaves from the pier right in front of this building. That squarish building is the ICA—The Institute of Contemporary Art. Free for MIT students to enter, it houses a variety of contemporary art exhibits. When I went earlier this year, they had exhibits on using recycled material in furniture, blending color patterns, and some video voice-overs where the artist imitated someone else's voicemail. Sometimes I don't understand contemporary art, but the ICA does a pretty good job of not getting too abstract or deep.



A sculpture in the ICA elevator shaft.

To top it off, not only is the ICA a fun and quirky museum, but it also hosts the Red Bull Cliff Diving competition. Yes, competitive divers actually jump off the top of the building into the Charles River, and you can go watch live, next year!

Besides the art, I think the view itself is worth the visit, since you have an amazing panoramic of the Charles River and Cambridge / Boston (see below). The gift shop also has a ton of quirky, fun, and artsy products, so if you are looking for something memorable and different, you might want to browse there. My conclusion—a couple of hours at the ICA makes for a good complement to a day on the waterfront or out in Boston. From MIT, you can get to there by taking the red line to South Station, then hopping onto a Silver Line bus to the World Trade Center stop. Cross the street towards the river, and you should see the ICA.



View of the Charles River from the ICA Balcony. Photos courtesy of Cole Shaw.

Why did the graduate student read this at 3am?

Because he just finished a problem on homework due tomorrow! Okay, that probably wasn't very funny, but hopefully the rest of this page is more entertaining:

Q: Why do amateur chemists enjoy working with ammonia?

A: Because it's pretty basic stuff.

Q: Why does hamburger yield lower energy than steak?

A: Because it's in the ground state.

Kids' Corner (aka Ask the Roman Kids Stuff)

8. How often do you attend Coffee Hour?

Max: Now, not that much, because I have to go to bed earlier because I go to school. I think getting up early and going on the bus to school is the funnest thing on earth.

Dante: I love it when it has freezy pops. But now I don't go there as much, but I don't know why. (*Is it because you have to go to bed early for school?*) Yes.



9. Do you remember to bring your own plates and utensils to Coffee Hour and other events?

Max: Yes we do!

Dante: We bring our own bowl.

10. What do you wish they served at Coffee Hour?

Dante: I wish they could have a little snack called brownies there again.

Max: Spaghetti!

Got questions you want to ask Max and Dante? Forward them to the Editor at ashdown-newsletter@mit.edu and we'll see what they say!

Citizen's Corner: Fahrenheit & Boston Weather

by Amanda Zangari

"Thirty's hot, twenty's pleasing, ten is not and zero's freezing", my sister quotes to me as we walked down the streets of Oxford. I was a First Year undergraduate, and she was spending her Junior Year Abroad in England. Among the many pieces of English culture, sometimes surprisingly different for two countries divided by a common language, metric temperatures were certainly something she was getting used to, not usually caring to deal with the formula $^{\circ}\text{F} = ^{\circ}\text{C}(9/5) + 32$ in her head. My sister was, as it happens, an English major. While I can usually deal with the formula in my head if I'm not sleepy, her poem has stuck with me nearly seven years later.

I'm amused to think that, being new to the United States, most students in Ashdown have the opposite problem. Nearly everything on the internet can be readjusted to metric, but you might not get a translation if you watch the weather on TV or see it displayed in some public place. So here's a handy guide to the crazy temperature system we use here*, that yes, really does feel like it makes more sense, sort of the same way miles can be turned into minutes in on the highway.

In the Fahrenheit system water freezes at 32 degrees and boils at 212 degrees. The zero point is taken from the temperature at which a mixture of ammonium chloride, ice and water stabilizes (thanks, Wikipedia). While 0°C to 100°C make a nice delineation between boiling and not, I think of 0°F and 100°F in a different way.

It's mostly a coincidence, but the temperatures in Boston rarely get above 100°F and very rarely go below 0°F . My first year (now nearly five years ago), I worked nights in January at Wallace Astrophysical Observatory and it was 0°F for just a couple of nights, I haven't seen the temperatures be that low since. Most summer record daily highs are somewhere in the upper 90s, and since every day has its own record, whenever you get above 96, some record gets broken.

(continued on next page...)

*If you are curious, the other two countries that use Fahrenheit are the Cayman Islands and Belize.



Find Fahrenheit frustrating? Celsius confusing? Don't sweat swapping scales!

Here is my handy guide to Fahrenheit and weather. I will spare you a poem.

90-100 degrees: About as hot as it is going to get. Usually, when it's that hot, it's also humid. It will be in the upper 90s for a handful of days each summer.

80-90 degrees: Hot. Great for swimming.

70-80 degrees: A really nice day. Short sleeve weather.

60-70 degrees: A nice day, but you might be more comfortable in long sleeves.

50-60 degrees: Cool. If it's night out, you are probably going to feel cold. Time for a light jacket, or a sweatshirt.

40-50 degrees: Even cooler. The first frustratingly cold weather, of Fall, but by spring, this will feel positively tropical. On your first 40 degree day, you will unbutton your winter coat.

30-40 degrees: Cold. Wear a hat and gloves. Snow will become sleet. In winter, we often get as much rain as we do snow.

20-30 degrees: An unfortunately typical winter temperature. We get a lot of these. Ditch the cute winter coat for a serious one.

10-20 degrees: Unpleasantly cold. Wear two pairs of pants. If your boots aren't really the warm kind, you will figure it out around now. Switch to mittens.

0-10 degrees: Bitterly cold, and fortunately rare. When it gets near 0, nostril hairs freeze. Usually daytime temperatures aren't this cold, but if they are, schools will discuss cancelation.

And there you have it. Enjoy the changing seasons and rapidly dropping temperatures!

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.



Helpful Info for New Residents, Part 2

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.

Borrowing Items from Front Desk

The Ashdown website lists items available for check-out and also indicates if one is already checked-out. Ashdown's website: <http://scripts.mit.edu/~ashdown/>

Movies and Clothes Drying Racks must be returned within 48 hours. **Please Note:** With the drying racks, you will receive an email after 24 hours, but please disregard until 48 hours have transpired. Games and Sports Equipment are to be returned within 24 hours (ideally when done use). Vacuums and Moving Carts are to be returned immediately when done using. Vacuums should be cleaned/emptied of debris after every use.

There are cots available at the front desk as well. We have the following options:

Cot (Roll-away with Mattress)- Cots are \$3.00 for the first night and \$1.00 for each subsequent night. The resident must pay cash (exact amount is ideal) for the cot at time of rental. The resident is responsible to return the bed the morning after done with use. If linens were provided, they must be pulled from the bed and placed on top when the bed is returned to the front desk.

Army-Type Cot- Canvas cots are available at no charge.

Air-Mattress- Available at no charge.

Mail

Incoming Mail- Your room key will open your mailbox. Your mailbox number is your room number (including alpha if applicable). For items too large to fit in your mailbox, please see "Packages".

Outgoing Mail- There is USPS mail pick-up Mon-Sat (time is variable). There is a drop-off in the lobby of Ashdown. Residents can also leave packages to be picked up at the desk for either return/send. The package would have to be ready for mailing (labeled) or you would have had to arrange for pick up (where the company picking up is bringing the label to Ashdown). The companies that come to Ashdown are: UPS, FedEx Ground, FedEx Express, DHL, and USPS. We cannot say your package will be picked up the same day as every carrier does not come every day.

Interoffice Mail- There is a drop-off for interoffice (on-campus) mail in the lobby of Ashdown.

Packages (anything too large to fit in your mailbox)

If you receive something too large for your mailbox, you will find a Package Notification Slip in your mailbox. You must present this to the front desk in order to retrieve your package(s). Please take note of the date the slip was written as you must find that date in the red binder, then find your name (*will already be written there*) and sign to the right indicating you picked it up.

Guest Policy

Residents are responsible to maintain their own guest list on-line by going to the Ashdown website, under "View My Info". A resident can add up to 5 guests at one time. Each guest's name is automatically deleted after 30 days from date of entry.

(continued on next page...)

Please let your guest know to carry a picture ID so the front desk can confirm their identity.

If a visitor is NOT on the guest list, the resident **MUST** come to the lobby and escort the visitor into the building.

No person will be allowed entry into the building without either being on the guest list (w/picture ID available) or with an escort by a resident.

Overnight Guest Stipulations

Three-Night Stay: A resident may have an overnight guest for up to three nights. Out of courtesy, if you have a roommate(s), you should let him/her/them know who is coming and for how long.

Extended Stay (> three nights): If your guest is staying for more than a three night stay, you must contact the House Masters, Terry and Ann Orlando and request an extended stay. Again, if you have a roommate(s), s/he/they should be given the information regarding who is staying and for how long once permission is granted.

(continued in Part 3, next issue)

Solution to Puzzle #3 (August 2012 Edition)

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

With the mentioning of typing and Dawn's handedness, looking at the chat log with a typical (QWERTY) keyboard in mind seems like a good start. Traditional typing instruction assigns certain keys to certain fingers on each hand, and the keyboard can be divided in half to delineate which hand is used to press which key (the space bar is shared between hands).

Upon looking at which hand is used to type the letters, it seems Ash uses all right-hand letters and Dawn uses all left-hand letters, except for one letter in each line:

~	!	@	#	\$	%	^	&	*	()	-	+	Delete
Tab	Q	W	E	R	T	Y	U	I	O	P	{	}	
Caps	A	S	D	F	G	H	J	K	L	:	"	Enter	
Shift	Z	X	C	V	B	N	M	<	>	?	/	Shift	
Ctrl		Alt									Alt		Ctrl

Ash: Jk I'm joking
Dawn: Go eat a bee
Ash: Rly? You no lol?
Dawn: Few seats I was sad
Dawn: Ate dessert after we left
Dawn: Felt great deserted
Ash: Lol punny haiku?
Dawn signed off.

Following the letters, the word "GORILLA" appears. SECRET CODE WORD FOUND.

Contact the Editor

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