

The Muddraker

Proposed Land Deal Provokes Controversy

BY BEN KELLER '10

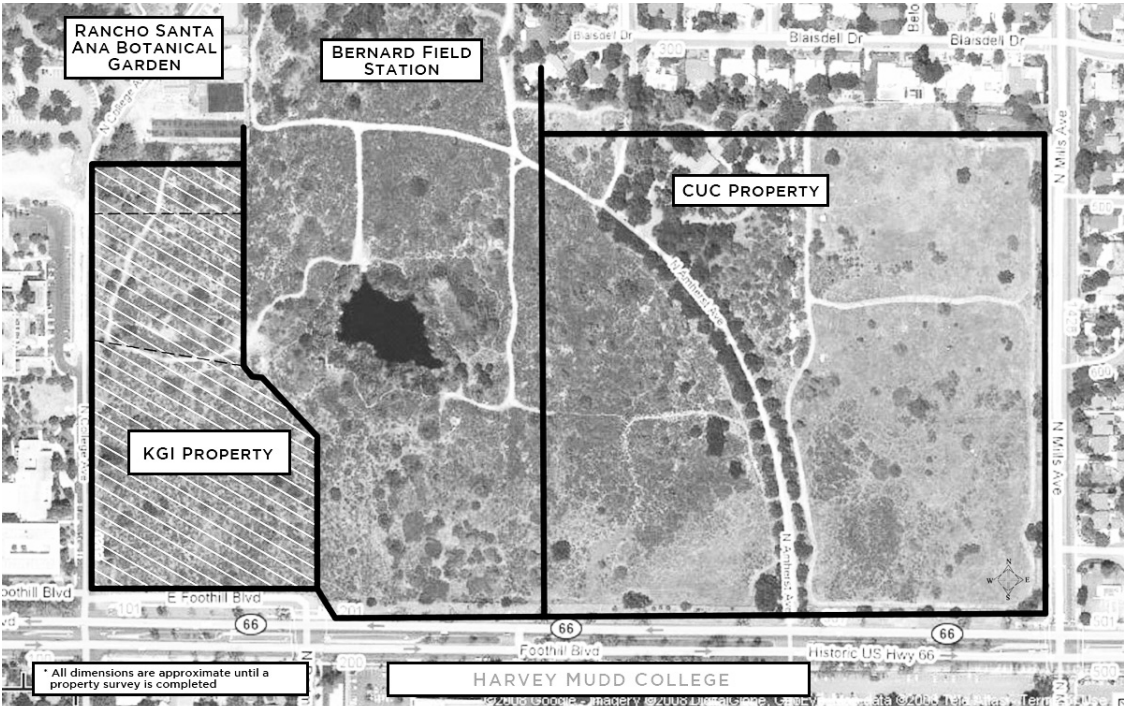
On October 22nd, Harvey Mudd College publicly announced its intent to purchase part or all of an 11.46-acre parcel of land north of Foothill Boulevard, adjacent to the Bernard Field Station. While the size of the parcel is small, the land and the politics surrounding it have a complex and storied history. Mudd's decision to involve itself may be one of necessity, but the college's interest in the parcel is just another chapter in the battle over the Bernard Field Station and land use in Claremont.

While the 11.46-acre parcel is not officially a part of the Bernard Field Station, the history of the BFS is inherently relevant, central to the current use of the land. The land that currently comprises the field station, as well as several hundred other acres north of Foothill, was originally part of the Scripps Trust, land donated to the Claremont University Consortium by Ellen Browning Scripps in the 1920s. The land was initially designated for the construction of new colleges, but for decades it lay idle. The consortium sold much of the land to private owners; by the 1970s, the amount of land still owned by the colleges was greatly reduced. In 1972, the Robert J. Bernard Biological Field Station was established on much of the remaining land. Its official purpose was to serve as a biological research station for members of the Claremont Colleges, although the consortium was motivated to establish the BFS as a tax dodge (the land was zoned for education, resulting in greatly reduced property taxes, but it had not previously been used for educational purposes). The land designated for the field station was hardly pristine; part of the land had once served as an orchard, and another part had been partially landscaped to serve as nine holes of a golf course (the other nine holes still stand today as the Consortium-owned Claremont Golf Course). Even some ecological aspects of the Field Station were artificial, such as a pond (dubbed "pHake Lake") that was constructed, filled, and populated with appropriate plant and animal life. Despite these curiosities, the Bernard Field Station began serving as a useful biological resource for many 5C students and faculty.

This status quo was roughly maintained until 1997, when CUC announced its intention to establish a seventh Claremont College, the Keck Graduate Institute, and that it was considering using part of the Bernard Field Station for new facilities. Many students and faculty protested this development, insisting ei-

ther that KGI should not join the Consortium, or that it should be located elsewhere. As CUC settled upon the 11.46 westernmost acres of the field station as a site for KGI, student protests turned hostile and confrontational, and a community group known as Friends of the Bernard Field Station took legal action against CUC. In 2000, a settlement was reached between the Friends and CUC, in which CUC agreed to preserve the 40 central acres of the field station for 50 years, while opening up the rest of the field station to potential development (see the map). While CUC did grant the 11.46-acre tract to KGI, the land was never developed due to pressure from students and faculty, and KGI instead established itself at its current location near Indian Hill Boulevard and Arrow Highway. For the past several years, the BFS has existed in uneasy limbo. While only part of the land is protected (and CUC and the college administrations are careful to only refer to the 40 protected acres as the Bernard Field Station), all 86 acres of land have remained in continuous use by students and faculty. The partitions dividing the land into protected and unprotected sections exist only on paper; even the land owned by KGI has been leased to CUC for use as part of the field station. With the exception of an abortive CUC plan floated last spring to construct facilities and parking on the KGI land, no serious attempts have been made to upset this status quo.

This all changed over the past several months. In August of last year, KGI made other Consortium members aware that it intended to sell the 11.46 acres of land north of Foothill. At this time, Harvey Mudd was about to go public with its plans to demolish Thomas Garrett and construct a new classroom building. This plan, however, had raised unexpected issues with city ordinances regarding parking, which has always been a difficult issue in Claremont, with students, faculty, and residents all jockeying for coveted street spaces. By the current regulations, Harvey Mudd was required to construct more parking spaces if it built a new classroom; furthermore, the new lot had to be within 800 feet of the new construction. This ruled out Linde Field and other open spaces owned by the college, and since



Harvey Mudd and CGU will share the controversial 11.46-acre tract of land adjacent to the Bernard Field Station. (Photo courtesy of Google Maps).

multilevel or underground parking would be prohibitively expensive, Mudd immediately saw that the KGI land would be a good investment for this future construction.

Mudd was not the only college interested in the land, however. The Claremont Graduate University had been planning an expansion, in the form of a new school of public health, and it would need land for new facilities to support this addition. The KGI land seemed well-situated near to its other academic buildings, as well as student housing, and so CGU also expressed interest when KGI made clear its intent. Both schools clearly had a good reason to want the land, and were prepared to pay. Rather than risk a bidding war between two Claremont Colleges, CUC insisted on a series of negotiations that resulted in a settlement agreeable to both schools. In this settlement, Harvey Mudd would purchase the land, with the intent to use the 1.2 acres nearest to Foothill for a new parking lot. Half of the 11.46 acres would then be sold to CGU, predicated on certain conditions that were not made public. Additionally, each school would designate one acre of their newly acquired land for biological use. This land would be contiguous with the existing field station. See <http://www.hmc.edu/newsandevents/land-purchase.html> for more details on the agreement.

When Harvey Mudd announced the details of its agreement, and its explicit intent to purchase part of the KGI land for the construction of a parking lot, the reaction among 5C students and faculty was largely negative, especially among biologists. As this was the same land that KGI intended to develop nearly a decade ago, many of the same arguments against develop-

ment of this land were reapplied to the new situation. Biology professors are quick to point out the ecological and educational value of the field station; it is one of the last stands of native coastal sage scrub in Southern California, and much of the undisturbed sage scrub is located in the western portion of the BFS. The field station is also one of the only biological research stations in the country that borders its parent institution, allowing for much more widespread use than if the field station were relocated. Many current biology majors depend on the BFS for research pertaining to their theses, which extends into the contested 11.4 acres; faculty research would also be impeded by new construction. Furthermore, any student of ecology knows that small infractions on a habitat greatly diminish the extent to which that habitat can support a diversity of species, especially populations of larger animals. Indeed, some 5C biologists believe that the 86-acre field station is barely large enough to sustain its ecology, and that a loss of 11 acres could lead to a large reduction in the utility of the rest of the field station.

Harvey Mudd's administration, led by President Maria Klawe, defends the proposed land purchase as a necessary step in the development of the college. The administration portrays Mudd as desperately needing a new classroom building, but being constrained by fiscal concerns and city ordinances. Purchasing the KGI land is the cheapest and easiest way to construct a parking lot necessary for the new classroom building, administrators argue. Furthermore, the new parking lot will be as "green" as possible, with special concern for edge effects on the rest of the field station. The administration also points to the two acres dedicated

"New Land" Continued on Page 2

Proposition 8 Causes Great Debate

BY SEAN LAGUNA '12

Proposition 8 is hideously and upsettingly controversial. Many consider the ban on gay marriage an infringement upon human rights, but others consider it necessary to protect the sanctity of marriage. I stumbled across some interesting statistics regarding the Proposition 8 vote from the Los Angeles Times website (<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/politics/cal/la-2008election-california-results,0,1293859.htmlstory?view=8&tab=0&fnm=0>):

I found these statistics especially startling. It is worthwhile and interesting to compare Proposition 8 to Proposition 4, which would force minors to notify their family before receiving an abortion. There is a definite correlation between the



Protesters gather against Proposition 8. (Photo courtesy of Fritz Lies).

groups that support and oppose both propositions, but Proposition 8 passed, while Proposition 4 failed. Why? I speculate that people vote differently than they often say they will. When people go into the voting booth to actually and secretly decide yes or no, they consider how it will affect them, specifically. I also suspect that there are more people who secretly plan on having an abortion that they wish to keep secret from their parents than people who secretly plan on having a homosexual marriage. Humans tend towards secrecy, and when people think about their situation and what they want, I can imagine that there are many people who are wor-

ried that they might be harmed by Proposition 4 passing than by Proposition 8 most of the people who plan on a homosexual marriage are not planning it in secret. What this says about the results is that there are many more people who are afraid that they might need to secretly get an abortion than people who want to have a homosexual marriage, a fact that displeases me. The idea that there are many people who are thinking, "I might need to have an abortion because I might do something stupid, and I do not want to have to tell my parents... but, I have no issue preventing two homosexual people from getting married," is upsetting doubly upsetting when a good portion of the supporters do not have a Bachelor's degree. It is easy to agree with your affiliations and vote for a ban on gay marriage, but it is less easy to vote for notifying parents for an abortion it does not surprise me that there is a group of people who would normally support a parent notification of abortion, that lies in public and switches in private. Any such group for gay marriage would never come out and get married, so the secrecy of the abortion versus the inherent openness of marriage is the key difference here.

In this issue...

page 2

Diversity

Jared Diamond

Dorm Art

HMC Prototyping

page 3

October Energy Challenge

Club Participation

An Open Letter To The President

page 4

CIS

Random Thoughts

Ask a Prof: Zach Dodds

The Problems Arising from Institutionally Mandated Diversity

BY KEVIN THAM '12

By the time you read this article October will have come and gone, and with it the advertisements for Harvey Mudd's Multicultural Ally Project, or MAP. All in all, it's the sort of thing you've been hearing for about ten years, at least if your life has been like mine—diversity is good, respect the different cultural backgrounds of others, et cetera. This particular campaign included an opportunity for people to write notes about their own experiences with discrimination and put them up on a poster board. One of these in particular caught my eye—it came from a student who believed he had never encountered much in the way of discrimination, and wanted to be "part of the solution." However, he ended the note by writing sadly that he believed he was "part of the problem."

Based on his desire to be "part of the solution", he certainly cannot be a flaming Ku Klux Klan style racist or sexist, so why does he think he's "part of the problem?" There is a clue to this conundrum; in the first part of the note he writes that he is "white and male." It's the only demographic fact we can assume about this student, and if it weren't important to the idea that he's part of the problem of discrimination, he would not have noted it. How does the fact that he's white and male make him a representative of the problem of discrimination?

There's really only one way this association can be made, and that's to assume that the fact that you're white and male makes you automatically discriminatory, and that the contrapositive ought to be true as well if you are not discriminatory, you are probably not white and male. This is the assumption that buoyed the University of Delaware's "social justice"-themed residential life program one year ago: the idea that whites have the power and thus are the only group who can be discriminatory, and in fact are one and all discriminatory and oppressive in some form or another, and that terms like "white racism" are "non-terms", obfus-

cating the issue of oppression. (More information can be found at <http://phibetacons.nationalreview.com/post/?q=MGM5YmFjYjEzMWRhNzRkMmRiYWVhZU5YWlwnDI3NTA>.) Parts of the program planning also encourage commiseration among people who claim to have been oppressed, with one sample questionnaire asking, "When was a time you felt oppressed? Who was oppressing you? How did you feel?" But this is not important to the current discussion.)

And while this idea may sound right if you restrict your examination to European history 1750-1960 (a rather discriminatory idea—what about African history 1500-1900, or Asian history 1845-1945?), expanding the search terms shows that association to be demonstrably false. Take the Barbary Pirates, for example, a loosely organized set of North African brigands operating out of present-day Algeria and Libya, who preyed primarily on—and were greatly feared by—European ships and sailors, from the 1500s to the 1830s. Or perhaps the definition of dhimmi in a highly Islamic (sharia ruled) society, whose extra burdens include the jizya, and whose non-Muslim state legally rendered him a second-class citizen (there is a third class, probably including atheists and pagans). Oppression can even extend to within an ethnic or cultural group—such as the Liberians, who regarded the African natives as "inferior"—and may have practiced slavery, or the Japanese circa 1850-1945 (from the Meiji Restoration to the end of World War II), who had some very blatant ideas of racial superiority and exercised them fully in Korea and Manchuria.

Thus there is no way white and male can be strictly equivalent to "oppressive," and the mere state of being such is not grounds for assuming you are a discriminatory and evil person. This raises one other question. Where did this student get the idea that his whiteness and maleness made him "part of the problem"—that his Caucasian descent made him inferior?

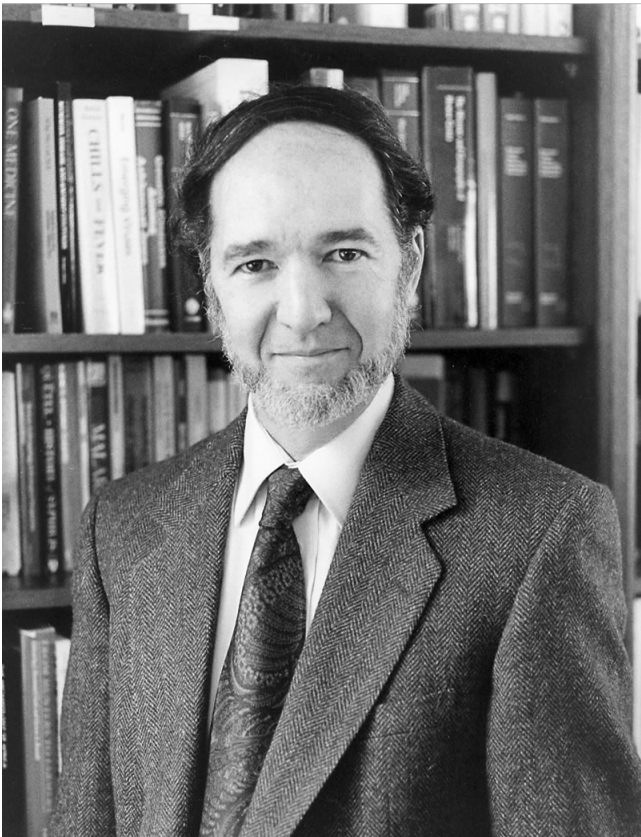
ASHMC

CORE TEXTBOOK LIBRARY

Ever spent several hundred dollars on textbooks for core classes and then thought, "Hey, man! Lame!" ME TOO! That's why ASHMC has decided to start a library of Shared Core Textbooks in Platt. ASHMC approved funding to purchase textbooks and recently received a matching grant from the Strategic Vision Initiative fund to purchase the books. ASHMC representatives were at dorm auctions scavenging for texts and will be continuing that work on eBay. The books will be labeled "ASHMC" with bright, loud neon, to prevent their theft.

If you would like to donate books to this collection, please bring them to the LAC and tell the friendly employee at the desk they are for the Platt Library. Do not steal books.

Jared Diamond Speaks at Mudd



(Photo courtesy of board.verycd.com).

BY SUSAN TAN '12

On Thursday, October 23, the freshman class was bombarded with emails from the Academic Excellence tutors, all carrying similar messages: "We all want to go see the Jared Diamond talk at 7:30, so we're going to cut AE short tonight, likely around 7:15 at the very latest" and "omg JARED DIAMOND is speaking in Galileo at 7:30! As a result, the first Thursday AE session will be postponed by one hour." The chemistry professors also sent campus-wide emails inviting students to attend the lecture. At this point, many students surely wondered, "Who's this Jared Diamond guy?" A quick Wikipedia search provided the following information: "Jared Mason Diamond (born 10 September 1937) is an American evolutionary biologist, physiologist, biogeographer, lecturer, and nonfiction author. Diamond works as a professor of geography and physiology at UCLA. He is best known for the Pulitzer Prize-winning book *Guns, Germs, and Steel* (1998), which also won the Phi Beta Kappa Award in Science. He received the National Medal of Science in 1999." He has also earned assorted other awards and is fluent in a dozen languages. His books rely on sources from diverse fields such as molecular biology, anthropology, history, linguistics, physiology, and economics. Diamond is a world-renowned intellectual celebrity.

Diamond's lecture, "Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed," was delivered at Harvey Mudd College, in Galileo Hall and via live-video feed in Beckman Hall, to an estimated audience of 1,000. Diamond explained the five factors that contribute to the success or failure of a society: climate, enemies who exploit the internal conditions of their neighbors, friends who establish commerce relations, human environmental impact, and political, social, and cultural issues. He cited mountains of evidence from vastly different time periods and societies, including the Tokugawa leadership in Japan, the Viking society

in Greenland, the Roman Empire, and Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Diamond demonstrated a surprising ability to incorporate seemingly disparate fields of knowledge into his arguments and analyze it from multiple perspectives. The Harvey Mudd mission statement and curriculum emphasizes a similar relevance of diverse study, including humanities and social sciences, in the technical fields. As a result, students graduate with in-depth knowledge of their major as well as wide knowledge of various fields in the humanities. Both Diamond's use of various sources and the design of the Harvey Mudd curriculum suggest that it is much better to know a lot about everything than to know a lot about one thing.

Diamond explained how modern society could learn from the lessons of the past. One such lesson is to take environmental issues seriously. Sustainability issues are a deciding factor of whether or not any modern society will collapse or survive. Diamond said, "[Environmental issues] did in the Anastasi and the Norse [civilizations]; they can do us in today. We're consuming resources faster than we are producing new resources. It's certain that this cannot go on for long. And if we don't change our ways, it's certain that there will be an environmental collapse. What one can't predict is when that environmental collapse is going to come." His distressing warning also contained the optimistic note that current generations are capable of helping to prevent this collapse.

Interestingly, his emphasis on understanding environmental impact resonates with the mission of the college. The Harvey Mudd mission statement aims to develop students who are aware of the impact of their work on society. Diamond's talk provided a context for further discussion about how technical work in engineering and the sciences relates to both society and the environment.

Let Me Print!

BY SAM ETTINGER '12

Two summers prior to my arriving here, some Rose-Hulman IT professors and techs mercifully tolerated my presence at their impressive 3-D printing facilities outside of Terre Haute, IN.

3-D printing is a relatively new field through which full, tangible analogs of digital models are created using any of a host of different technologies, like plastic extrusion from a nozzle that can move on three independent axes, or something called "chemical vapor deposition," which still baffles me even though I've read its Wikipedia article twice now. Models provide terrific benefits to project proposals because they enable one to perfect a part without blowing too much money on a full-size element, or to display important visual aspects in a manner complementary to words. This latter aspect is highly desirable to people like yours truly, the vision-oriented ilk who enjoy poking at things while talking and, if pressed to explain something without visual clues, probably wind up gesticulating madly at nothing of consequence.

I was quickly bitten by the 3-D printing bug. Incidentally, that metaphor is much more powerful to those who have seen the insect residents of Terre Haute, IN.

So, I found myself affixed to a desktop for hours at a time, honing my CAD skills and harnessing elegant machines to make tiny plastic prototypes of parts for a handful of other people's massive-scale proposed projects. I got to practice my entrepreneurship, too, designing and selling a handful of Möbius bracelets (I kept one for myself—yes, xkcd readers, it does say WWED? on the outside the inside the side). Yeah, those were good times.

Naturally, I wanted to keep those good times roll-

ing at Mudd. Surely there's a printer there. A technical school has got to have one; it's so useful for all sorts of technical projects. Right?

As you may imagine, dear reader, hopes were quickly dashed. When questioned, students largely pled ignorance or made brief and obtuse mentions of laser cutters. A couple of engineering professors (otherwise helpful souls) gave me the runaround, always directing me to someone else. It was not until very recently that I learned Mudd does have a 3-D printer, but it is allegedly only available for clinic work. Some students have begun their own 3-D printing project to make the service available to all students. This is nice, and I personally will do all I can to see the project finished post-haste, but I have no disillusion. As it stands, a homebuilt printer is simply not of the speed, finished product quality, or overall caliber of an expensive, professionally built apparatus.

I am still confused as to why it took so long to uncover the more-or-less official Mudd printer. Maybe my case was unique and other people learned of the machine instantly, but that seems unlikely considering the scale and long duration of the cover-up. Why was there such a lack of communication?

Are administrators afraid that students will use this type of machine on frivolities? Is someone afraid that unsupervised undergrads will waste all of the printer's precious ABS plastic on giggeworthy model phalluses? Come on. At least 40% of us are more mature than that.

Give us a chance! I am confident that a 3-D printer can be used responsibly by Mudd students for a wide variety of applications beyond clinic work.

Could the Campus Use Some Do-It-Yourself Art?

BY ANDREW CHUNG '10

Take a look at the standard Harvey Mudd dorm room. It's not too shabby—there is plenty of space, and power outlets abound. What more could a Muddr want, right? But after spending all day learning in a campus that could admittedly use some help in the prettiness department, do you really want to go back to a bland, boring, beige room? Couldn't your room use an artist's touch? That's the idea behind a new proposal making its way through the Dormitory Affairs Committee (DAC). This proposal stems from the recent renovation of West dorm, where residents were allowed to pick the color of their room from a limited array of colors. If the proposal passes, students will be allowed to express their artistic sides and paint their rooms however they wish.

"Hold on a second," you say. "What about the people who pull into a painted room? Would they be stuck with a mural they don't like?" DAC co-chair Sam Gordon '09 says that the issue has been raised and DAC is considering at least two ideas to deal with this potential problem. The first is to take pictures of all of the rooms and post them prior to room draw, so students have an idea of what their intended room looks like. The second idea gives students who pull into a room the right to request that the walls be repainted. The question remains, however, about whom the burden of repainting would fall upon. That is, would the current residents have to undo their art, or would incoming residents be forced to deal with wall paintings they may not necessarily want? Those of you who have filled out the most recent proctor and dorm evaluation survey may have noticed a question on this very issue. DAC has deferred discussion of this proposal until the student responses from these surveys are gathered and analyzed.

On the subject of campus beauty, the Board of Trustees has expressed concern that the appearance of the campus has kept many students and their families from attending or even applying to Harvey Mudd. In response, the school has set aside money to fund projects that would improve the appearance of the dorms. The administration has stressed that no one dorm is solely at fault for turning off prospective students and that the money is available to any student from any dorm. Interested students should speak with their dorm presidents and Dean Guy Gerbick.

In an update to a past Muddraker story, the gender-neutral housing policy has been approved by both the Dormitory Affairs Committee and the President's Cabinet. The proposal will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees, who will vote on the issue in January. This policy, if implemented, would allow students the choice of rooming with anyone they wish, regardless of gender.

“New Land” *Continued from Front Page*

to biological research in perpetuity as demonstration of their commitment to biology and the field station. Indeed, many administrators across the 7Cs, including Bob Walton, the head of CUC, believe that ultimate development of the field station is inevitable. Situated in a dense suburban area, the Claremont Colleges are rapidly running out of land on which to expand; even the Pit, the CUC-owned land east of Claremont Boulevard, has been mostly parceled out to Scripps and CMC. Seen in this light, the Mudd plan is reasonably kind to the BFS and those who use it, as it sets some land for biological research and entails only 1.2 acres of near-term construction.

Despite these concessions, many students and faculty remain unsatisfied with the plan. In an attempt to address community concerns, Harvey Mudd hosted an open forum on October 31 in Galileo Hall. The forum was attended by 5C students and faculty, as well as administrators and members of the Claremont community. The meeting began with a half-hour briefing by Dean of Faculty Bob Cave, who briefed everyone present on details of the plan. The floor was then opened to questions and comments, with President Klawe fielding questions and defending the plan from criticism. Some attendees were opposed to development of the field station and the adjacent land under any circumstances, while others had comments specific to the proposed plan. President Klawe pointed out that in the near term, Harvey Mudd would be the most responsible owner of the KGI land, as other owners would not listen at all to student concerns, and might even fence off the land to prevent researchers from accessing it. One student pointed out that while Harvey Mudd had made repeated public commitments to sustainability, CGU had not made similar pledges,

and so there was no guarantee that CGU would realize the same commitment when it purchased its 5.73 acres. Other students were concerned that Mudd was attempting to "greenwash" its destruction of habitat by making token commitments to sustainability, and accused Mudd's administration of not seeking more creative solutions to the parking problem. Throughout the forum, however, President Klawe expressed her intent to continue to seek student feedback, and committed to being as open about the process as possible.

As these discussions took place, the land purchase proceeded on schedule. At the time of this writing, the purchase of the KGI land by HMC had been approved by the CUC Board of Overseers, and the land is currently in escrow (Mudd will likely gain formal ownership by the end of January). Despite the administration's openness about the process, many students and faculty remain skeptical about the proposed construction. Given the rift of opinions held about land use and the Bernard Field Station, it seems unlikely that a single solution can satisfy the entire 7C community. One possible way that Mudd could avoid the proposed construction was made clear at a Claremont City Council meeting on November 10, at which several council members pointed out that Mudd could apply for a variance from the city parking restrictions. This would allow the school to build parking farther than 800 feet away from its new construction, opening up Linde field as a possible site. Whether the administration will seek to find creative alternatives to building on its newly-acquired land north of Foothill remains to be seen, but regardless of the decisions made by the administration, it seems clear that the Bernard Field Station and its adjacent properties will remain a complex and politically charged issue for years to come.

October Energy Challenge Results

BY SAM ETTINGER '12

We should all still be able to recall the month of October 2008. If you personally do not, then you may be a goldfish, or perhaps a cocker spaniel. The rest of us, however, ought to remember the two most important things of October. The first, of course, was Joe the Plumber; and the second was Mudd's own October Energy Conservation Competition, spearheaded by ESW/MOSS.

The energy challenge pitted dorms against each other, striving to see which would have the most negative ΔW , where W_i is the energy used in October '08 and W_f is the energy used in September '08. Some of the vital stats could be seen on the big flat-panel television in the Hoch, which was kind of inefficient compared to using, say, posterboard and a sharpie. However, the TV was so darn shiny that the energy pull was forgivable.

The dorms, in order of most saved to least saved, were Atwood, North, Case, Sontag, West, South, East, and Linde. The top three savers had respective consumption reduction rates of 33%, 22%, and 20%.

"As a whole, the residential end of campus reduced its energy consumption by approximately 16% over the month of September," said ESW/MOSS co-president Dmitri Skjorshammer.

The top three dorms won prizes of \$500, \$300, and \$200, to be used on environmentally-focused dorm improvements. They also had their names engraved on a solar panel, approximately 0.5 m² in size. The author's quick Google-based estimates suggest that we would require a 0.75 m² solar panel in direct sunlight to supply sufficient power for that flat-screen television.

ESW/MOSS promoted many ways of conserving energy throughout the month, as well as year-round. Rob Best, the other co-president of ESW, said, "Personally, I reduced phantom loads by unplugging all unused devices. I opened windows rather than turning on the lights, turned off my computer whenever it was not in use, and turned off the AC whenever possible."

He continued, "The only thing I have to add is that it's really encouraging to see so many students who were interested in this competition. Wise resource use in general, and especially energy use, is a topic that is very important as the world faces more and more strain on what resources are available. So it's encouraging to see so many students getting involved."

Life Outside the Classroom

BY SEAN LAGUNA '12

The club participation here upsets me. It upsets a lot of people who organize clubs and events. Some of our clubs are depressingly small.

As a member of the rocket club, MARC, I went to RocStock on the weekend of November 7th. Seven people went: six of my freshmen friends and Graham Orr, the president of MARC and a particularly motivated and busy person. I have been working with him in MARC because I think rockets are awesome, and I want to learn about them. Go figure, I'm a nerd. Graham built a rocket in order to be Level 2 certified in rocketry - he planned to launch a rocket with a huge engine, video capability, an altimeter, and tons more electronics that he designed and built himself. My friends and I bought a kit and assembled it and launched it while we were there, all for free, thanks to school funding. We also built a rocket that we made out of trash that went about 250 feet straight up, fell down, and deployed its parachute when it was about a foot from the ground. Kinda cute.

Anyway, we camped out, built and launched our rockets, and got to talk to some awesome people and see some amazing things, for free. It was a great escape from the repetitive and destructive nature of Harvey Mudd - it helped me refocus and made me a generally happier person. I can hardly imagine staying sane without extracurricular escapes - not videogames or shopping or partying, but something productive and something stimulating. Caging yourself into your room or your studies transforms you from a person into a robot. There is a natural human connection to moving your muscles and seeing the sky and ground. There is something innate that makes pursuing something enjoyable yet still productive the healthiest thing you can possibly do. Rocketry combines the outdoors with something totally awesome, as well as with something nerdy and mentally stimulating. When 7 out of 800 kids decide to appreciate this, I am somewhat unsure about how to react. Harvey Mudd students were hand-selected to be educationally intense people, but also people that appreciated being part of the real social and physical world. Isn't there something about well-roundedness in the mission statement of the school?

Yes, Harvey Mudd's course load makes it a very busy place. Any student will agree that the amount of work he or she has to do is a disincentive to doing extracurricular activities - any free time a student has seems to get sucked up by sleep, relaxing, and having fun. That's fair, but a vital part of life is lost. The reason students are here at Harvey Mudd in the first place is because they believe that learning is a worthwhile thing to integrate into life - getting smarter is key to living a full life. Clubs like MARC embody that idea perfectly - engineering is such a huge part of rocketry, and rocketry is such a huge contributor to the world. Propulsion and aerodynamics are socially and politically important scientific fields that are being developed and explored. And rocketry provides not only a creative problem-solving channel, but also the satisfying rush of fun when you watch your rocket launch - the icing on the cake - which makes it so unlike schoolwork. Of course, clubs don't start or end at rockets. The school is ready to throw money at any productive hobby. Take advantage of it, and do something cool with your time.

Graham spoke with the president and founder of Aerotech at RocStock - Aerotech is currently the number one brand in model rocket engines and propulsion. Dr. Aerotech had seen Graham's online discussion about an engine he was building that utilized an experimental type of fuel that Graham developed himself, and was asking him about it and asked him his opinion on other rocketry topics. When Graham came back to our camp and talked about how thrilled he was about the conversation, it hit me that clubs like this were a link to the real world also in terms of jobs and reputability - Harvey Mudd is an amazing place because it allows us to become true experts in our field, to the point where presidents of companies will, in fact, think highly of us. In squandering our opportunity by refusing to channel our intellectual capacity outwards into society, we are harming ourselves by refusing to tap into our creative sides, and also disrespecting the world we live in and the opportunities we have. Seriously, go out and do something besides DOTA or Super Smash Brothers.

Dear Mr. President,



The official portrait of President Barack Obama. (Photo courtesy of change.gov).

Congratulations on being elected the 44th President of the United States of America! And congratulations on being the first African-American man to have done so! It's certainly a red-letter day in American history which will improve our standing in the world, act as a partial exoneration of the charge of institutional racism, and

Alright, you know what, enough. Margaret Thatcher and Golda Meir were both the first female prime ministers of their countries (the U.K. and Israel), but neither is referred to solely as "the first female prime minister of her country" like it's some grand victory for women's rights, so I'm going to stop talking about your skin color like it's the best thing in the world. Still, President of the United States, whoo-hoo, good job!

Of course, now that you're going to be picking furniture for the Oval Office, you won't be voting "present" anymore. So may I kindly offer my completely unsolicited advice from a college student's perspective?

Regarding the world: sure, having the world on your side may sound fine in theory, but there are a couple of problems with it. One, the world is filled with a lot of not-very-nice people, and a lot of those not-very-nice people have power thanks to other not-very-nice people killing all the nice ones. Two, the 56% of the American public that voted for you didn't elect you to President of the World, Brandenburg trip notwithstanding. You are the President of the United States - remember that your job description involves "advancing U.S. interests" when you start talking with other countries and the U.N.

On messianic tendencies: I read in the news that your staff is beginning to downplay the whole "hope and change" message of your campaign. And while this might lead to some pissed off supporters, it makes perfect sense now. After all, just because you are the new President doesn't mean that the tides will begin to recede and the world will begin to heal. Humanity is just ***** like that.

On education: DO NOT fall into the trap that more money correlates to better education. Making a scatter-plot with "Top 20 countries in education" on the x-axis and "money spent per student" on the y-axis reveals almost zero correlation either way. But if you are going to play around with money, send it to me! \$50,000 tuition is a lot to pay for!

On Iraq: Don't touch.

Thank you for taking the time to read my unsolicited advice, even if you aren't actually reading some short article in some tiny newspaper in some small college that nobody has heard of yet.

Sincerely,
Mr. V--

Pitzer/HMC Study Abroad Option for Engineering Majors

Fall 2009 and Spring 2010

BOTSWANA

CHINA

COSTA RICA

ECUADOR

ITALY

NEPAL

TURKEY

**Get out there and make a difference in the world.
Non-engineers welcome to take the
non-engineering option on the same renowned
Pitzer study abroad programs.**

Fall 2009 Application Due: February 15, 2009
Preliminary Spring 2010 Application Due: March 15, 2009
Final Spring 2010 Application Due: September 25, 2009

For more information
Email studyabroad@hmc.edu
Or stop by the HMC Office of Study Abroad,
Platt Campus Center

CIS, Under New Leadership, Looks to the Future

BY BEN KELLER '10

Most Mudders don't consider the Computing and Information Services offices in the Parsons basement to be much of a hangout spot, but on November 14, the normally quiet hallways were packed with students, faculty, and CIS staff. Raffles, food, and conversation abounded, as Harvey Mudd's small information technology department put forward its best face. Everything from cool websites to new chairs was on display; blank posters requesting feedback on various CIS policies covered the walls. The open house was more than a party, though; it also served as a brainstorming session, an opportunity for Mudd to collectively determine the future of computing technology at Mudd.

Joseph Vaughan, Harvey Mudd's new CIO, was the first to deem the event a success. Since his arrival at Mudd in February of last year, Vaughan has sought to raise the visibility of CIS among students and faculty, and has actively solicited feedback on CIS policies from the community. Vaughan grew up in Ireland, only coming to the United States after he had received his undergraduate degree. Once in the United States, he studied philosophy at UCLA, eventually accepting a managerial position for the large humanities department there. It was only in 2001, when he began his tenure as CIO for the department, that he became seriously involved in information technology and computing management. These experiences more than prepared him to join the Harvey Mudd team, and when he was offered a job at Mudd, he jumped at the chance.

Of course, the role of CIO differs between institutions, especially at such a small school as Mudd. Vaughan smiles as he lists half a dozen activities that could fill a typical day, everything from budgeting for 5C CINE and Sakai services (Mudd manages these services for the entire consortium) to working on the print task force report to getting wireless working on his Eee PC. The contrast between computing at Harvey Mudd and computing at a larger school like UCLA is substantial. There are disadvantages to our small size; for instance, small schools don't have a large human resources department that can provide training to faculty. But there are advantages as well. Vaughan describes Mudd's administration as "much more agile," allowing necessary changes to occur in weeks instead of months or years. And, of course, being one of the six voices on the President's cabinet allows for tight collaboration and streamlined planning. On the whole, though, Vaughan sees his role at the college as transcending mere management. In his words, he seeks to "challenge the college to think about IT decisions, and how to use information technology to forward the mission of the

college." These goals are much more complex than day-to-day management, and they require just as much managerial skill.

Central to these longer-term aims is the Harvey Mudd IT Plan. The first seeds of the plan were sown in a college-wide review of IT practices over the summer of 2007. The review found a need for more structured long term planning, and the IT plan was conceived of to fill this role. In a nutshell, Vaughan describes the review as addressing the question, "What should HMC be doing with respect to IT in the next four years?" The most recent draft of the plan is viewable online at <http://www5.hmc.edu/draft05>.

Vaughan acknowledges that "excellence in IT and higher education is not a solved problem;" he sees the IT plan as an attempt to solve the problem for Harvey Mudd. The draft is lengthy, addressing everything from email to sustainability to software, but it is also very flexible, allowing feedback and community opinion to direct the actions of CIS. The basic formula for each section, Vaughan explains, is to state each problem, and describe some ways that the problem can be addressed and explored in the near term. In this way, the document embodies the idea that the process of consultation is more important than a set of strictures; the document is intended to provoke discussion, not lay down a set of solutions. Vaughan stresses that the IT plan is "still in beta," and that student feedback is not only welcome but essential to making the plan succeed. Students are encouraged to read the plan and leave feedback on the website, or to contact CIS or Vaughan directly with comments.

The most important sections of the plan deal with IT governance, infrastructure, and innovation, all areas where CIS has had issues in the past or would like to further explore. In particular, CIS is very concerned with the stability and reliability of its server infrastructure; most students no doubt struggled with Charlie downtime at some point in the past semester (the increased server downtime was reportedly a result of an unidentified hardware issue). Even as it seeks to improve basic services, though, Vaughan hopes that CIS can take the lead in IT innovation in the coming years. If all goes well, a plethora of new software services will be available to future Mudders, and CIS hopes to use the new classroom building as an opportunity for the "blossoming of innovation." Whether these grandiose plans will come to fruition remains to be seen, but under the leadership of its new CIO, CIS seems poised to outdo itself in the years to come.

Random Thoughts on the Passing Scene II

Now 50% more RANDOM! (...with an equivalent decrease in thought...)

BY KEVIN THAM '12

- Well, they've done it. After months upon months of "Yes we can!" and "O-BA-MA!" Barack Obama has been elected the 44th President of the United States. He's also the first African-American one too, but nobody cares about that. So will the world begin to like us again? Will the oceans begin to recede? Will the earth begin to heal? Will the country get back on its feet? In a word: nope! All of these problems have bases stretching at least 20 years back in history (the "trans-Atlantic alliance" lost a pretty big member after France bugged out of NATO military operations in 1969), and one man, no matter how special, isn't going to change that. Besides, if Obama wanted change on all of these matters, why didn't he stay in the Senate and start proposing bills left and right?

- General Motors, that bastion of old Detroit manufacturing superiority, now believes it won't be able to survive the year (at least until Obama takes office) without a hefty bailout from the federal government. Well, GM has made some spectacularly bad decisions on how to handle its money over the years (refusal to adapt to competition overseas, maintaining worker and executive salaries when it was clear the company was losing cash, etc.), and they're also not the only victims of the financial crisis. So I have just three words to say to GM: SUCK IT UP! You made the decisions that put you in the mess you're in, now deal with the consequences like all the other people in financial distress!

- If you've been on campus regularly before the 2008 state and general elections came around, you probably heard one of those protest marches coming up and down campus announcing "No...on 8! Love does not discriminate!" Unfortunately for them, Prop. 8 passed, so now marriage in California is constitutionally defined as the union between man and woman. I didn't care for it myself, mostly because a state constitution is not really where you put your marriage laws. But I also didn't care for the marching; maybe because I'm a bit of a curmudgeon before I should be, but maybe it's also because 1960s style marching and chanted slogans that always follow the same beat pattern are more annoying than enlightening. For me, at any rate, the marches hurt the No on Prop. 8 cause.

- Even more enlightenment from the No on 8 groups! You may recall that a number of commercials advertised the No on Prop. 8 vote as a continuation of an endless struggle for civil rights. Oddly, the group you'd most expect to be sympathetic to a civil rights matter didn't see it that way; about 70% of voting African Americans voted for the proposition. So what happened after the vote? Well, if you were black and in the Westwood area near UCLA, you got treated to a racial heckling by anti-8 groups, even if you voted against it! There's also the Mormon protests, and that San Francisco theatre troupe owner forced out of his chair because he sup-

ported the pro-8 groups monetarily. Discrimination is okay when a minority group does it, apparently.

- (Also: LGBT = Lettuce, Guacamole, Bacon and Tomato sandwich. And if you laughed at this or the above bullet, well I did too, so it's okay.)

- The recent terrorist battle in Mumbai demonstrates a few funny things about the world. Considering that a hospital, a posh historic hotel, and a small Jewish center were all targets, terrorists are decidedly indiscriminate in whom they decided to kill. Apparently this particular set wouldn't murder any hostages they believed were Islamic, so clearly they were some branch of militant radical Islamism whether they were Pakistani government-subsidized, Al-Qaeda recruits, or some random bunch who got a hold of Osama bin Laden's speeches is irrelevant. More generally, the world is not nice, and will not suddenly turn nicer now that Obama has been elected President. If he wants to talk to these people, or try to find ways to reduce poverty in the hopes of reducing the influence of ideology, all I can say is...good luck!

- Veteran's Day, aka Armistice Day, aka Remembrance Day went by without a word on Harvey Mudd Campus. Kinda sad, considering the death toll of that trench-warfare laden mess. At the same time, this paper is probably coming out around that time when all the people on campus are worrying about the new semester, the aftermath of finals, friends, and whatever else. So to combine some relief from the latter with a belated homage to the former, here's an old song from the era by George Asaf and Felix Powell:

*Private Perks is a funny little codger
With a smiiiiile...a funny smiiiiile...
Five foot none, he's an artful little dodger
With a smiiiiile...a funny smiiiiile...
Flush or broke, he'll have his little joke
He can't be suppressed...
All the other fellows have to grin
When he gets-this-off-his-chest. Hie!*

*Pack all your troubles in your old kit bag
And smile...smile...smile...
While you've a lucifer to light your fag*,
Smile, boys, that's the style!
What s...the use of worrying?
It ne-ver-was-worth-while, SO--
Pack all your troubles in your old kit bag
And smile...smile...smile!*

*while you have a lighter or match to light a cigarette
And remember that at least you aren't getting your head blown off by machine-gun fire at Verdun!

Ask a Prof Zachary Dodds



(Photo courtesy of Kevin Renfrow '11).

Dear Professor,

Lately I've been low on energy. Staying awake in classes is tough and I'm just exhausted all the time. However, it seems that you always have so much energy that you might explode! You seem to be enthusiastic all the time. How do you do it?

--Sleepy Student

Dear Sleepy Student,

Having spent ten years at HMC, I have to say that I feel even luckier now to be at so unusual a place than I did during the long-ago days of last millennium. Perhaps this means that all Mudders should stay here for a decade? Or perhaps not. But as I look back at those ten years, I think the reason I feel so lucky boils down to HMC's energy. Certainly that energy has its downsides, and perhaps you've asked yourself a question that I've asked myself many times: "How am I supposed to keep up with this?" Now in a moment of enforced reflection, as I am sitting for the foreseeable future in Pomona's courthouseⁱ, I think I'll try to put together a top-42 list of strategies I've used when struggling to keep up with the pace at Mudd:

Strategy #42: *Skip Things*ⁱⁱ

I consider skipping things to be the hammer in our quiver of HMC-survival strategies. Our school's incentive system is a formidable one -- so formidable, in fact, that I've experienced more than once the Zen-ish insight that, if everything matters (and it does), then so, too, must nothing matter.

A Sarah Lawrence professor, Joseph Campbellⁱⁱⁱ, was notorious for assigning ludicrous quantities of readings to his students. One semester, after a few weeks in one of his courses, students confronted him, pointing out that they had "three other classes of work to complete too!"^{iv} Campbell replied, "The readings? You have your whole life to do the readings. I'm surprised you even tried!" Campbell was a wise guy.

Of course, skipping things might result in a grade-point-average below 4.0. As with many positive habits, *too* much success at this strategy may have other, less positive side effects. However, it's unlikely that you came to HMC in pursuit of a 4.0.^v What's more, this list provides me the chance to put these words into practice:

Strategy #4: *Don't skip things*

Campbell argued that it is our finite time here that provides meaning. So, for my part, I try not to squander all of the meaning I accumulate by following suggestion #42. Even so, I find the *three e's* -- eating, entertainment, and exercise -- to be difficult things not to skip. Compromises must be made.

As for eating, that compromise usually involves chocolate (preferably dark chocolate); for entertainment and exercise, I defer entirely to my kids -- with mixed results. For instance, you might be surprised how one's fifth consecutive episode of Hannah Montana can instill a deep appreciation for LA's recent writers' strike. Also, few things motivate "exercise" like repeatedly being challenged and beaten by a nine-year-old in head-to-head DDR sessions. Even though I need to be shamed into following suggestion #4, I appreciate it nonetheless.

Many times I struggle to reconcile these two seemingly incompatible strategies for staying energized at Mudd. For example, as someone not in Math 55 or Physics 23, I should find it easy to succeed in my attempts to skip those courses' lectures! Yet, when strolling by Professor Townsend's or Professor Benjamin's classrooms, my impulse not to skip things kicks in, and I end up finding myself unexpectedly well-informed about accelerating cats, Catalan numbers, or both.^{vi}

Strategy #3: *Caffeine*

The ability for living things to follow nature's gradients is truly impressive. Bacteria navigate their way to reservoirs of oxygen.^{vii} Left to their own devices, cows turn out to be living compass needles.^{viii} And, as I move around campus (or a classroom), I always find myself drawn in the direction of the nearest Starbucks. Rumor has it that Professor Pippinger exhibits this same *caffeinotropism* -- indeed, I'm grateful that he and President Klawe are converting the old gas station north of Sontag into a high-throughput Starbucks outlet.^{ix}

The example of Montana history professor Kyle Volk intrigues me. In exchange for including menus on his course syllabus, he secured a \$250 sponsorship

from the Missoula restaurant *El Diablo* for his course *Americas: Conquest to Capitalism*.^x I wonder if next year's frosh would mind seeing Starbucks logos in the corner of each of their CS 5 slides?

An HMC graduate from a couple of years ago, Ben Tribelhorn, summed it up this way: "At Mudd I don't feel overworked, just undercaffeinated."

Strategy #2: *Fake energy*

Another energy-maintenance strategy I've tried when particularly undercaffeinated is simply to act energetic. The psychologist-popularized phrase, "fake it to make it," points to our uniquely^{xi} human ability to alter our habits and feelings simply by pretending that they're already changed. While this logic may seem circular to some, after being exposed to the mind-altering effects of recursion for extended periods of time, you too may find it completely natural.

Strategy #1: *HMC People*

More than all these other strategies, it is the people at HMC that energize me the most. After all, if we're susceptible to the self-delusion of strategy #2, then the influence of the very real energy of HMC's community will be that much greater. Of course, Mudd's idiosyncrasies ensure that not everyone will find the place nourishing. But, for students and faculty finding it the right fit,^{xii} HMC's energy is impossibly infectious.

Impossible, because conservation laws seem not to apply: the community's energy sums to more than that of its individuals separately. And infectious, because I find that even when my own energy is at a low, I'm buoyed by the people I'm with.^{xiii} GoCrossCampus's "re-energize" button struck me as an apt metaphor. What's more, it seems to have worked.

As another example, I feel fortunate that throughout the day Judy Hines and Professor Orrison have also been here at the Pomona courthouse.^{xiv} Judy's path through Mudd convinces me that one of the best ways to simultaneously *skip things* and *not skip things* is to go abroad -- although organizing a year in Dublin while at HMC is no small feat! And catching up with Prof. Orrison is another of the countless and constant reminders of why, for me, I hope a decade at HMC is only just the start.

ⁱ In HMC time units "foreseeable" seems to be about eight hours.

ⁱⁱ Note that, in this context, the word "things" does not apply to CS 60, CS 154, the Magnify360 clinic project, or next fall's CS 5 course (gold section).

ⁱⁱⁱ This story is true, or at least stolen from The Power of Myth, by Joseph Campbell and Bill Moyers. The fact that Joseph Campbell is now gone should not weaken the impact of his insights -- unless, that is, it was his students who killed him. I'm unsure about this.

^{iv} Note that, if spoken to an HMC professor, this statement risks reuse at the next faculty meeting's open-mic/improv session.

^v On the other hand, if you did come to HMC to get a 4.0, you should come by my office with your credit card information so that I can help you obtain your rightful share of several third-party escrow-held Albanian bank accounts about which I've recently received email.

^{vi} as just two of many possible examples...

^{vii} Bacteria are not too small for spatial sensing of chemical gradients: An experimental evidence, by the great Danes Roland Thar and Michel Kuhl, 2003. This footnote qualifies this article to be counted toward my publication record -- thank you for your indulgence!

^{viii} Magnetic alignment in grazing and resting cattle and deer; by Sabine Begall et al., Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 8/25/08.

^{ix} Don't let the signs on that new construction fool you -- they are there simply to deflect members of the public who are not part of Starbucks's immediate Chemical-Access-Filtration program, or iCAF.

^x When censured by the University of Montana, Prof. Volk claimed the devil had made him do it. And I can only guess how much the state is paying Hannah...

^{xi} I admit that I have conferred with no non-humans in making this statement.

^{xii} Admittedly it is largely out of self-interest, but I am a strong advocate that there should not be a stigma attached to finding Mudd a good fit!

^{xiii} It is a bit worrying that phenomena that are too infectious become deadly.

^{xiv} No claims of mutuality of feelings are being made!

contributing muddraker

staff

Advisor

Dean Chris Sundberg

Editors-in-Chief

Michael Ho '10

Ben Keller '10

Layout Design

Hayden Hatch '12

Michael Ho '10

Jason Wang '10

Editors

Patrick Eschenfeldt '12

Sam Ettinger '12

Sean Laguna '12

Michael Nevarez '12

Contributing Writers

Andrew Chung '10

Professor Zachary Dodds

Sam Ettinger '12

Patrick Foley '09

Ben Keller '10

Sean Laguna '12

Susan Tan '12

Kevin Tham '12

Photographers

Lilian de Greef '12

Angus Ho '10

Kevin Renfrow '11

Graphics

Hayden Hatch '12

We want your letters to the editor! Send them to muddraker@gmail.com. Questions, comments, and corrections also welcome.