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The Election Process at SP

Interested in becoming an Officer at SP? Want to know how the next Executive Council of our dorm will be elected? Keep on reading...

Below you will find some useful information with regard to the election process schedule, but for more detailed information you should check the bylaws of the Sidney-Pacific Graduate Community at <http://s-p.mit.edu/docs/constitution.php>

The elections for Hall Councilors, the selection of Committee Chairs and the election of the next Executive Council are three separate processes.

The Hall Councilors are elected by the current residents in each hall. If you are interested in becoming a Hall Councilor, you must file your candidacy between March 16-30 and meet your residents between April 11-13. Elections will take place on April 15-16. Note that there is a proposal underway to shift 5&6 North to become 5 North and Floor 6.

The members of the 2004-05 Executive Council will be elected by the current House Council. If you are interested in being an Executive Council Member you should have someone nominate you (or nominate yourself) between March 2-16. The election will be held on April 6.

The Committee Chairs will be selected by the 2004-05 members of the Executive Council. Applications will be accepted between March 16 and April 9, and the candidates will be interviewed and selected at the end of April.

The schedule below shows the important dates to remember:

| | |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tues March 2 | SPEC 2004-2005 Nominations Dinner. Any Current Sidney Pacific Graduate Resident may be nominated for one or more SPEC positions (self-nominations okay). |
| Tues March 16 | SPEC Nominations Close. Applications for Committee Chair 2004-2005 positions are available, and the filing period for Hall Councilor elections opens. Note: People running for Hall Councilor and applying to be a committee chair need to have separate applications for each position. |
| Tues March 30 | Filing period for Hall Councilor closes |
| Tues April 6 | House Council elects the 2004-2005 SPEC |
| Friday April 9 | Deadline for Committee Chair applications |
| April 11-13 | Meet the Hall Councilor Candidates (Sunday through Tuesday) |
| April 15-16 | Hall Councilor Elections (Thursday-Friday) |
| Tues April 20 | Newly elected SPEC takes office |
| Tues May 4 | Newly selected Committee Chairs take office |
| Tues May 18 | House Council 2003-2004 leaves office |

Submit articles to
bernat@mit.edu

SP Outreach Committee Update and Future Activities



By: Siddhartha Jain (SPOC Chair) and
Luis Laguna (SPOC Vice-Chair)

The S-P Outreach Committee (SPOC) has been very active in the last months trying to facilitate several initiatives for Sidney Pacific residents.

During the past fall semester SPOC launched (with funding from Sidney Pacific and MIT's Public Service Center), the SuPerKids Program which served as a uniting link between the Cambridgeport community and the Sidney Pacific resident body. Through the SuPerKids Program, several MIT students offered their time and knowledge in order to serve as volunteer mentors for local primary school children. The Program was held once per week during the whole fall semester and it proved to be a mutually challenging and fun activity for both mentors and mentees. As part of its leisure activities initiative, SPOC also organized several outing activities for Sidney-Pacific residents. During Thanksgiving a shopping and movie viewing outing took place. Residents were able to head to Boston's traditional shopping district near Downtown Crossing station in order to get a head start with their Holiday shopping and afterward they enjoyed attending the premiere of "Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World" in Loew's Theaters.

SPOC has also been actively engaged in collaborating with other Sidney Pacific house government committees in order to bring residents special activities and events. For example, at the beginning of the fall semester SPOC actively supported the Orientation Committee with the fund-raising and sponsorship sourcing efforts for the Annual Sidney Pacific Activities Fair. During the Activities Fair residents had the opportunity of engaging and evaluating local companies whose services would facilitate their everyday life. SPOC was instrumental in bringing to the event and obtaining monetary sponsorship from companies such as Fleet Bank, ZipCar, Radio Shack, and Cinderella's Restaurant.

During October SPOC also organized (jointly with the Movie Committee) an outing to watch the screening of "The Matrix Revolutions." This event was a huge success and residents were very satisfied with the experience, as it allowed them to interact with their fellow residents while watching a very gripping and engaging movie.

During this past Independent Activities Period (IAP) SPOC organized a Yoga and Meditation Series which was very well-received by the resident body as it allowed them to relax both physically and mentally and gain energy for the beginning of the spring semester.

In order to aid residents with the upcoming tax-filing season, SPOC has been very active in setting a series of three Tax-Filing Workshops for Sidney Pacific residents. During these workshops several volunteers from Sidney Pacific will provide free tax-filing advice to fellow residents. SPOC, in collaboration with IRS-approved volunteers from Harvard Law School, has given previous preparatory sessions to the volunteers so that they can provide adequate and informed tax-filing advice to those interested.

Future activities that SPOC is planning to organize for the spring semester will include: (a) the Pacific Park Party II, a soccer and social event in which residents will have the opportunity to interact (and play soccer!!) with neighbors from Cambridgeport community and kids from the Cambridge Youth Soccer organization; (b) the First S-P Chess Tournament in conjunction with the MIT Chess Club will serve as the launch for the "S-P Chess Get-Together" sessions which are planned to occur weekly and in which residents will have the opportunity to play and get to know other chess enthusiasts from S-P; and (c) an outing activity organized jointly with the Outing Committee which may consist in visiting the USS Constitution or taking a Ferry ride in Boston Harbor.

These are some of the main activities that SPOC has led in the last year and we look forward to obtaining further suggestions from residents about activities or efforts you may want us to lead in the future. Furthermore, we want to motivate residents to lead some of these ideas or efforts and allow us to help them in bringing them to fruition.

Last, but not least, the members of the Outreach Committee want to express that it has been their pleasure and honor to have been able to serve the Sidney Pacific graduate community during this past year, and most importantly to have built so many friendships on the way.

Announcements

JOIN THE SIDNEY PACIFIC COMMUNITY AT ORKUT.COM
Sidney Pacific has a growing social scene at www.orkut.com
Meet your neighbors, view the events calendar, post messages, be social!

For access to the site simply email your request to
sp-social-chair@mit.edu

Mats Cooper (Social Chair)



Italian Cinema at SP



The Cinema of Paolo and Vittorio Taviani: Nature, Culture and History Revealed by Two Tuscan Masters

By: Yanir Rubinstein

Italian cinema has seen many maestros. The Taviani brothers undoubtedly deserve this title. For over 40 years they have created in their works a unique form of art which is much more than movies. Much of their inspiration draws its roots from Southern Italy and Sicily, their history, nature and unique flavor. In its essence – poetry of the Italian landscape, as some critics have termed it. In the coming 2 months S-P will showcase 4 of their works, in their order of production, aiming to give the audience a chance to follow the artists' evolution. These screenings go under the title of the S-P World Classics Film Series which we hope will become an annual tradition in our house.

Anticipated schedule (be sure to check announcements in the building or email sp-historian@mit.edu for more information. All screenings will take place at the Seminar Room, Sidney-Pacific) :

The 2004 S-P World Classics Series: Poetry of the Italian Landscape

Friday, March 5th, 10pm :

St. Michael had a rooster (San Michele aveva un gallo, 1972, 87 minutes)

Friday, March 26th, 10pm :

Padre Padrone (1977, 113 minutes, Grand Prize Cannes Film Festival)

Friday, April 16th, 10pm :

The night of San Lorenzo (La notte di San Lorenzo, 1982, 107 minutes. Also known as The night of the Shooting Stars).

Friday, May 7th, 10pm :

Fiorile (1993, 117 minutes. Also known as Wild Flower).

* The subtitle above is the title of a book by Lorenzo Cucco published with Gremese Editore, 2002. This series has been made possible through funds of the History and Movies Committees.

An Experience with the Art of Living

By: Ambar Jain

We are a bunch of residents of your dormitory who have recently finished with what was truly an amazing journey – the Art of Living Part-I Course held at MIT from Jan 29th–Feb 2nd. It was a fun-filled five day retreat in Yoga, Pranayam (Breathing) and Meditation with lot of other interactive group processes. Sudarshan Kriya, a healing and purifying rhythmic breathing technique, taught in this course instantaneously refreshes, re-energizes, relaxes and rejuvenates the body and the mind. It brings us to a state of relaxed alertness, happiness and joy. The experiences with Sudarshan Kriya are far beyond the imagination of a poet, they are personal and profound. How can I even describe them in words?

Here is little that we would like to share with our beloved fellow residents:

«I believe that in our adult lives we built many constructs that sometimes may prevent us from trying something new – a top notch education can also do this to you! To me

the Art of Living course was about learning to let go and finding solace in my own breathing for thirty minutes a day. Hopefully, the thirty minutes will eventually become longer and longer»

-- *Kyong-Hee (708)*

«The Art of Living is something that everyone should try at least once. Not only practices help me calm my mind using some very powerful Yoga and Breathing techniques, it also allows me to take a break from the everyday hustle.

-- *Ashish (402B)*

«The course helped me develop a positive outlook towards life and start taking things as they are and as they come. This is important to enjoy the present to its fullest.»

-- *Siddhartha (386B1)*

Ever since I have taken the course, every day is a new day for me, full of Enthusiasm, Joy and Love. That is what Life is. Isn't it?



A Mascot in the Making

By: Rikin Gandhi

Have you ever noticed the space under your door? I have spent nights contemplating the creatures that might use this as their gateway. For one such vile guest made his way into my apartment through this space. His name Mickey, his size small, and his color brown – he was a mouse. He came while no one stirring. I heard him that night, but I dared not look for him. The following day, I found the gifts he had lovingly bestowed behind the oven and refrigerator: droppings and fur.

I could not fathom why he would climb five floors to seek us. We keep an impeccably clean apartment, but we do live adjacent to the garbage chute. To protect the bedrooms, my roommate and I stuffed old National Geographic magazines under our doors. Housing responded to my pleas by placing peanut butter-flavored sticky paper around our kitchen. Stepping into one, I know they are sticky. Still, the droppings continued to accumulate. My repeated calls for help brought sophisticated, black box traps. Still, the droppings continued to accumulate.

We heard reports that Mickey might also have made visits to our neighbors. Finally, I convinced housing to install a plastic rubber strip to seal the space under our front door. For a few days, I thought our friend had found another home. We removed the magazines from under our doors with a sense of new security. I decided to seize the opportunity by vacuuming the droppings. As I pulled out the refrigerator, I noticed something unusual. Mickey. I screamed as I looked into the eyes of the enemy for the first time. He dashed under my roommate's door in the ensuing chaos. Upon investigation, I noticed that there were plastic shavings by our apartment door. Mickey had eaten through the strip.

I have neither seen nor heard from Mickey since that frightful day. Perhaps, he has gone to bigger and better places. Perhaps, he was a figment of my imagination. Regardless, I flinch with every sound I hear from the kitchen, and the magazines are back under my door. Like our beaver mascot, Mickey showed himself to be persistent, elusive, and awake at odd hours. Although he is a foe, I do respect him. Truly, Mickey might be the mouse that every Sidney and Pacific resident strives to be.



From Child to Adult... Taking Care of Our Happiness

By: Natalija Jovanovic

It is not that hard to remember all the things we used to do as children that made us happy. Our life was made of small pleasures: biking, jump-rope, roller-blading (or roller-skating for some of us older people), walk in the park, etc.

Remember camping and telling stories 'round the fire? What was it that made life so nice (at least in retrospect)? When we needed sleep, was there anything that could stop us from dozing off on the backseat or even on our room's floor? When we didn't like something or didn't want to do something we screamed 'no!' (Especially to our parents!) Now we don't have to scream, but we can still say 'no' to more work when we are overwhelmed with the work we already have. And, when it was our birthday, was there anything to stop us from having as much fun as we could? Is there some rule that makes birthdays any less worthy of celebrating after a certain age? I don't mean celebrating until we can't walk in a straight line. What I mean is to celebrate how loving a family of friends we have around us year after year.

Have any of us obsessed about what we did? No way! It was play. Wouldn't it be nice to make more of our daily lives into play? Try scheduling breaks between your appointments – at least 30 minutes – to allow yourself to review (and write down) conclusions from the previous meeting and prepare for the next. Just rushing through a day is so grown-up-ish!

I recently learned with the help of a friend to formulate a sentence that has since helped me deal with some obsessions of mine: "Perfection is an option, not a requirement." This sentence makes me more comfortable and relaxed when I have to face something in which I set a high standard for myself. The beauty of it is that it allows for perfection while allowing for survival should perfection be unreachable at the moment. So what other endless "wisdom" can I dish out in this short writing?

Plan ahead to be healthy – see your doctor, drink and smoke less, and exercise more. If you choose to drink, never drink alone. Aim for the stars in the future, but set realistic goals for today and tomorrow. When something seems too difficult, take baby steps, motivate yourself and build a support system, i.e. at the end of the day write down the things you did well and the ones you could have done





better. Learn to deflect deterrents and don't be afraid of failure – just look at “a certain large software company whose operating systems cause as much trouble as benefit”. Remember that envy stinks and that it's better to invest energy in yourself than into conflicts. Invariably, I find that helping others is a gift of inestimable value. Whether it be providing directions, holding the door open,

or – well, this is a geek school – helping someone set up their own server, sharing a little bit of our energy with others makes us all feel better.

Natalija Jovanovic is a grad student in Course 6, and is happy when with family, fiancé, friends and nature. See: <http://web.mit.edu/natalija/www>

Sid-Pac on the Ice

By: J.P.Kurpiewski, Team Goalie

Throughout the winter, The Sidney & Pacific “Sid Pack” IM Hockey team has had a fun-filled season. The Sid Pack have played six games thus far, with their seventh and last coming up on March 9th. This season they've had two thrilling wins, against a tough schedule of CN league teams. In the fall, S&P went up against the “Frozen Solids” of Physics, the “Chicken Pucks” of Phi Sigma Kappa, and the MIT alumni team, “Old School Hockey”. During IAP, they played the Microtechnology Lab “Loonies,” the “Neanderthals,” and the East Campus dorm.

In the first two games, Sidney & Pacific was finding its team chemistry and passing game against a superior frat team and the physics department. These teams had been playing together for a long time, were organized in their attacks, sported team uniforms, and held practices. Backstopped by a goalie who had never skated in a hockey game before and having only a few shots on goal per game, the Sid Pack made a good effort, but fell in losses of 5-0 and 8-1.

The teams stuck together in their third game to stage a comeback. Going into the third period, the Alumni had a 1-0 lead, but the game's momentum was clearly in the dorm's favor. The Sid Pack had far more shots on goal and pressure in the opponent's zone. As the clock ticked down towards the end of the third, with less than two minutes left, the SP team pulled their goalie to add a sixth skater to the ice. With an empty net behind them, the pressure was on, the team fought hard, and Eric Soller scored with less than a minute left to tie the game. Trying to use similar tactics to take back the lead, the Alumni pulled their goalie in the final minute. But with less than 10 seconds left on the clock, team co-captain Eric Dresser weaved through the defense and over thrown sticks to flick the puck in the net for the game winner. S&P wins, 2-1!

The Sid Pack hockey machine got a little rusty over the

winter holiday, and started off IAP with 4-1 and 3-0 losses to the MTL Loonies and the Neanderthals, respectively. Once again, the teams resilience and skills shined through in their 6th game against the East Campus dorm undergraduates. The Sid Pack came out with guns blazing and dominated all three periods. Forwards Olivier Toupet, Ali Motamedi, and Jenny Yang skated powerfully and assisted Tim Johnson, Daniel Finchelstein, and Eric Dresser on Sidney & Pacific's goals. The tough defensive play of Dave Quinn and Eric Soller was a brick wall to the EC offence, only allowing 5 shots on goal the entire game. Goalie J.P. Kurpiewski posted a shutout in the 3-0 win on his birthday, making it an exceptionally good day for him.

The last game of the season is scheduled for March 9th at 11:00 PM on the Z-Center ice rink. We'd love to have spectators if anyone wants to come out to cheer.



The Sid-Pac ice hockey team in action in the Johnson's Ice Rink