

The Muddraker

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What Happened to the Smoothie Man?

BY BRIANNA POSADAS '13

On November 2, 2010, all students, faculty and staff were notified by email that Raul Oliveros, a Dining Services employee, was terminated from his job for threatening a supervisor. The November 5, 2010 issue of *The Student Life* confirmed the menacing image of Raul and legitimized the defamation of character by only quoting the man responsible for his termination. The entire Mudd community was in shock; how could this man, a shy, unassuming man, be a major threat to our campus? Though students have flooded management offices for answers, no satisfying explanations have been given. The circumstances of his termination were suspicious, and no outlet has told Raul's side of the story, until now.

Raul Oliveros was born in Michocan, Mexico. He lived there through high school with his five sisters and five brothers. When one of his brothers passed away, his mother and two of his sisters immigrated to the United States and moved to Fontana. Raul soon began to work at Harvey Mudd College with the encouragement of his sister. He has worked at the dining hall for fourteen years. While at the college, he worked with the stocks and only a couple years ago was moved up to the smoothie line. Raul had a great rapport with the students. It was through them he learned about the engineering department's E8 Tools course. It is his dream to take a course like Tools either at Mudd or at another institute to build upon the skills he acquired in Mexico in metal work.

It is not clear why Raul was terminated; the story continues to change. In an interview with an administrator of the dining hall, it was revealed that Raul threatened to bring a firearm and use it against the General Manager. The employees of the dining hall heard different stories as well.

According to one source, Raul said "if you think I will bring a weapon and start shooting, I am not that dumb." Another story has Raul saying "I will fight this with all the weapons I have." And the version that I personally heard from yet another employee shortly after the incident was "if you don't take care of this, I will myself."



Raul Oliveros (far right) with his family.

As it was explained to the employees by management, it was a key phrase, whatever it actually was, that was the cornerstone to Raul's termination. The management even went as far as to tell the employees that the investigation was meaningless because there was enough of a case against Raul to terminate him.

Raul's Story

This is Raul's account of those three days before he was terminated. On Friday
Smoothie Man, continued on page 3

REBUTTAL BY ANDREW DORANTES, VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

The article "What Happened to the Smoothie Man?" written by Brianna Posadas contains some errors and a picture of events that is not consistent with what occurred, and I want to take a moment to clarify the situation. I invited the author and *Muddraker* editor to meet with me to

fortunate when any College employee's employment is terminated. It is not, however, our policy or practice to publically discuss individual personnel actions and for that reason we will not provide further details regarding this individual's termination.

The article also comments on issues related to the operations of the Dining Commons. The following paragraphs respond to these comments.

The article mentions that part-time employees work a maximum of 20 hours. Part-time employees may work less or more than 20 hours a week. Regular part-time employees who are scheduled to work 20 or more hours per week are eligible for health insurance and other benefits and, with the exception of long-term disability and long-term care, receive the same benefits as full-time employees. Employees frequently request to work additional hours, and there are times when management asks them to work extra hours; however, if they cannot, they are not forced to do so. All California laws on overtime compensation are strictly followed.

The College contracts with Sodexo for management services; employing a general manager, catering manager and an executive chef. The remaining employees who work in the Dining Commons are HMC employees. These employees are valuable members of our community and are treated as such. Dining Services employees enjoy the same generous benefits afforded to faculty and senior leadership (e.g. 50% dependent scholarship benefits, 12% retirement plan contributions, health and related benefits, and generous vacation benefits).

Smoothie Man rebuttal, continued on page 3

The Flex Debate

BY RAY HURWITZ '14

Do you like the current Flex system? Do you know any Mudders who like the current Flex system? Did you know that students at the other 4 C's get their Flex in a lump sum to use at their discretion throughout the semester?

Each Mudder gets a weekly allotment of flex that expires when the week ends. You get the same amount of flex dollars per week as you do meals per week. At the other 4 C's, students receive a lump sum of 10x the amount of meals per week to use through the semester. This semester is 16 weeks long, so a student on the 12-meal plan at HMC receives \$192 in flex during this semester. Each week, \$12 is subtracted from the total regardless of whether it

is used or not and no more than \$12 can be used in a given week. At the other colleges, a student on the 12-meal plan receives a lump sum of \$120 in flex during this semester. However this amount can be budgeted at the student's discretion.

Obviously the ideal solution for students, although certainly not the administration, would be to keep the \$192 amount, but instead receive it in a lump sum. However, that does not appear to be an option at this point. For those on the 8-meal plan, would you turn down an additional \$48 of possible flex to get a guaranteed \$80 in flex to be used freely throughout the semester? For those on the 12-meal plan, would you turn down an additional \$72

of possible flex to get a guaranteed \$120 in flex to be used freely throughout the semester? For those on the 16-meal plan, would you turn down an additional \$94 of possible flex to get a guaranteed \$160 in flex to be used freely throughout the semester?

In my eyes, most students at HMC are under the impression that the other 4 C's receive the same amount of the flex that we do, only in a lump sum instead. But we now know that this is not the case, and the new debate becomes much less one-sided. Joe Agajanian '14 says he would rather stay with the current system in order to maintain a higher flex total. However, Jake Bouricius '11 prefers the lump sum system

so he can budget his money throughout the course of the semester. In a *Muddraker* poll asking which system students preferred, 288 out of 418 students favored the current system, while only 130 students preferred the other system. This amounts to about a 70/30 split of the polled student body. Flex is a fairly integrated part of our lives here at Mudd because of it's diverse functionality. Who doesn't love a late night excursion to the Muddhole or some sweet Challah on Thursday? Maybe sometime in the future we can find a compromise with the administration in order to give students more freedom in choosing their flex plans.

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Kevin Samrick



sontag



Mira De Avila-Shin

case



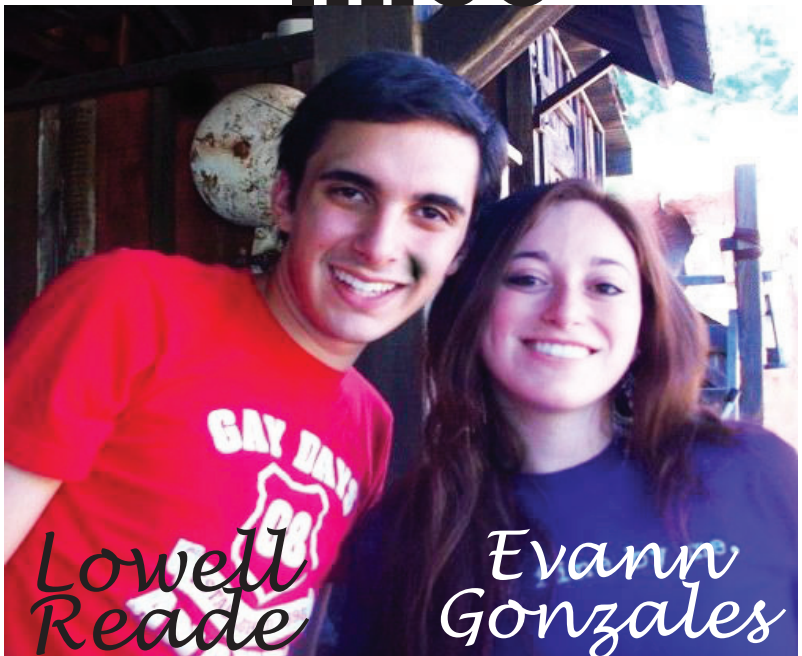
Alix Chan
Mary Van Vleet

atwood



Sri Nayak
Nick Hill

linde



Lowell Reade
Evann Gonzales

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West

Divina Allen
Alice Paul

East

Sidra Hussain
Bryan Visser

North

Emily Ross
Liya Temin

South

Miranda Parker
Jeep Srisuknimit

Sontag

Malous Kossarian
Garrett Wong

Case

Johnathan Chai
Lilian de Greef
Sarah Ferraro
Michael Morton

Atwood

Crystal Bong
Hannah Groshong
Garrett Menghini
Katie Shepherd

Linde

Chris Abella
Kiley Sobel

The Engineering of E11

By Shreyasha PauDEL '14

On November 22, 2010, the students and the faculty at Mudd gathered in Galileo McAlister to participate in a game of Capture the Flag, played by autonomous vehicles. This was the final design competition for the new freshman elective E11: Autonomous Vehicles where incoming freshman learned the basics of electrical and mechanical engineering and design an autonomous vehicle.

This was the first time the freshmen were taking an engineering course in their pass/fail semester. “Our objective in introducing the course was to give a taste of what engineers and computer scientists do to the students,” said Professor David Harris about the course. And with the labs ranging from circuit soldering, CAD design, machine shop and C programming, the course

does just that. According to Prof Harris, many of the students in the class had little or no prior experience with electronics, programming, CAD, or the machine shop, but by the end of the course they had successfully designed their own mobile robots and in fact added an extra physical modification of their own. Anyone who attended the final competition in Galileo will remember the intimidating robot which shot bullets to capture the beacon.

Another important aspect of this class was that two students Madeline Ong’11 and Matthew Keeter’11 helped design the curriculum over the summer and were a part of the teaching team throughout the course. “Maddy and Matt were awesome,” said a freshman who took the course. Prof Harris agrees. He further adds, “Maddy and

Matt worked really hard. They spent the past summer inventing the robots, writing the labs, and developing the competition. They served as section instructors and learned how it felt to stand on the other side of the classroom.” When asked about her experience, Madeline Ong said, “this class was a gold mine for me. Developing it, I got to pull from both my chemical and computer engineering background. While it was plenty of effort on the teaching staff’s side to pull it off, I feel confident stating the class was a success.” Matthew Keeter, Ong’s partner in crime, adds “the students generally did a great job in the course, and a few groups went far above and beyond our expectations in the final project this made the final game a lot of fun to watch and moderate.”

However, there still is a lot of work to be done to improve the class. Currently some of the freshmen who took the course last semester are working to improve the robot hardware and revise the lab for next year. According to Joshua Vasquez ’14 who is in the E11 improvement team right now, they are changing a lot of the features of the course. Joshua adds, “We’ve planned to spin a new printed circuit board with added features, we’re testing new sensors and machining new components to house them, and we’re rebuilding the fuel cell from the ground up!. We’ve taken the course; now, we’re aiming to make it more thrilling and user-friendly for next year’s round of Freshman.” From the looks of the things, there will definitely be some cool robot competitions from E11 in the years to come.

Smoothie Man, continued from front page

October 29, 2010, Raul had a conversation with the General Manager (GM) to complain about another coworker who hit him with her cart everyday. Raul had had enough and wanted the GM to help him. The GM told Raul to think about it. Raul did not understand why this issue did not warrant immediate investigation. The GM then asked him, “if I don’t do anything, what are you going to do about it?” Raul responded “if you don’t do anything about it, I will.” The GM responded, “I can take that as a threat” to which Raul said “you are going to take it however you want to. That is your opinion.”

On Monday November 1, 2010, Raul was about to clock out for the day when he received a phone call from the GM telling him to clock back in because he wanted to talk to Raul. Raul came to the GM’s office where both the GM and the assistant GM (AGM) were there. The GM asked Raul to repeat what he had told him on Friday. There was no note taking or recording of the conversation to Raul’s knowledge. The GM asked Raul what he meant by his comment “If you don’t do anything, I will.” Raul turned to the AGM and asked “what would I do? Do you want me to remind you what I have done in the past” to which she responded “You have gone to Human Resources and filled complaints.” The GM continued to grill Raul. Raul then told the GM: “I am not going to bring something to handle the situation, I am not dumb enough to dirty my hands.” Raul was then dismissed after being reassured that everything was fine. That night Raul received a phone call that he was suspended. About an hour after that phone call a police report was filled against him.

On Tuesday, November 2nd at 4:34 pm Raul received another phone call informing him of his termination, communicating his ban from campus, and asking him to come back to campus before 5:30 pm to get his things. Raul never came and received numerous phone calls in the next few days beckoning him to campus to pick up his possessions and to speak to the administrator. To each request, Raul responded that he could not step foot on campus because he was banned and anything that needed to be said could be submitted to him in writing. The administrator kept reassuring Raul that the police would not be called, but another coworker eventually brought Raul his belongings.

Raul never received a termination letter. Raul was never told what it was in Harvey

Mudd’s policy that he violated that lead to his termination. According to Harvey Mudd’s Discriminatory Harassment Policy, the only policy on Harvey Mudd’s website that mentions violence and threats, the college had 30 days to complete an investigation of the situation; the investigation took two days. The policy also states that Raul should have been “informed of the complaint and the identity of the complainant and shall be provided a copy of the complaint. During the investigation, [Raul should] be accorded a full opportunity to respond to the complaint, either verbally or in writing.” This policy was not followed; Raul had no participation in the investigation except for the brief conversation he had with the GM who failed to inform him that there was an investigation against him.

Other Dining Hall Employees

Since Raul has been terminated, the dining hall has been chaotic. The employees are having a difficult time making up for the loss of hands. In an interview with an administrator we, a small group of students, brought up issues that the dining hall employees had addressed to us. The employees wish to remain anonymous for fear of losing their jobs. Here are their complaints, and the administrator’s responses to them.

In the three months since he has been gone, his position has not been posted as available. Instead of hiring more workers, management shifts their workers wherever they need them without consideration for hours worked or availability. The administration claims this is not true and they are making up for the lack of hands by hiring temporary workers. According to a group of employees that I have been meeting with, these “temporary workers” are the regular workers who are being moved from their permanent positions and “temporarily” placed at another. A different employee is then moved to “temporarily” replace the worker that had just been moved and a continuous chain reaction ensues. When employees complain about the double work they have to do, they are simply reassured to just “do the best you can.” The administrator claims that part-time employees work a max of 20 hours; anyone who works over 20 hours receive full benefits. The part-time employees, who are suppose to work a maximum of 20 hours a week, instead work the standard 37.5-40 hours a week, but that extra time is not considered overtime, but rather

“on-call” time. These employees, who regularly work “on-call” are receiving no benefits whatsoever. All this shuffling around and temporary work is making the dining hall very disorganized. As many of us have noticed, the smoothie line itself gets back up, especially at 9 am on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The employees try their hardest to move the line and make sure no student leaves hungry, but they notice students walking away because they just do not have the time to wait in line. Due to student complaints, the management has decided to move the smoothie line to the main event station to be closer to a sink. Senior employees are being overlooked for promotions because of unfair promotion policies. When workers interact with students, management forges excuses to come over and eavesdrop on the conversations. The employee handbook and other written communication between employees and management are done in English, even though many of the workers cannot read English. Requests to have these communications translated into Spanish have been dealt with slowly. Management claims that they are in the process of revising the the handbook, and the revised one will be available in Spanish as well as English, but the revisions will take a long time.

Sodexo

All of these issues can trace their origin to Sodexo. Sodexo is the company the managers are employed through, while the employees are hired by the college. Sodexo has a long history at the Claremont Colleges and throughout the nation for mistreating employees and receiving kick backs. Pomona College has recently removed Sodexo from their campus, and the managers are now hired through the campus. In the November 5th issue of Scripps’ newspaper, *Voice*, it was revealed that Sodexo had a history of “racial discrimination, insufficient health care and unlawful firing” at colleges across the country. In New York, the company was sued for receiving kick backs from General Mills. Sodexo has been recently removed from the University of California, Santa Cruz. There is a nation-wide campaign called “Kick Sodexo Out!” run by the United Students Against Sweatshops to remove Sodexo from university campus and have the administration listen to the students demand for a contractor that will treat their workers with respect and dignity. (For more information, see [\[outsodexo.usas.org/\]\(http://outsodexo.usas.org/\)\) The employees have tried to reach the president to discuss their issues with Sodexo and the management but have consistently been redirected to the administrator positioned in the dining hall. The employees have been told that if things are not fixed through the VP, that only then can they address the president.](http://kick-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Deju Vu

Nine years ago, when another employee of Mudd’s dining hall was unfairly terminated, the students rallied and were able to get her her job back with severance pay within two months. The General Manager responsible for her termination was removed. The Assistant Manager at the time, who was also responsible for her termination, was not removed and still works at the dining hall today. This Assistant Manager was also involved in the termination of Raul Oliveros. The complaints of the employees then completely mirror the complaints the employees have now. According to the May 7, 2002 issue of *The Collage*, Harvey Mudd’s employees “have complained about receiving a lack of respect from the managers, extreme favoritism, and unfair scheduling.” One of the solutions proposed was a “closer connection with Sodexo, the company that hires the managers and the head chef.”

Raul’s Current Situation

Since Raul has lost his job, he has been unable to get another one. Though management claims the report they filled with Claremont police will not black-list him from other positions, he has still been unable to find work. Raul has not been collecting unemployment because he was unaware that he qualified. He received no termination letter where his unemployment qualifications would have been addressed. Raul was financially supporting a niece and nephew through school, a relative with a heart murmur, and a close friend and another relative battling cancer. It has been really hard on Raul not being able to support the ones he loves as he once did.

All of us recognize what a big part of the community Raul was. If you had not seen him in the dining hall when you were getting your morning smoothie, you had undoubtedly seen him around campus, reading in the LAC, or at the parties where he bartended. It is a great tragedy that an employee, who had such an exemplary record for fourteen years, can be terminated within a few days and dismissed from our campus without a second thought.

issues with Miguel Ruvalcaba, General Manager, who is open to student input.

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Smoothie Man rebuttal, continued from front page

Dining Services employees have had and continue to have opportunities to meet either individually or in a group with me and HMC’s Human Resources staff, as well as the General Manager of Dining Services, to present their issues and concerns so that we can work together to address them. I am fluent in English and Spanish and have personally met individually with each employee on more than one occasion to listen to his or her thoughts and

concerns. I make it a point to be available to Dining Services employees on an ongoing basis. As a result of meeting with Dining Services employees, we have made and continue to make numerous changes, including providing additional resources and tools. About two years ago, we began frequent (no less than quarterly) bilingual meetings between Dining Services employees and senior HMC leadership (either myself or the Assistant Vice Presi-

dent for Human Resources) to make sure their voice is being heard. Also, we are in the process of updating our employee handbook and, once the update is complete, it will be translated into Spanish. We will continue to offer more services and policies in Spanish, as we have been doing over the last two years.

I would be happy to speak with students who are interested in Dining Services. I also encourage them to discuss

ASHMC for All

By JOHNATHAN CHAI '13

Our student body government, the Associated Students of Harvey Mudd College (ASHMC), has actively been planning events and thinking of better ways to serve everyone. Student leaders want to be more visible and hear feedback directly from the Mudd population. ASHMC is planning a “Meet the Neighbors” event, where local Claremont residents will be invited onto the lawn in front of the LAC. The goal is to encourage casual and friendly conversation between students and our community members. This type of event has been held successfully on campus in the past.

Last semester, ASHMC approved Duck!, an improv club and the Underwater Robotics Club. Both clubs have started strong and have accomplished a lot in a short amount of time. Hufsa Ahmad, ASHMC President, appreciated the open attitude

of Duck! and how encouraging the members were to new students who wanted to learn improv. The Underwater Robotics Club started working on campus over winter break and has already built a swimming robot. ASHMC funding for clubs is in good shape because during budgeting last semester, clubs were given ample funds so that they do not have to ask for more money in the future. Another exciting and upcoming event is the Club Festival, which will showcase the various clubs at Mudd. Unlike the Club Fair, this festival is aimed to be more interactive and not focused on recruiting members. Both old and new clubs should benefit from the publicity; perhaps raising more awareness of their cause or attracting new members.

Hufsa has also created an ASHMC calendar and twitter feed (http://twitter.com/ashmc_updates). At



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATIE HAUSER '13

the moment, the calendar is empty because clubs have not been posting their events but she hopes that next year it will become more active. In a recent tweet, Hufsa wrote: “I (the President) just got kicked out of my own meeting. They’ve been talking about me for like 5 minutes and I am super nervous.”

The Secret of the Bookstore Bears

By MATTHEW GOODWIN '13

I have always been terrible at buying other people gifts. Presents I have given in the past have often been described with such wonderful adjectives as “thoughtless,” “ugly,” and “chewy.” Once I arrived at college I thought this would all change; after all I could just stop by the bookstore and pick up some sweet Harvey Mudd merchandise. Not only would it be something that only I could get, it would be borderline exotic for the people I know back home (most people in Florida still think Mudd is some sort community college). Before I came back home for winter break my freshman year, I picked up a Mudd shirt for my brother and one of those little stuffed bears that expound the fact you know someone who goes somewhere on their shirts.

When I got home I proudly delivered my gifts. Shortly after, my little sister came to me holding her bear. “What’s this hole for?” she asked. I wasn’t aware of a hole when I bought the bear but sure enough at the bottom of one of the bear’s feet there was a hole, although it was more of

a pouch than a hole. Upon further inspection I found that the hole had a Velcro clasp in it to keep it shut yet it didn’t seem to be in anyway important to the structure of the bear. Not only was it was very much a compartment, but it was a mysterious compartment – the best kind.

Many times I have pondered what this hole could be for: is it just an odd artifact from the manufacturing plant in Thailand or something more? That “something more” part is what continued to captivate me. Yes, this pouch could be absolutely nothing but it opens a gateway to so many interesting somethings. Perhaps these pouched bears (does that make them marsupials?) are part of something innocent like an initiative to increase pockets among the public (everyone can use more pockets). On the other hand it could be something far more sinister. These pockets could be used by international cartels to smuggle various types of contraband across borders. After all it would not be the first time that Mudd, in some form or another, has been involved in illicit sub-

stances (I’m thinking of the Methamphetamine Lab bust in Atwood circa 1986). Could the bears be disguises for foreign government-planted bugs so they can spy on our friends and family? Maybe I didn’t look hard enough and perhaps a little bit further in there was decoder ring that would lead me on a National Treasure-esque hunt to find Harvey Mudd’s buried gold. Before I headed home this break, almost a year till they day I had first been captivated by this mystery, my sister called and told me she had figured out what the hole was for, but she insisted I’d have to see it to believe it. On my way home I couldn’t stop thinking of what my eight-year-old sister had figured out that I couldn’t piece together. When I arrived home, I begged her to show me. She calmly took me to her room. “Look” she said as she gave it three shakes. From the compartment fell a few multicolored tablets. My thoughts started to race as to what just happened. Were they precious stones, maybe they were drugs, I really didn’t know. She then turned to me as I hung waiting for her to

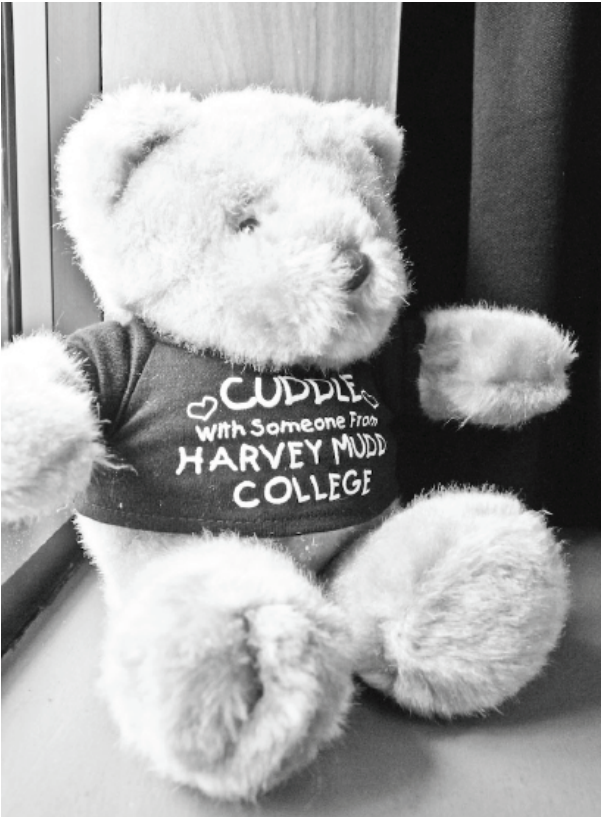


PHOTO COURTESY OF KATIE HAUSER '13

explain what just happened. Unfazed, she picked one up and stuffed it in her mouth. Then through her chewing she revealed the bear’s secret: “It holds your Skittles.”



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Truth Values: One Girl’s Romp Through the MIT Math Maze

By BRIDGETTE EICHELBERGER ’14

Gioia De Cari gave a one-woman show-stopping performance in Truth Values: One Girl’s Romp Through the MIT Math Maze at Scripps’ Garrison Theater on February 11th.

And romp she did. De Cari started the play wearing a pantsuit and her trademark leopard print heels, but soon ditched the jacket and the shoes in order to impersonate the colorful characters that populated her experience at MIT’s graduate school. She gave a scrunched face and wheeze to the headache-prone professor, a thick Indian accent to her colleague Paulo, and a droning voice and cocked hip to her friend Shirley. De Cari relied solely on her acting and storytelling abilities to keep the audience engaged; the only props she used were a plain chair and end table.

De Cari started her academic career in Berkley, “a place so liberal that I thought the woman’s movement had done its work. Thanks, Gloria- what was her last name? Steinem?” Young, freshly married and idealistic, De Cari decided to attend MIT. Marching zealously across the stage, she proclaimed, “I was off to earn myself a PhD from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology!”

When De Cari arrived at MIT, she had several obstacles to contend with. “I was given an office in the basement of building two,” By way of explanation, she added, “they don’t name the buildings at MIT, they number them.” When De Cari finally found her shared office, she learned that among her coworkers, she “was the only woman, the only American, and, unfortunately, the only one that bathed.” In fact, De Cari was one of the few women who

were pursuing a PhD in 18. “18 means math,” she sighed. “They don’t name the majors at MIT, either.”

De Cari quickly decided that the very masculine look the other women at MIT donned was not for her. “Pouring all my curves into guy style clothes was topologically impossible,” she explained, turning from side to side. As a way to express herself, De Cari began a series of ‘fashion experiments,’ rated on a 1-10 scale of how much controversy the clothes inspired among the stuffy MIT males.

“My Princess Di look was a six. I needed a control group.”

“My miniskirt was a nine,” De Cari said, voice rising with glee.

“And my denim dress with six zippers was a ten!” she crowed.

While working on a thesis for her doctorate, De Cari discovered that she loved acting. So, she made a deal with herself: “I would set a timer for three hours in the morning to work on my math, and as long as I did that, I could do whatever else I wanted... but no math, no theater.” When she acted, De Cari “felt like an astronaut moonlighting as a stripper.” Her more risqué theater jobs “I was held aloft by two half naked slave men” contrasted with the image of the ideal female mathematician. Acting was her passion, but she was reluctant to give up all of her work in mathematics.

In the end, Gioia De Cari overcame the pronounced bias against women, the death of her father, and health concerns to receive a master of science degree from MIT.

After the play, a panel discussion fea-

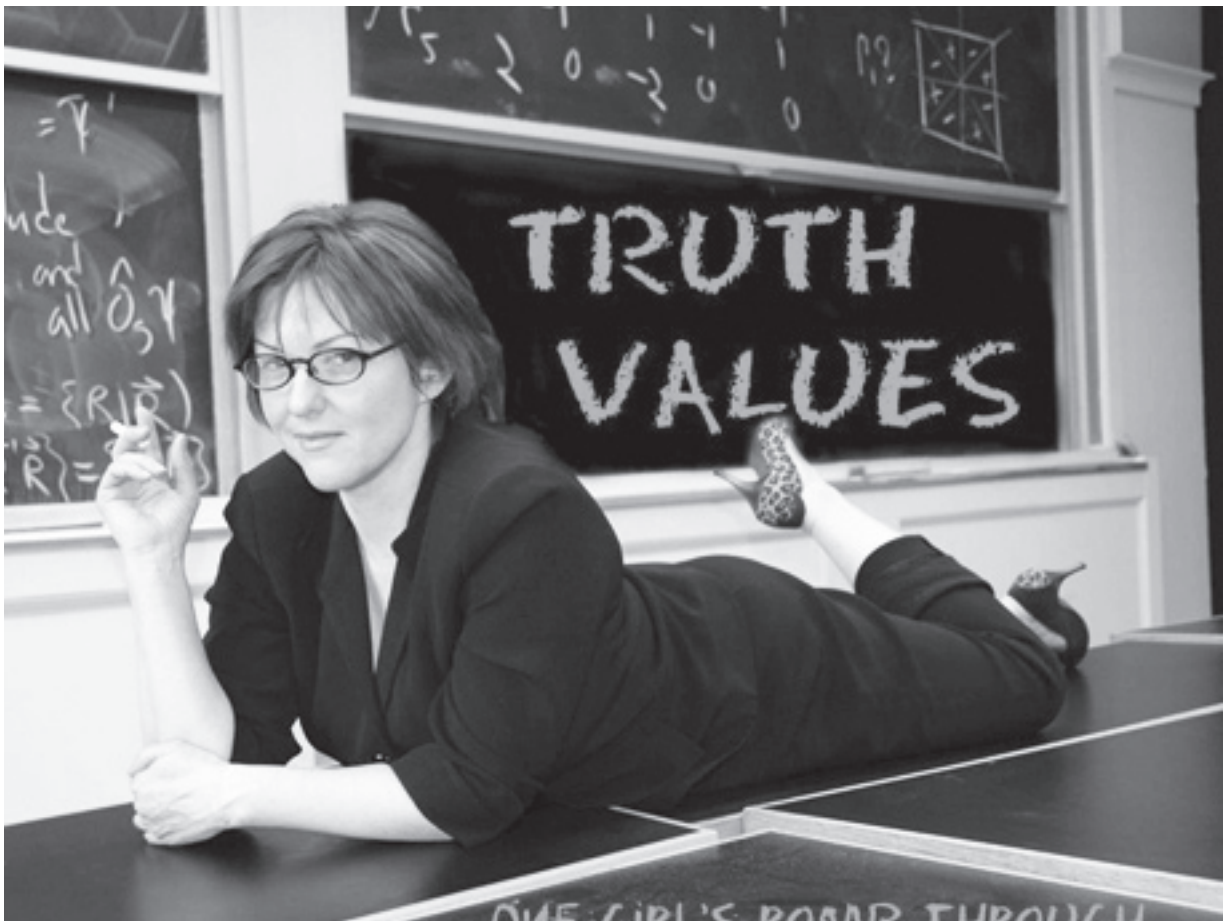


PHOTO COURTESY OF HARVEY MUDD COLLEGE

turing Gioia De Cari, Jennifer Lindsay, Rachel Levy, and Sarah Warkentin began.

Naturally, Gioia was asked about the fates of her friends Sandy and Paulo. “The characters in my play are composite and fictionalized,” she replied. “The women I knew almost all dropped out. I did reconnect with one, in Boston. She’s still into math...went into strictly teaching. She felt bad about herself because she felt real mathematicians did research.”

In Professor Levy’s opening remarks, she addressed false perceptions of high-level mathematics. “If you have to work hard at something, then you’re not good

at it, and if you’re not the best, then you don’t deserve to go into that as a career.” She also shared some words of wisdom for parents: “You want to teach [your children] that some people are turkeys. It’s true for girls and boys...we all occupy this world together, we all work together.”

Jennifer Lindsay and Sarah Warkentin, both alumna of Harvey Mudd College, agreed that although their personal experiences were not as bad as Gioia De Cari’s, the college has seen marked improvements in gender equality. Harvey Mudd’s Class of 2014 is the first class that has more women enrolled than men.

Arab Film Festival Screens ‘Captain Abu Raed’

By SNEHA VISWANATHAN ’14

On Friday, February 4, the Scripps Arab Film Festival screened the first of its four films, ‘Captain Abu Raed.’ As I sat in the Humanities auditorium sipping the complimentary mint tea that the hosts offered to all attendees, I was introduced to the daily routine of the fictional Abu Raed, a janitor at the Amman airport who suspends his humility for a few hours each day to inspire children in his working-class neighborhood to broaden their horizons. He acts as a pilot and regales the children with tales of his trans-continental travels while Murad, a mistreated child who lives next door to Abu Raed, watches sourly. The film introduces a second storyline that eventually merges with Abu Raed’s life; this one focuses on Nour, a wealthy pilot in her thirties who is jaded by cultural and familial pressure to find a good husband. When her car breaks down, Nour is forced to take the bus from the airport to her house. On the bus, she meets Abu Raed, who piques her interest with his focused reading. The two start a conversation about books, which leads to a friendship marked by deep mutual respect. Nights for Abu Raed are punctuated by sounds of violence and shouts from Murad’s father next door. Murad, in an anguished effort to break down Abu Raed’s tall tales, attempts to inform the other children of Abu Raed’s true profession. After his initial attempts to intimidate his peers fail, he convinces two of his friends to come to the airport with him. Through a bustling crowd, they see for the first time that Abu Raed is not a pilot, but a janitor. Instead of reprimanding Murad, Abu Raed reaches out to Murad by giving him a gift that he received as a token of appreciation from a traveler. Eventually, Murad warms up to Abu Raed. Through this newfound trust, Abu Raed is able to console Murad and enlists the help of Nour to help Murad, his brother, and his mother to escape from Murad’s father.

‘Captain Abu Raed’ is a reflection on class, gender, and age differences in Jordanian culture. Though Abu Raed comes from a working-class background, his desire to maintain his self-respect as an elderly man is apparent in several facets of his life. He takes pride in his years of hard work, his collection of books, and in his ability to interact with different types of people. In a metaphorical sense, Abu Raed truly travels the world through his brief yet heartfelt exchanges with travelers from various parts of the world at the airport. The viewer does not define Abu Raed by his job but instead respects him for his kind actions and intellectual capabilities, such as dabbling in several languages. These traits also engage his friendship with Nour; a relationship

that at first seems to border on flirtation. Despite her social upbringing, Nour is able to admire and feel affection for a working-class old man like Abu Raed because of his quietly projected dignity. This poise is sharply contrasted with Abu Raed’s alcoholic neighbor (Murad’s father)’s angry and violent temperament. The contrast is emphasized by the cinematography; the interior of Murad’s house is a shadowy bluish-gray, while Abu Raed’s house is filled with calm hues of pale orange and yellow. The viewer is left to wonder why two men living next to each other with the same economic means have vastly differing habits and personalities. Perhaps Murad’s father feels forced to succumb to the social expectation that men should be able to single-handedly support their families. He barely has the resources to accomplish this task, but his pride will not let him believe that providing for a family alone is beyond his capabilities. The conflict between his prideful ideal and real life results in bitterness and rage that he takes out on his family. The difference between Nour and Murad’s mother’s characters is also glaringly obvious, as demonstrated by the indignant look Murad’s mother flashes at Nour when they first see each other outside Abu Raed’s house. Since she was raised in a rich family, Nour received the education necessary to be financially independent. However, Murad’s mother can only depend on her husband’s income, and is therefore trapped in his household. Additionally, the film explores the importance of male role models in Jordanian culture. Abu Raed mourns the loss of his only son several years earlier; with this loss, he also gave up his position as a role model. He compensates by taking up a father-figure role once again when he begins telling the neighborhood children stories of his “travels” and by making sacrifices along the way to help them stay in school. Murad’s initial resentment toward Abu Raed also stems from the fact that he had trouble accepting his own father as a role model. Murad was jealous of Abu Raed’s newfound status in the eyes of his peers compared with the neighborhood’s perception of his father. Abu Raed recognizes Murad’s confusion and realizes the importance of being Murad’s caregiver.

By exploring Jordanian culture through the daily actions of a humble old man, ‘Captain Abu Raed’ illustrates that human capacity for empathy and friendship can overcome differences in social status, age, and the hardships caused by surrounding circumstances.

LAC Introduces New Bike Program

By JOHNATHAN CHAI ’13

You might have noticed the new fleet of blue bikes at the Linde Activities Center. These bikes are part of the LAC Mudderbike program, which was started to provide Mudders transportation to the other Claremont Colleges and local area. As the old set of bikes became worn out, the LAC decided to replace them with a new set of wheels and accom-

panying U-locks. The higher quality bikes need maintenance and repair, so the LAC has also hired mechanics. The mechanics are on a personalized weekly schedule and check up on the bikes in a newly built shed in Linde.

Changes to the Mudderbikes were inspired by Pitzer College’s Green Bike Program (GBP). The GBP also

loans students bikes at no cost to promote environmentally friendly transportation. GBP collects abandoned bikes to refurbish and raffle off for free. Additionally, students, staff, and faculty of all the Claremont Colleges can get a bike repaired at their shop, located between the Gold Student Center and Atherton Hall.



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATIE HAUSER ’13

Ask a Prof



“Ask a Prof” is a regular section of the Muddraker. Here, you’ll be given the chance to anonymously ask professors whatever you’d like. We’ll be rotating professors for every issue.

INTERVIEW BY BEVERLY YEH ’13

What has changed at Mudd since you were a student here? Would you change anything else?

“The first things that popped into my head were the physical changes - several new buildings, the most prominent of which is the recreation center. In my mind it is still a very large patch of grassy area (that used to get filled with snow during Noisy Minutes so we could all roll down the small hill). I remember the planting ceremony for the tree in front of Platt (in honor of Prof. Spacapan) that is now taller than the building. The food at the Hoch is also orders of magnitude better than the food was my first couple of years here.

As far as student life, I don’t believe all that much has changed. When I walk the corridors, I see people who look like people I used to know here. I see students walking down the hallway intently reading a book titled ‘Quantum Physics’, and I walk by and hear conversations that invariably involve ‘pi’ at some point. The more things change, the more they stay the same.”

Which dorm(s) did you live in? What the most memorable experience you had at Mudd?

“I lived in Linde my first two years (do they still shout ‘Ron is the sausage king?’), and then South my last two (alas South dorm does not apparently shout ‘Apathy, Apathy, Apathy, Joy, Joy, Joy!’ to end their dorm meetings). While most students who hear that today are amazed by the juxtaposition, it was not as stark when I was in Linde. I moved in as a freshman when the dorm was brand new, so new in fact, that they were still working out the kinks. I remember that some genius who designed the building did not properly insulate the cold water pipes, and didn’t apparently realize that we live in the desert here. The effect of this was that for our first three weeks in the dorm, when you flushed the toilets they steamed (think about the effects of that for a moment) and when you took a shower, you turned it to ‘hot’

because it was colder than ‘cold’.

I don’t particularly have one defining moment that I remember from Harvey Mudd (aside from the moment I realized that almost 20% of all of my units at Harvey Mudd were with Prof. Van Hecke). Mudd was a great experience all around. I was at a high school recruiting event once for the admissions office, and I was at the table with another alumni. When my wife came over to chat with him, he pointed over to me and said “I talk about Harvey Mudd, but your husband evangelizes.” That’s how Harvey Mudd sticks in my brain.”

What inspired you to study chemistry? What would you be doing if you weren’t a chemistry professor?

I wanted to be a chemist ever since high school Chemistry. That class was by far the hardest and most challenging class in high school, and the experience was rewarding enough to make me keep going. Once I arrived here, however, I toyed with the ideas of Math, Physics and Computer Science as majors. Funny enough, if you look at my professional history, I’ve worked in Chemistry, Physics, Computer Science, and done quite a bit of Math in doing so.

As to what I’d do if I was not a chemistry professor, if I had my druthers, I’d be a stay-at-home dad and do some consulting work on the side for fun. I love hanging out with my kids, playing with them, and watching them grow. They’ll never be little again, and on some days it makes me sad to be missing most of it.”

Which teachers did you have at Mudd who are still here? Are any of your upperclassmen or classmates professors at Mudd now?

“I already mentioned Prof. Van Hecke, but a good number of the professors I had are still here. I’m not THAT old.

There are a few people I knew at Mudd who are professors now, but I didn’t know them all that well while at Mudd.”

Prof. Todd Clements



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATIE HAUSER ’13

If you set up a chemistry lab at Mudd, what would you do research in?

“That’s a great question, and I’m never entirely sure of the answer. One of the great things about coming out of Mudd is that I knew a little bit about everything. It’s allowed me to take jobs where I made micron scale infrared displays, or worked with high-powered acoustics to punch holes in clouds, or mixed some chemistry and physics to detect femtogram quantities of materials. On the flip side, I often cannot accurately describe what my “field” is because it has been so varied, and I’ve loved every part of it. Certainly whatever research I do would end up mixing Chemistry, Physics, and computer software and hardware. I get antsy if I’m limited to one field for too long!”

A rhino is charging at you at the speed of (3/5)c with mechanical pencils for its horns. Unfortunately, you are glued to the floor by some unidentified chemical substance. Quick! What do you do in this situation?

“Well, considering you are giving me time to do something, that means the rhino is starting off awfully far away. So most likely I would register surprise in finally seeing a rhino charging at (3/5) c instead of just solving physics problems involving it before I was instantaneously reduced to my constituent components.

Alternatively, I would answer that it is a trick question, because rhinos charging at (3/5) c ALWAYS charge on a frictionless surface, so I certainly could not have gotten stuck on it.”

Mudd Security Blotter

By Dean
Chris Sundberg

Howdy and welcome to another edition of the Mudd Security Blotter. We have had some problems with theft, unleashed dogs, and broken water lines so far this month so let’s get right to it:

February 2

“An HMC maintenance worker advised that there were 2 subjects taking avocados from the back of The Garrett House. One of the subjects had a grey beard and was last seen on Platt Blvd. carrying a yellow fruit picker.” Campus Safety arrived only to find the petty thief with the yellow fruit picker was gone on arrival or GOA in Campus Safetyspeak. Students have been warned to BOLO or, “be on the lookout” for a grey-bearded man with a yellow picker and a lust for guacamole.

February 3

“A student requested assistance, advising that there is a male subject with 2 unleashed dogs (unleashed dogs are not OK on campus) walking through campus in the area of Linde Hall.” Campus Safety was unable to locate (UTL) the individual. If you see folks with unleashed dogs on campus (we had an incident involving unleashed dogs already this semester), contact Campus Safety at x72000 or 607-2000 immediately.

February 4

“An HMC student went to the Campus Safety station to file a theft report. He reported that his backpack, computer, and cell phone were taken from his room at West Dorm, room 404. Total value: \$1200.00.”

Lock your doors out there folks. If you see anything suspicious, contact Campus Safety at x72000.

February 5

The manager from Jay’s Place requested “maintenance while advising Campus Safety that the first floor restroom flooded into the basement restroom.” Yech. Anyhow, the plumber came by and the Platt indoor waterfall display was permanently shut down.

February 6

A proctor called Campus Safety to report “a male who entered the West Dorm Courtyard acting strangely...” No, it wasn’t me just riding by on my bike. Campus Safety came by and advised the proctor that “the subject seems to be a transient, is compliant and leaving the area.”

CMS Winter Sports Update

By RAY HURWITZ '14

After an incredibly successful Fall for CMS sports, the Stags and Athenas progress on to the Winter season. We wave goodbye to Football, Men's and Women's Soccer, Men's Water Polo, Men's and Women's Cross Country, and Women's Volleyball while we welcome in Men's and Women's Basketball and Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving.

There are no Mudders on either of the Basketball rosters. However there are nine Mudders on the Men's Swimming and Diving team and three Mudders on the Women's Swimming and Diving team. After suffering season-ending injuries to two starters, the Men's Basketball team salvaged their season and made a late push for the SCIAC title. The team finished 16-10 and lost to Redlands in the SCIAC title game. The Women's Basketball squad exploded out of the gates to a 10-1 record and finished the season at 20-7. They lost in the SCIAC title game to Occidental, but with no graduat-

ing players on their roster, they will be a team to beat next year. Men's Swimming and Diving won six of seven conference dual meets as they headed into SCIAC Championships. Mudd fills up the roster with Seniors Chris Ramos and Elliott Smith, Junior Vincent Pai, Sophomores Brad Perfect, Devin Bowers, and Thomas Carey, and Freshman Bo Lee, Alex Flake, and Joey Klonkowski. The Men's squad was victorious at the SCIAC Championship meet, avenging their earlier loss to Redlands. Mudders Vincent Pai and Brad Perfect took first and second in the 200 M Breaststroke while Devin Bowers took second in 100 M Freestyle. The Women's Swimming and Diving team enjoyed similar success winning all seven of their conference meets and then the SCIAC Championship meet. Senior Jenni Rinker and Sophomores Ashley Kretsch and Jaclyn Olmos-Silverman round out the Mudd contingent. Rinker was part of the record-setting 400 M Freestyle relay at the SCIAC meet.

My Fellow Frosh Mudders,

We did it! We survived our first semester of college and for some reason we're back for more; ready for another semester of sleep deprivation. When I returned home family and friends all wanted to know how i had spent my first semester in college. "How is college?", "How are your classes?", "Do you know what you want to major in?", "What activities are you involved in?", "How did you do on finals?" Aside from answering slightly redundant questions over Winter Break, I recharged and caught up on my sleep. Rested and ready to tackle a new semester I wondered if I was ready to say goodbye to pass/fail. Would I still have time to be involved in extracurriculars and maintain my sanity. Or did I already lose my sanity if I think there's no better way to stay sane than by staying up late "studying"

with friends, jumping off balconies onto piles of mattresses and showering terrified friends as a birthday surprise? Either way, crazy or not, it seems as if the time has come to say goodbye to rhinos traveling at 3/5c and say hello to building hammers. This new semester is an opportunity for all of us to grow and further explore our interests. This exploration may manifest itself in the the form of clubs, courses, and hobbies. Now that we will be graded in our courses it can be easy to focus on academics and forget about the other activities that make our day enjoyable. However, we can't focus solely on our school work. After all, it is still pass/fail... there are just varying degrees of pass.

- Carolina Reyes

Fencing Team Attends IFCSC, Places Second

By CODY CHANG (CMC) '13

Last Saturday, February 26th was the highlight of the Claremont Colleges' Fencing Club. As its first year as a 5C Club Sport, the Women's Epee team bested five other schools, scoring second place in this year's Intercollegiate Fencing Conference of Southern California. This is no small feat as some schools in the Conference (ASU, UCI, UCLA, UCSD, USC, UCSB) are division ranked schools, have had longstanding fencing programs for well over a hundred years, or fencing coaches that have coached or even competed on the National and Olympic scene. Despite all this, after all the Conference tournaments, the 5C Women's Epee team managed to pry Second Place out from these schools. Two of our women's fencers even got Second and Fourth place for overall individuals across the Conference! Not bad for a first year club sport don't you think?

Fencing is one of four sports which have been featured at every one of the modern Olympic Games. The first structured schools of fencing and swordplay originated during the medieval times in Europe. Varying styles of fencing (French, Italian, Russian, Spanish, etc) competed to be the best in Europe, eventually chang-

ing historical fencing to what we know it as today. There are now three weapons in fencing (Foil, Sabre, Epee) instead of just the sharp rapier. Fencers no longer fight-to-the-death (or to draw first blood... well...sometimes...) nor challenge one another by slapping opponents with heavy, metal studded leather grieves. Points (called touches) are now scored using an electrical apparatus instead of side-judges and the human eye. Despite these modern changes, fencers have not lost their finesse. The tip of a fencer's blade remains as one of the fastest moving objects in modern sports, only second to a marksman's bullet.

Although still a relatively new sport in America, fencing has found its way to mainstream, pop culture. From films like the Mask of Zorro, to Star Wars, and even I Love You Man, fencing is starting to make its mark in America. Oh, and the recent Beijing 2008 Olympics where the US took all three medals helps too...

It's not surprising then, to find out that your roommate or friend at the 5C's have actually taken a fencing class before, or has even competed in their high school team before coming here. The real question is, what are you going to



Left to Right: Lillian Haynes (Mudd), Leslie Cole (Pitzer), Deirdre Kessler (Pomona), Kimberly Chung (Mudd)

PHOTO COURTESY OF CODY CHANG (CMC) '13

do to get them to sign up for PE 222 Fencing Club?

Despite our spectacular Women's result at the end of our season, we still need more women to join! Having been invited to join the NCAA fencing circuit in Southern California, we are looking to make vast improvements i.e. hire a paid Coach, fill all of our six squads (Men's and Women's in all three weapons), and secure more fund-

ing. Our ultimate goal is to take up that invitation to NCAA status.

The Fencing Club meets 2 pm to 5 pm on Saturdays at the Harvey Mudd, Linde Activities Center with additional practices on Wednesdays 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm are Memorial Gym, Pomona College. No prior experience necessary.

February 7

Another report of unleashed dogs in the Linde parking lot area came in. "Campus Safety had a visual on the subject with 2 unleashed boxers in the Linde field area." It turned out that the dogs were appropriately named after former boxing heavyweight champs and responded only to the clanging of a bell when discipline was administered. The subject headed up Mills with his dogs, clangin' his bell to the tune of the "Rocky" theme song as he walked (the theme from "Rockys" I, II, III, IV, and V but not the recently released "Rocky Balboa", it was dramatically different from the other "Rockys" and therefore, a new song was written). The dogs followed obediently and in time.

February 8

"A Scripps maintenance worker advised Campus Safety of 3-4 students taking several pallets from the Scripps Maintenance Yard. Campus Safety made contact with the 3 sub

jects who took the pallets and advised them to return the pallets immediately." The students headed back to Scripps with the pallets and West dorm went fireless yet another night.

February 9

A fire alarm was reported in Linde dorm. Apparently someone in the kitchen burned food and took it with them because Campus Safety found nothing but smoke and the stench of burned food. Needless to say, someone out there was eating a hearty meal with a side order of charcoal that night.

February 10

A beeping sound was reported in one of the labs down on the academic end of campus. Maintenance came by to check out airflow and "pushed the mute button silencing the alarm". Another problem solved in the dark and shadowy world we here in the DOS office like to call, "the Ack end".

February 11

A person known only as "Jack" (last name unknown) "reported a large amount of water coming from a pipe in a planter box outside of the Linde Activity Center close to Sontag Hall." Campus Safety tried to turn off a number of valves but the water continued to flow. They then opened a maintenance closet, secured 4 mops and began mopping, unable to stem the tide. Almost magically, the mops began to multiply and take over the LAC courtyard and eventually Sontag, mopping about madly and forcing students from their rooms. The water continued to flow, inundating the residential end (as opposed to the Ack end) of campus and creating an atmosphere of peril as chaos ensued. Then a maintenance guy stopped by, turned off the proper valve, and halted the flow. Kind of anticlimactic but that's what happened. Really.

Well, that about wraps it up, folks. I present only the facts and nothing more (as evidenced above). Don't forget to contact Campus Safety at x72000 if you see anything suspicious (or unleashed) out there. Otherwise, I'll see you next time with more from the Mudd Security Blotter.

The Muddraker Poll

Poll conducted by Fiona Foo '13
Photos courtesy of Katie Hauser '13

With so many options across the five Claremont colleges, we wanted to know: what do you like to spend your flex on?



Matt Johnson
Class of 2013

"I get muffins for breakfast. I buy challah and gum, my goal's to get \$10 of gum each week."



Cassie Nguyen
Class of 2011

"I go to the Muddhole and I also buy breakfast at the coffee cart."



Anna Cunningham
Class of 2011

"I buy another meal or buy a drink at the Muddhole."



Mira De Avila-Shin
Class of 2012

"If the Motley was open, I would buy Mexican hot chocolate."



Lee Wyninger
Class of 2011

"I don't know, mostly drinks at the Muddhole."



Emily Fischer
Class of 2014

"Breakfast, usually at the Hoch."



Lexie Burgers
CMC Class of 2012

"Food at the Muddhole or the Hub. I like their paninis."



Daniel Wakefield
Class of 2013

"Mostly candy, like peanut M&M's."



David Derry
Class of 2014

"Drinks and stuff at the Coop. I get Honest Teas and protein bars."



Zewei Wang
Class of 2013

"Basically just Coke and apple juice."



Jeane Wenzel
Class of 2014

"Lattes at the library and Pitzer cafe."



Kimberly Chung
Class of 2012

"I sometimes forget about it...and don't spend it."



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YOUR GUIDE TO SPRING SEMESTER AT MUDD!
by *Bonny Guang* and Drawn by *Mira De Avila-Shin*

If you're too stressed to remember what month it is, just look around at the people in your class and use this handy dandy guide! Warning: YMMV.

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