



Sidney Pacific SPeaker

Volume 9, Issue 4

Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

October 21, 2010

A Welcome from the House Manager

By Jack Ahern

Welcome New Resident.

First, I would like you to know that you live in what I consider to be one of the nicest university communities anywhere. We have been so lucky to have such wonderful and upbeat groups of officers and volunteers who have worked very hard and tirelessly each year to make S&P this wonderful place that you now belong to. I'll bet your beginning to realize this even now after being here for such a short time. Just wait till you have lived here even longer, you will have so many fond memories of the many wonderful people you will meet, the great number of events from Housemaster dinners, COSI, Interest Groups, SPICE, themed coffee hours, parties and so very much more.

As you get more comfortable and settle in I would like to give you a few tips about the way our building operates.

S&P is in a true sense apartment living. By this I mean you are totally responsible for the way your apartment is main-

tained. We do employ housekeepers, but their responsibility is solely limited to maintaining and cleaning all the building common areas. These include meeting rooms, floor kitchens corridors and so forth. Our housekeeping staff will also remove any trash you place outside your room each morning. We ask that you please use the plastic bag provided.

Recycling should be placed in the large container located nearest to your apartment. We do single stream recycling, so there is no need to separate bottles, cans and plastic. Please do not contaminate recy-

cling with ordinary trash.

For any needed repairs in your apartment please complete a "Repair request" form on the S&P web page. This will then go directly to our hall mechanic who will take care of the problem.

Two things are very important to remember. Do not hang anything from the sprinkler heads located in your apartment. These can be set off with very little pressure and will cause many thousands of dollars in damage.

MIT will not be responsible for any of your personal belongings that may become lost, stolen

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Courtesy of SP Photofile Committee

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or damaged. You may wish to consider obtaining Tenants Insurance.

The second important thing to remember is, do not leave your stove unattended. Smoke from burnt food will set off the

smoke detector in your room and will sound at the front desk. Turn your vent fan on and open your window. Please do not open your door and let the smoke out into the corridor. Doing this will set off the building alarms causing a necessary evacuation of the building and automatically calls the Fire De-

partment to respond.

Oh! There is one other thing you need to know. My door is always open when I am around. Please feel free to drop in even if just to say hello. If I can help you in any way do not hesitate to ask.

Do you need a SPeaker?

By Yi-Ting Chen

Welcome to the Newsletter of Sidney-Pacific Residence, which will be published monthly as a connection between SPEC and S-P residents. The name of this newsletter is "SPeaker." As the title suggests, the newsletter is aimed to provide opportunities for residents to speak out their ideas in Sidney-Pacific Residence. Each issue will contain upcoming events, exciting dorm activities, surprising photos, refreshing stories and much, much more. Our goal is to encourage communication between residents as well as strengthen the relationship between SPEC (Sidney-Pacific Executive Council) and residents. Moreover, the newsletter will record fabulous events around S-P, so do not worry if you miss any of them. You can always see how events turned out.

Starting this year, the vision of newsletter will be extended to various levels, and more columns will be introduced. One goal of the newsletter is to bring more novel information into the residence. For instance,

some of the best cafés and restaurants around S-P are introduced in this issue. "SPeaker" presents a first step to start exploring the area so that we can all enjoy the best of the life around S-P from the experience of other students. After all, going it alone in Boston and Cambridge, you never know what you might get.

We hope you have some ideas for this newsletter. My role as newsletter chair is to provide as wide a variety of information as possible. However, we also need input from you! Therefore, it is time for you to SPEAK OUT! If you feel like being involved or are looking for a place to write something you want us all to know, I can proudly tell you that this is the place! We are seeking people who want to share their stories, interests and so on. There is no experience required. Also, you can pretty much write whatever you want, from poetry to multi-issue novels, as long as you are willing to share!

Last but not least, we also want to hear feedback from

you. Tell us what you think about this newsletter and any comment or idea is welcome. If you have further questions, please email to: sp-newsletter-chair@mit.edu. I am looking forward to your responses! Enjoy the SPeaker!

Upcoming Events!

Don't miss them!!

- 10/30 Taste of the Northwest:
Free Dinner and a Party
- 11/3 Chinese Cultural Coffee
Hour
- 11/7 Brunch, Karaoke
- 11/9 November House Council
Meeting
- 11/17 Jigsaw Puzzle Night

A Complicated Relationship

By Ece Gulsen
(SP Environment Chair)

How do you define your relationship with nature?

Let's admit: Most of us feel for the polar bear that looks helpless on a little piece of ice or that seagull covered in oil after the Gulf spill or dead fish poisoned by some nearby factory's industrial waste. At the same time, I cannot deny that very few times I have heard comments like "So what? Polar bears can actually swim." or "I hate seagulls, and I am glad there are fewer of them now." or "Something has to be sacrificed anyway, and there are still many fish on the earth." Putting these outliers aside, the reason why most of us are uncomfortable with what we see is because we **feel** that something unfair, unethical--something wrong is going there. Yet, as mere individuals in a global consumerism culture, we cannot help but feel desperate by observing ourselves as contributors to the big problem: Everyday by our various actions we cause greenhouse gas emissions that warm the planet, we fill our tank by oil that killed many lives in the ocean and we consume whatever that factory has produced after dumping its poisonous waste in a nearby river. It seems like although most of us (especially at SP) love the nature, our relationship status is quite

"complicated" for now. If you would like a framework in which you can think more about different viewpoints on this topic and revisit your own opinions, I recommend Michael E. Colby's 1991 paper: *Environmental Management in Development: The Evolution of Paradigms*.

So far, I have drawn a rather dark picture of us, watching the disaster with grief and every now and then becoming a little piece of the evil cause. This is not entirely true. There is a wide spectrum in which every responsible individual can change his/her own behavior for the love of Mother Nature. You make many trivial choices every day, don't you? It just takes a second to think twice and give a hand to save the polar bear, the seagull, the fish and eventually many more kinds of lives on the earth. Here is a list of possible choices in a regular day at SP:

-Recycling or not recycling your milk bottle, soda can, papers, cardboards, etc. or your old dear cell phone that needs to be retired. (For more information on our recycling policies, please visit: the SP website>Resources>Recycling.)

-Turning off your lights and A/C when you leave your room or any common

area, **or just leaving them on...forever.** (Soon, we will be able to see very interesting and dynamic graphs regarding this on SPTV: instantaneous electricity use of SP, Ashdown and Warehouse.)

-Using the drying racks after you do laundry when possible **or using a power-hungry dryer** that drinks electricity from the mains and kills all the freshness of your clean clothes. (If you don't have your own, drying racks can be checked out at the front desk.)

-Bringing or not bringing your kitchen utensils to SP events such as coffee hours or brunches. Did you know that last spring, on average 70-80% of residents were bringing their own utensils? Think about all that single-use waste that goes to landfills after several hundreds of people eat and leave! Plus, every week you have a chance to win prizes in the Green Raffle if you have your own utensils with you.

-Composting or throwing away your food waste. (See below for further information.)

I do believe that these kinds of choices actually *define* our relationship with nature. Contrary to the dark picture I painted at the beginning, we

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A Complicated Relationship

do have some degree of control in how we want to treat nature in this "complicated" relationship.

Finally, I would like to make some clarification over two practical issues for which I have been receiving questions at SP. First one is the location of the compost bins: currently we have two bins outside the court yard (top picture on the right). Second one is the unfortunate use of the technocycle bin in the main lobby (bottom picture on the right). Please dispose only small electronic equipment in that bin-- it is not for plastic, glass

or paper. More than that, it is definitely not a trash bin...

Want to get involved in environmental actions/events at SP? Have any questions/comments? Contact me at sp-environment-chair@mit.edu.

(top picture) Location of the compost bin

(bottom picture) the techno cycle in the main lobby, next to the battery disposal



Courtesy of SP Photofile Committee

Food Map: Cafés around S-P

Some best-rated cafes on www.yelp.com! Try them out, and write a review at SPeaker! (Have other nice restaurants in mind? tell us!)



1. **Coast Café**, 233 River St, Cambridge, (617) 354-7644, "The fried chicken was seasoned perfectly, tender, and amazing."
2. **Andala Coffee House**, 286 Franklin St, (617) 945-2212, "Delicious, fresh food & juices - goat cheese & honey plate is to die for."
3. **Baraka Café**, 80 Pearl St, Cambridge(617) 868-3951 "Definitely try the couscous in any form."
4. **Flour Bakery + Café**, 190 Massachusetts Ave,(617) 225-2525 "Sticky buns - absolutely orgasmically delicious."

Credit by yelp.com

Sidney Pacific Speaker

Newsletter Chair
Yi-Ting Chen

The Speaker is published on a monthly basis to serve the needs of the Sidney Pacific Graduate Community. Submissions of articles, photos, events, and other items of interest can be sent to: sp-newsletter-chair@mit.edu

