

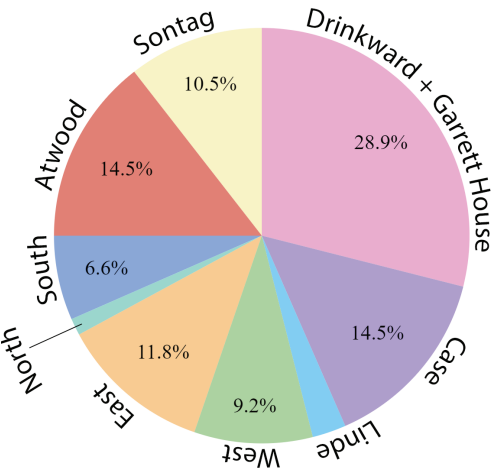
THE MUDDRAKER

MEET THE CLASS OF 2027!

Article by Aleicia Zhu & Kate Lam | Art by Antara Krishnan | Layout by Isabel Godoy

Mudders, have you ever wondered if your Andes mint-taking habits are normal? Do you want insight on the frosh’s favorite snacks for your next party or club meeting? To answer these questions and more, we surveyed the Harvey Mudd Class of 2027!

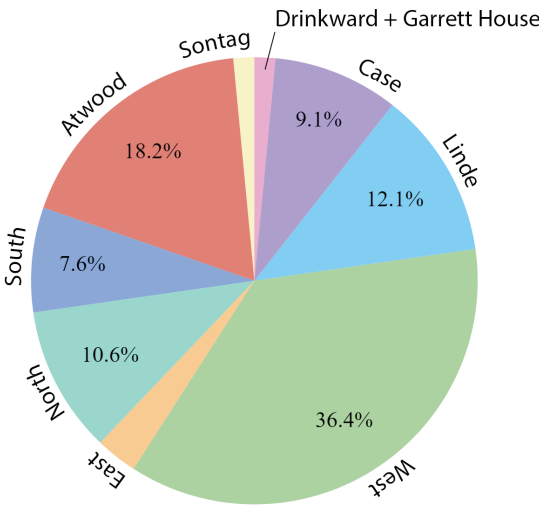
Best Dorm at Filling Out Forms



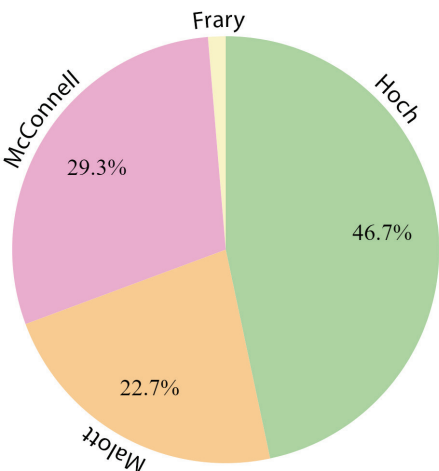
From the Office of Admissions, we know the proportion of frosh in each dorm. Nevertheless, we asked which dorms the Class of 2027 were in to test their form-taking abilities. Based on our seventy-five respondents, good job, Drinkward and Garrett House frosh, you had our highest rate of response at 28.9%. Conversely, it looks like many North frosh did not check their emails.

Dorm That Plays the Best Music

As expected, the rambunctious LAWN dorms duke it out for the winner. West takes a wide lead in first place, and Atwood comes in at a respectable second. Linde and North finish in third and fourth, respectively. However, South and Case are not to be ignored — from a Southie, we may not play music as often, but quality over quantity. The quieter dorms should also not go unappreciated.



Favorite Dining Hall



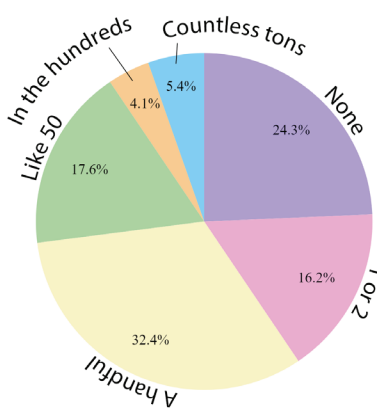
Mudders have their clear favorites when it comes to dining halls. Our very own Hoch won the most votes; I have to say our bakery selection, salmon, steak, and pho are unbeatable. However, a number of Mudders enjoy Malott at Scripps and McConnell at Pitzer. There was a lone vote for Frary. Sadly, no love for Frank, Collins, or Oldenborg.

Favorite Trader Joe’s Snacks

Trader Joe’s gets a lot of love from Mudders. Some favorites include the mini chocolate peanut butter cups, dried mango, and chili & lime flavored rolled tortilla chips — or as one student lovingly called them, “fake Takis.”



Number of Andes Mints Taken From the Hoch

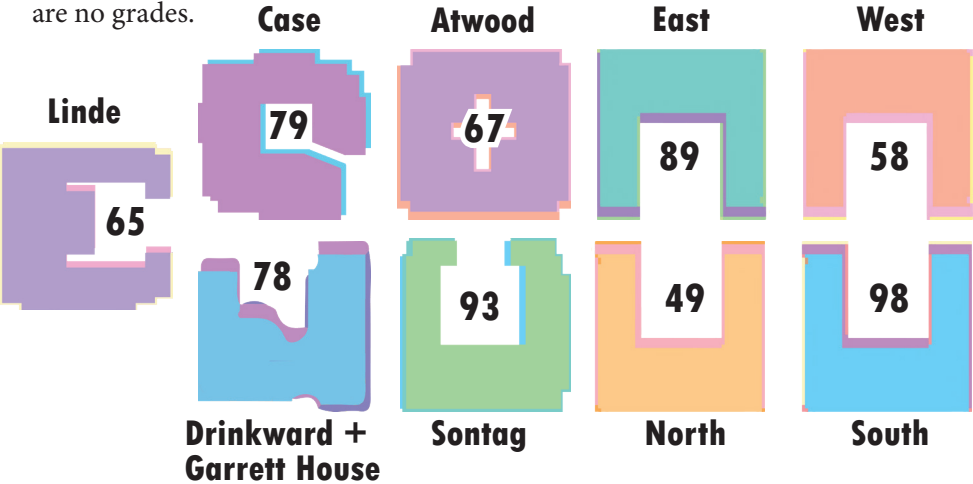


The majority of Mudd frosh have partaken in the chocolate-y joy that are the Andes mints. Maybe that’s why the jar is always empty when I leave the Hoch :(



Rice Purity Score by Dorm

North and West are the least pure, as expected based on previous surveys. South and Sontag would get an A on this test, but we’re pass/fail frosh so there are no grades.



Fictional Character That Would Excel at Mudd

Mudders honed in on the intelligence of the student body. The most popular answer was Hermione Granger, but other notable responses include Annabeth Chase and Peter Parker.



letter from the *editors*

Dear readers,

Thanks for picking up a copy of The Muddraker! This semester, The Muddraker has welcomed quite a few new staffers from the Class of 2027, who we are so excited to have with us!

In this issue, you'll find features on Dean Cindy (pg. 3) and Prof. Wloka (pg. 4), who sat down with The Muddraker to chat about their experiences before and at Mudd. Flip to our centerspread for witty perspectives on 5C dining halls (pg. 6-7), and to our back page for a short story about a Barbie-inspired satire on Mudd called MuddBubble. Read about some fun facts in Mudd's history (pg. 5), many of which have been unearthed from the yearbook archives in Platt.

Beyond Mudd, learn about one of the world's most sustainable buildings located in Santa Monica (pg. 2), and the state of pollution in Southern California (pg. 9).

Looking for some fun things to do this holiday season? Check out our list of Claremont fall and winter activities (pg. 8) for some inspiration, or you can try your hand at baking seasonal treats by following our recipe for mini pumpkin cheesecake bites (pg. 10). And as always, a crossword and comics can be found toward the end of this issue (pg. 11).

We hope you enjoy the paper, and happy holidays!

Happy reading!
Shivani and Avani

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SANTA MONICA CITY HALL EAST

the world's most sustainable municipal building

Article, Photos, & Layout by Shivani Manivasagan

One of the most sustainable buildings in the world is here, in LA County. Santa Monica's City Hall East building is net-zero energy and net-zero water, and complies with the Living Building Challenge criteria — one of the world's most rigorous standards for green buildings. In fact, after its construction ended in 2020, City Hall East became the first municipal Living Building in the world.

A little more on the Living Building Challenge: It's an initiative by the International Living Future Institute (ILFI) to encourage the design of buildings that adhere to the most stringent environmental standards. The goal is for these regenerative buildings to give more than they take — to actively do good for their surroundings, instead of just *less bad*. There are over 30 Living Buildings globally; the first was the Bullitt Center in Seattle, constructed in 2013.

Last month, I had the opportunity to visit Santa Monica City Hall East and receive a tour from Amber Richane, Project Manager for the building's construction. Here are some things I learned:

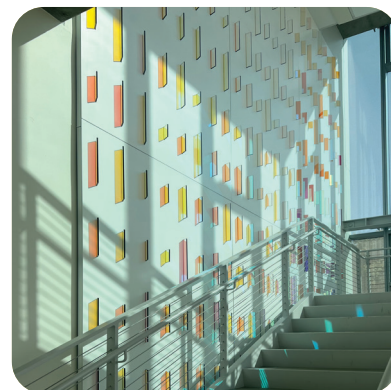


The building notably does not use any Red List materials — substances declared by the ILFI to be detrimental to human health and the environment, such as PVC, lead, and mercury. The building's developers undertook the additional challenge to avoid using these materials even in the products used for construction.

Several design strategies help the building self-regulate its indoor temperature. The glass exterior of the building minimizes heat gain, and automatic windows open and close throughout the day. Also, the interior of the walls are filled with a phase-change material that buffers heat transfer; similar to coconut oil, it melts into a gel-like substance when it absorbs heat, and solidifies when it loses heat. These mechanisms help heat and cool the building, allowing traditional ventilation systems to kick in only on extreme days.

Given Southern California's weather, the building's designers had to get creative in pursuing net-zero water usage. The restrooms are fitted with "composting toilets," which use foam instead of water to convey waste to sewage — consuming only three tablespoons per flush — and create compost onsite underground. Also, the building hosts an onsite water treatment area to filter rainwater and greywater, repurposing it for irrigation and drinking.

2 | The Muddraker December 2023



Beyond sustainable design choices, the building is intentionally crafted to be a welcoming space for its users. Each floor has art installations, a kitchen and break room, and its own color theme. Even the stairwell is pretty; the wall is lined with small rectangular mirrors that refract sunlight into an array of colors.

Additionally, these features can be economically feasible. Although the building's sustainability measures led to a 9% increase in upfront costs, in the long term, it's actually *cash*

positive in 16 years in part because its smart design eliminates energy and water bill expenses.

Santa Monica City Hall East takes sustainability to the next level, aligning with the city's broader commitment to climate action. However, Richane acknowledges that the Living Building Challenge is *hard*. Everyone who worked on the building experienced a steep learning curve, but as Richane points out, that means doing it again would be so much easier. Regardless, she says it's okay to start small — every building can do one thing better.



Meet Dean Cindy!

Mudd’s New Interim Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students

Article by Shivani Manivasagan
Layout by Avani Anne



Q: What was your journey to becoming Dean of Students at Mudd?

I’m a first-generation college student, so education has always been important to me. I earned my undergraduate degree in biology with the intent to go to medical school. I started working in health education at City of Hope, a National Cancer Institute. There, a physician told me that if I worked at USC, I could get a Master’s degree paid for. Given the financial challenges I had as an undergrad, I decided to pursue a career in higher education.

I began working at USC’s School of Social Work, and within five years, I quickly moved up from a Program Assistant to a Director of Undergraduate Advising. That was such a rewarding experience; I felt that I was able to pay it forward and help other students navigate the college process. It didn’t feel like a job to me; it was a passion. I earned my Master of Education in Postsecondary Administration and Student Affairs.

The Assistant Vice President (AVP) of Student Affairs at USC at the time, who I consider a mentor, asked me to co-teach a class with her at USC called The Politics of Difference. As a high-level AVP who still taught in the classroom, she believed there was huge value teaching in the classroom while serving as an administrator. She told me to consider getting a PhD, and I eventually did, at the University of San Diego. Afterward, I followed in the footsteps of my mentor, working at USC as an administrator while also teaching. This was an incredibly fulfilling and enjoyable experience.

Fast forward almost 20 years of me working at USC — my daughter was applying for college, and she was admitted to USC, which was one of her top choices. I felt that this was my cue to leave, to let my daughter have her own experience.

I started looking at other options. As someone who grew up in Southern California, I’d always known about the Claremont Colleges. I looked at Harvey Mudd because I wanted to return to my passion — STEM education — but no positions were open at the time. That’s when I learned that Keck Graduate Institute was looking for their first official Dean of Students to help build their Division of Student Affairs by integrating their currently siloed offices into one division. I was intrigued; I love to build and improve systems. I remained on faculty

at USC’s Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, a position I’ve held since 2010. I love it because I teach students how to communicate strategy and change — it’s applicable to everything that I do, and I truly find so much joy from that.

I was at KGI for five years. In my last year, I was asked to run their Master of Science in Community Medicine program, but I remained open to other opportunities. Then, someone from Harvey Mudd contacted me, saying there was an external review report done on its Division of Student Affairs and Mudd was looking for someone who could review the feedback and make improvements. I was very intrigued because it was aligned with my experiences and what I teach. And that’s what brought me here.

Q: What does a typical day look like in your job? What are your responsibilities?

No two days are ever the same and I love that the day can be a bit unpredictable. My calendar will have meetings with students, administrators, and faculty, but there might also be a situation that needs to be elevated above any meeting that I go to. I support students and provide guidance on best practices; for example, when I meet with our DB and JB Chairs, I’m not making policies or running the system, but I ask: How can I support you? What can I do to help you? Is there any advice that you need?

Overall, I see myself as a liaison between students and administration — I take student input to help inform decisions we make in DSA. From the DSA external review report, I heard that students were concerned about staffing. They felt that staff had a lot of responsibilities on their plate; for example, the International Students and Scholars position also handled Institutional Diversity, as well as Study Abroad. By hiring more staff, we intend to let each of these positions have their own focus. That is a big win because I’m aligning what we’re doing now with what the students want, which is a major responsibility of my job.

Q: Recently, there have been several position openings in DSA. What has the hiring process been like?

We have five open positions in DSA, and my goal is for us to fill all of them by spring semester and send the community an update on how we’re responding to the external review report.

We’ve posted openings for the following positions: Associate Dean for Institutional Diversity, Assistant Dean for International Students and Scholars, Assistant Dean for Study Abroad, Assistant Dean for Accessibility Services, and Director of Career Services. The last position got posted later than the others, but we are still hopeful to have someone start in the spring semester.

We have different hiring managers for each position. For example, I’m the hiring manager for the Associate Dean for Institutional Diversity, Dean Karen is taking the lead on International Students and Scholars, and Dean Amy is handling Accessibility Services and Study Abroad. There are different people on the hiring committee for each position, depending on which groups the position would closely work with.

We’ve received around 20 to 40 applications for each position. First, we review each applicant with HR and HR conducts phone screenings. Then, the search committee conducts first round interviews. The search committee ranks the candidates and we bring the top two finalists to visit campus and meet the community. Based on community feedback, an offer is made to the top candidate.

It is exciting that five new people will possibly start at Mudd together. There is so much they will need to do, from meeting new people to understanding the culture. I didn’t have a formal onboarding process through the Division of Student Affairs, but given that experience, I have a better understanding of how I can develop one for these folks — because I just went through it myself.

Q: What are your thoughts on Mudd? How is it different from your other experiences?

It’s definitely different from the grad population, just by nature of the age demographic. Here at Mudd, I love the strong sense of community. I love the dorm culture. I see how students are so committed to and involved with the school. You are all so brilliant, and I enjoy seeing student projects — like when the summer research students did their poster presentations. I feel at home, and I feel like Mudd is a good cultural fit for me.

Q: What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

I love playing with my three German Shepherds, Roxy, Zeus, and Ares — whether it be playing with them in the backyard, swimming with them in the summer, or taking them on hikes. I also love traveling, even just a quick weekend getaway with my husband and kids.

Q: Do you have any advice for students?

Try to find the consistent themes — your underlying passion — in the activities and extracurriculars you choose. For me, the common theme was helping people. Although biology and higher education seem different at first, there is common ground between me providing resources to cancer patients, and me providing resources to students. I’ve stayed true to what my passion was; although I thought it was going to be in health care, it ended up in higher education. There are so many transferable skills between your different interests.

Also, realize that you’re building your professional network right now. Faculty and staff are amazing resources, and the people in your classes, clubs, and extracurriculars may someday be your boss, or you may someday be their boss. It’s important to maintain professional relationships with each other — who knows, your paths may cross in the future.



Meet Prof. Wloka, who joined Mudd's computer science department in 2021! Read on to learn about his path to becoming a professor, his Lab for CATS, and some of his hobbies and interests.

Q: Can you tell us about your time at university and grad school? Why did you choose to become a professor?

I had kind of a windy path. When I was two years old, I told my parents I was going to be a paleontologist. But when I was around thirteen, I realized that that would require a lot of digging in deserts — I grew up on a farm, so I've had many long days picking vegetables and helping out in various ways, and I had a strong desire to be in fewer dusty fields. I then wanted to be an astronaut, but soon realized I was too tall and my eyesight was too poor. Eventually, I decided that the next best thing would be to work on the rocketry and mechanisms that go into space. So, in undergrad, I studied aerospace engineering for three years at the University of Toronto.

Then, I interned at an automation company and worked on machine vision projects — it felt like solving a very fun puzzle, which I enjoyed. Reflecting on courses I'd taken over the past few years and reading more about what genuinely interested me, I realized that I really liked doing computation and learning more about how biological systems reasoned and thought. For example, I remember taking a robotics course in my second year — I enjoyed the puzzle aspect of trying to reason about and predict ahead of time what situations a robot might need to deal with, and figure out how to design mechanisms to overcome that. So, I switched programs. I finished my undergraduate degree in computational neuroscience, which incorporated a number of physiology courses as well as computer science courses.

From there, I looked for graduate school programs. I knew I still wanted to be in Toronto because my partner was finishing school, and her family was in the area. My choices were to either stay at the University of Toronto or move to York University, which happened to have the Center for Vision Research — integrating neuroscience, psychology, and computer science. One of my undergraduate mentors, Sven Dickinson, recommended I look into John Tsotsos' lab there. John and I met and had great conversation, and I applied to work with him, going on to do both my Master's and PhD with him. After I left York, I came here to work at Mudd.

Essentially, I had to try a number of different things before I figured out what I wanted to do. In addition to taking courses in a lot of different subjects, getting a chance during my internship to reflect on what I actually enjoyed was very important for figuring out my own path.



Q: Who is a role model to you?

My PhD supervisor, John, is a role model for me in terms of how I try to approach science as well as supervising students. He supported everyone in his lab, not only in terms of their academic and intellectual development, but also as a person. He is a computer scientist, but also does a lot of work in human vision and psychology. I am inspired by how he approaches interdisciplinary research; he spends a lot of time learning the relevant

background and vocabulary to provide important contributions to multiple areas of research. That's why I chose to work with him as a student, and today, I try to continue doing that myself.

Q: Do you have any goals for this semester or academic year?

This semester, I'm teaching CS81 for the first time, and I'm excited because I really like the material, but since it's my first time teaching it I'm also familiarizing myself with a lot of the course logistics and how best to present the content. My goal is to make sure I get a good handle on the course this semester while I have Prof. Stone co-teaching with me before I teach it solo next semester.

Q: Is there anything that you would like students to know?

I don't drink coffee, but I do drink tea. People always ask if you want to go for a coffee, but no one ever asks if you want to go for a tea.

Q: Can you tell us more about your Lab for CATS?

We don't do any experiments with cats; it stands for the Lab for Cognition and Attention in Time and Space. Our general interest is trying to understand how to see — either as a human or as an artificial system — and how we understand our perception of the world. We work closely with Prof. Breeden, who is also a founding member of the lab (she has a cat, and I have two cats, so it seemed like an appropriate name!). Prof.

Professor
Calden Wloka

Breeden brings expertise in eye tracking, along with her background in graphics and cinematography, which makes collaborating on experiment design a lot of fun.

Q: What student projects is the Lab of CATS working on?

Currently, I have students working on independent study projects in three areas. One of them is an area we call action-attention. You might have a sequence of someone kicking a ball, and then the video processing network should label that as kicking. We're interested in trying to understand what types of features these decisions are based on — are the networks actually incorporating the temporal features of the video (i.e. motion), or are they just seeing a ball and inferring it to be a kicking video? So we're trying to understand if the networks are actually learning what we want them to learn, or instead finding shortcuts in the data. If we can answer that, we can potentially design data augmentation techniques to make a network's learning more effective and use features that we think will generalize better, as well as provide methods to detect and perhaps mitigate bias in trained artificial intelligence systems.

A second group is working on eye tracking projects. One specific example is asymmetric search, which compares the behavior of deep neural networks to a biological intuition of how vision works. For example, if we consider a set of figures of people that are either upright or flipped, humans are faster at noticing a flipped figure because it's unusual. But we found that learning-based saliency prediction models — deep networks that are designed to predict what people will fixate on — consistently predict the opposite, that the upright figures are more salient. Our hypothesis is that the images these models were trained on mostly contain upright figures; the unusual and unexpected objects are not well represented, and this seems to be a fundamental limit to learning. I'm not sure there is a way to remedy this because there are so many different ways something could be unusual or surprising — even if we add enough flipped humans to our training so the networks learn to predict them as salient, what if we instead turn them to the side or put them in funny clothing? There seems to be a conceptual limit to how well we can just learn from data alone, particularly when it comes to novelty detection.

I also have a third group of students called the tool-building group. This semester, they're working on learning computer vision fundamentals through building computer vision code bases I can use for class demos, assignments, providing starter code for projects, and more. Based on what they learn from the process, they can extend their work into research projects in future semesters.

Q: What are some hobbies you enjoy doing in your free time?

After all of my childhood desire to flee the outdoors, actually really enjoy spending time outside; on the weekend I'll often go with my family to the Botanic Gardens. Since I grew up in a very different biome than the one found in Claremont, I really enjoy learning about the plants and animals that live here.





Mudd Fun Facts

Article by Kishore Rajesh

Photos by Josaphat Ngoga | Layout by Ananya Purwar & Sarah Yandell

Buildings & Alumni

- ◇ Platt Campus Center (formerly known as the Student Campus Center) opened in 1963 the day after JFK was assassinated, making it as old as the television series Doctor Who.
- ◇ Joe Platt spent almost 50 years at Claremont. He was president of Mudd, president of CGU, and eventually a Mudd professor until he reached his 90s.
 - ◇ About a decade ago, Shan replaced another building that looked more Mudd-like (with warts and all).
 - ◇ Richmond Hoch '63 and Wayne Drinkward '73 both attended Mudd.
 - ◇ Atwood triples were originally built as doubles.
 - ◇ Atwood efficiencies were advertised as apartments for married couples.
- ◇ The water tower outside of Sontag was built before Mudd in the early 1900s in the architectural style of Scripps.

As you may know, Muddlore is a yearly event at New Student Orientation during which current students recount interesting stories from Mudd's past, from statue shenanigans to the cannon heist. Given time constraints and other reasons, we have to leave out many fun stories from Muddlore. As one of the Muddlore heads for this year's Orientation, I'd love to share a list of some of them:

Quick Trivia

Professors

- ◇ Prof. Van Hecke '61, a Mudd chemistry professor who retired last year, was one of the first students to graduate from Mudd.
 - ◇ Supposedly, he flipped a coin to determine his major, saying if it landed on heads it would be engineering, if it landed on tails it would be physics, and if it landed on its side he would choose chemistry. The coin bounced off his hand and landed in a crack on the ground, on its side.

Mudd Traditions

- ◇ There used to be a tradition that whenever a Mudder got engaged, people would push them into Seal Court (the turtle pond next to Malott dining hall).
- ◇ Mudd used to have an annual class contest where all 5 classes (including super-seniors) would compete in an obstacle course.
- ◇ Mudd used to have a homecoming celebration.
- ◇ Dorm barbecues used to be partially funded by meal swipes. The Hoch would give frozen burger patties and other foodstuffs to dorms, and students could use meal swipes to get the food.

Bonus

- ◇ Wally the Wart was created in 1992, the same year as Bio 52.
- ◇ Two movies were partially filmed at Mudd: "The Secret Life of Girls" and "The Fear."
 - ◇ Both have meager ratings on IMDB.

Muddraker Fun Facts

- ◇ The Muddraker had a short-lived anonymous gossip section.
- ◇ The Muddraker was started in the 80s, had a few years of hiatus, then resumed in the 90s until today.
- ◇ The Muddraker used to publish 11 papers a year.
- ◇ The Muddraker (and also yearbook) had ads spread throughout.

Sources

- ◇ Muddraker Archives
- ◇ Joe Platt's Book (first two decades)
- ◇ Ken Baker's Book (third decade)
- ◇ Yearbook Archive in Platt
- ◇ Random Alumni I talked to at Alumni Weekend
- ◇ Stuff heard from upperclassmen





A “Serious Take” on 5C Dining

Article by Claire Stuvland

Art by Antara Krishnan | Photos by Josaphat Ngoga | Layout by Yuki Watanabe



Dining halls. Quite possibly the most critical part of any college. And at the Claremont Colleges, a consortium of 5 liberal arts colleges, students have seven (7!) dining halls to choose from. It is only natural that I rank them, based on not only their food but the overall experience they provide.

The Hoch

First is the Hoch, closest and dearest to Mudd. Without even mentioning the food, we’re off to a great start because “Hoch,” pronounced like the bird species, is simply a versatile name. It’s easy to ask your friends to Hoch lunch:

“Hey are we hoching today??”

This automatically gives points to the Hoch before we even consider anything else.

I’m not sure what others have heard, but when I visited Mudd as a prefrosh, I heard that Mudd had the best dining hall, so I had pretty high expectations coming in. However, those expectations weren’t quite met.

Let’s start with breakfast. I honestly have found very little to complain about with Hoch breakfast — you can’t go wrong with crepes or made-to-order omelets. A staple in my Hoch breakfast is avocado toast, especially with their avocado spread, garlic tomatoes, arugula, and the spice bar. The many options for smoothie bases and wide variety of fruit also make the smoothies a popular order. Recently, the Hoch bakery section has been stepping up its game and now the chocolate croissants reliably have a satisfactory amount of melted chocolate in them! This means victory for us cross country frosh.

Hoch lunch, though, I’m not as much of a fan. Your experience depends mainly on what time you get there. The 12:15 lunch rush is real and it is dangerous — I swear students swarm the Hoch after their 12:15 classes end. The lines are insane, and I like to theorize that it’s in part because Mudd students go to the Hoch out of convenience while students from the other colleges go to the Hoch because they’re serving some delicious pho or bao, which are some of Exhibition’s specialty entrees. If you’re like me, and you just want to grab your food as fast as possible, this is a major downside. During the lunch rush, eating at the Hoch means choosing food stations with shorter lines, which essentially means avoiding the best entrees. My impatience is definitely to blame, but I’m not unique in this regard.

Although I complain about Hoch lunch, I can definitely get behind Hoch dinner. The lines are still long at Creations or Exhibition, which typically serve the best entrees, but the mood isn’t nearly as frantic. Lines generally move pretty quickly, and the food is good. My friends and I particularly enjoy the wet burritos and quesadillas, as well as the triple chocolate cookies for dessert.

Speaking of dessert, there’s one thing that everyone I’ve talked to (n = 4) agrees on, and it’s that the Hoch has the best desserts of all the dining halls. The soft serve machine is more reliable than those at McDonald’s, the brownies and cake taste amazing, and the cookies are simply incredible. Most students agree that the triple chocolate cookies are the best, although I could easily argue for the vegan chocolate chip cookies or oatmeal raisin cookies (which are not dry!). My lukewarm take is that the normal chocolate chip cookies are better than the more popular vegan chocolate chip cookies.

The main reason I frequent the Hoch, though, is convenience. I would rather make the 30 second trek to the Hoch (South dorm superiority) instead of walking ten minutes to another dining hall with food that isn’t good enough to warrant the trip.



McConnell

Pitzer’s dining hall, McConnell, is actually decently close to Mudd. Some of the outer dorms are closer to McConnell than the Hoch, so Pitzer is a convenient option.

I’m not entirely sure if this is a known joke among Mudders, but I’ve heard McGregor (ironically) called Mickey G’s. When I told that to my friend, she started calling McConnell “Mickey C’s,” which I absolutely love.

It’s not nearly as iconic as the name of the Hoch, but it’s very silly and brings us joy.

My favorite thing about McConnell, though? My friends’ favorite thing about McConnell? The food. I don’t think you can really go wrong with McConnell. Their entrees are separated into four categories: Global, Comfort, Chef’s Table, and Grill. Global is generally the most popular because Pitzer serves international food there, like pad thai, open bao buns, pasta, and Pacific bowls. They’re by no means as high quality as homemade food, but by dining hall standards, it’s honestly really good. Pitzer also serves decent Mediterranean food — by this I mean Mediterranean food that I regularly like to eat — and make-your-own burritos.

I asked Liv DeBoer HM ’27, the same person who coined “Mickey C’s,” to say a couple things about McConnell because out of the people I know, she likes McConnell the most:

“I greatly enjoy my meals at the McConnell dining hall. They have an impressive variety of flavor and vegetarian options. They also have the best tacos and BREAD. Plus, they have cream cheese and bagels. Delicious.” She added a couple points I’d forgotten about. First, Pitzer is probably the best dining hall when in search of vegetarian or vegan options. They have a section that’s entirely meat-free, called Herbivore, and besides that a lot of the food is vegetarian-friendly or can be made vegetarian. Pitzer also has bagels available at every meal, and many cream cheese options at breakfast and brunch: pesto cream cheese, jalapeno cream cheese, sundried tomato cream cheese, plus some vegan options.

One area I think Pitzer could improve in is desserts. They’re not bad, but the standard is Hoch desserts and while I recognize that this standard is hard to meet, McConnell does not come through. Their key lime bars respectfully go crazy, but Pitzer cookies are no match against Hoch cookies, vegan or triple chocolate or what-have-you, and their bread pudding is sometimes oddly dry. Also, the dessert section often lacks labels. They have a list of their desserts, but no allergy labels, and it’s not always entirely clear which dessert is which.

Malott

To be fully honest, my take on Malott is at most anecdotal. I frequent Malott brunch, called “Scrunch,” on the weekends, but I’ve never been to another meal at Scripps. My assumption is that this is similar to many other students at Mudd — Malott brunch is popular among Mudders.

Even before beginning college, I’d heard Malott was known for having acai bowls at brunch. They have this on Saturdays and they serve overnight oats or chia pudding on Sundays. I have tried both and I can confirm they are straight fire, even if the mangoes in the acai bowls give me a brain freeze every time. To my surprise, though, these stations never have long lines — possibly because of how quickly students can grab their bowls and toppings. I see this as a huge bonus, because I’m used to having to wait in long lines for the best foods.

The long lines at Scrunch tend to be for the chicken and waffles on Saturdays and avocado toast on Sundays. I’m not huge on chicken and waffles, and I get my avocado toast fix at Hoch breakfast, so I don’t mind this. There are definitely some lucky times when the lines are short, but I haven’t observed this enough to confidently say that there’s a consistent time for this.

As a side note, “scracos,” or Scripps tacos, seem to be popular on Taco Tuesday and students line up early outside Malott for them.

One of my friends went and told me that they were “the best tacos ever” and that they were “worth the wait.” I couldn’t really tell if she was being sarcastic or serious but there’s definitely some significance in their popularity!

Overall, Scripps brunch is great, and their other meals are probably also great.



Frary

The main attraction of Frary isn’t the food (although the food is a bonus) — it’s the architecture and ambiance and the fact that Frary is the greatest collaboration between Hogwarts and Catholicism the 21st century will ever see. The lighting, the tables, and the huge mural on the back wall all come together to create a Potterhead’s dream.

I can’t speak to Frary lunch or dinner, although I’ve heard positive comments about both, but I will absolutely advocate for Frary breakfast and brunch (not to be confused with Frunch, which is Frank brunch). Frary has a yogurt bar with a lot of options for toppings: frozen berries, peaches, coconut, granola, and chocolate chips. I’m absolutely biased because I love yogurt for breakfast, so Frary’s yogurt bar is a highlight for me. They have a small sushi station for brunch, and while sushi and yogurt isn’t the typical pairing, I’m not about to complain. The pastries are delicious as well and every once in a while, there are mini muffins available. According to my senior cross country teammate, those mini muffins are “the best thing at the 5Cs,” which is such a bold claim it must be true. I’m only a frosh, but so far I agree with him — they are kind of mindblowing.

I can’t talk about Frary without talking about the mural in more detail, though. There’s a TSL article on the huge painting of Prometheus, otherwise called “the hunk without the junk.” A very entertaining title, but one that completely misses how beautiful and vibrant the mural is. It’s genuinely astonishing that we have this in a dining hall of all places, but the mural suits Pomona’s liberal arts grandeur and the atmosphere of Frary.

Collins

Among Mudders, Collins has a bit of a rough reputation. I’ve talked to frosh who refuse to eat at Collins and upperclassmen who, while admitting that they’ve never actually been, advise impressionable frosh to never go.

My take on the controversy? Collins isn’t that bad. In fact, it isn’t bad at all. One of my friends, a freshman at CMC, described its food perfectly when she said that all Collins had was “athlete food.” The food is generally plain and not very special, but it’s certainly not bad, either. When compared to the dining halls of other colleges and universities beyond the 5Cs, Collins would very likely be ranked quite high.

One thing to note is that Collins has the best music. Before orientation, I had to have breakfast at Collins because the Hoch wasn’t open very early, and Collins was blasting EDM at 6:30 in the morning. Awesome. That did a great job setting the tone for my day. I hear from my CMC friends that at lunch, 2000’s throwbacks aren’t infrequent.

Frank

Is too far. That’s all.

SIKE. Another Pomona dining hall! Like many Mudders, I have only been to Frank for one meal: Frunch. Frank brunch on Sundays (it’s closed on Saturdays) is absolutely worth the long walk to the far side of Pomona.

Sushi? Barbecue chicken pizza?? Bagel bar of your dreams??? Who would say no? Even the water, according to Prof. Frosh John Simon HM ’27, is incredibly fresh. The food isn’t the problem at Frank...

It’s the distance. The trek to Frank can be painstaking, not only because of how far it is, but also because the path there isn’t straight. We can go through CMC or Scripps to get to Pomona’s campus, and then we have to navigate Pomona. I have no clue how Pomona is set up; it isn’t nearly as geometrically organized as Mudd’s linear design. This is probably why I haven’t been to Frank for any meal besides brunch, and am unqualified to judge any of its food beyond brunch.

I can give a little spiel on its menu and setup, however. On the 5C dining app, Frank’s hours are incredibly unclear. Brunch is listed from 00:00 to 00:00, as is dinner. Their menu is generally very comprehensive, though, so I can look past that minor annoyance. Frank is a pretty sizable dining hall with a lot of indoor seating, but my friends and I like its outdoor patio. The wooden tables and chairs give students plenty of space, unlike the patio of a certain Mudd dining hall, and the music is a total vibe.

Oldenburg

Oldenburg is the last of the gazillion Pomona dining halls, best known for its foreign language tables where students can practice whatever language they’re learning.

Like the uncultured person I am, I haven’t actually been to Oldenburg yet, so I can’t give a very credible review. However, when I told August McIntosh-Lombardo HM ’25 that I had never been to Oldenburg, she looked me straight in the eyes and said, “Good,” nodding her head solemnly.

Lea Twicken HM ’25 advised me to go to Oldenburg and ask them if they had an English table, which would infuriate the staff but would also be so hilarious.

If any Mudd students are reading this, please consider taking her advice.

Conclusion:

Overall, it’s hard to go wrong with 5C dining! If you chose your dining hall at random, there’s an 86% chance that you’d be at least satisfied with your meal. :)

FALL & WINTER ACTIVITIES TO DO IN CLAREMONT!



Article, Art, and Layout by Isabel Godoy
Photos by Shivani Manivasagan



Claremont Farmers & Artisans Market

When: Every Sunday, 8 AM - 1 PM

Where: Harvard Ave in the Claremont Village

The Farmers Market is a great opportunity to pick up seasonal treats, like spices, preserves, bouquets, and more! It is also where you can buy unique art pieces created by community members, listen to live music, and snack on free samples.



The Local Collective

When: Every Sunday, 8 AM - 2 PM

Where: 240 W 2nd St in the Claremont Village

The Local Collective, tucked away in a little alley, is a market hosted by especially crafty artisans that often features seasonal goodies!



Village Venture Arts & Crafts Festival

When: Last Saturday in October, 9 AM - 5 PM

Where: Yale Ave in the Claremont Village

This free community event features artisans and crafters; music; food; a beer, wine, and cider garden; and a children's costume parade!



Montclair Pumpkin Patch

When: September 29 - October 31

Where: Montclair Place, between AMC Theatre and Central Ave

This event features pumpkin picking, hayrides, a petting zoo, and a corn maze! There is also a costume parade and contest on October 31 from 7 - 8 PM. As this event is not within walking distance of Mudd, you might want to arrange a carpool with friends or take the bus to Montclair Place.



Luminaria Nights at California Botanic Garden

When: December 8 and 9, 6 PM - 9 PM

Where: California Botanic Garden

Just a short ten minute walk from Mudd, the California Botanic Garden is a lovely place to visit during the semester. In December, the garden hosts Luminaria Nights, a holiday experience that features live performances, art, and food with the venue decorated with luminaria and string lights.

Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, performed by the Claremont Joint Music Program

When: December 9 at 7:30 PM and December 10 at 2 PM

Where: Garrison Theater at Scripps

This December, the choirs and orchestra of the Claremont Joint Music Program will perform Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, featuring special guest soloists and conductor David Cubek. This event is also a triple celebration of the 200th anniversary of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, 60th anniversary of Garrison Theater, and 20th anniversary of the Scripps College Performing Arts Center. Be sure to reserve your free ticket online!



SoCal...So Polluted...So What Now?

Article by Sudharsan Gopalakrishnan | Layout by Alice Tidmarsh

To many in Claremont, the smog that usually obscures Mount Baldy is a mere consequence of excess air pollution in Southern California. Today, we mainly observe photochemical smog, which forms when sunlight reacts with pollution released from human activities (EPA, 2004). Given that Los Angeles is among the most polluted regions in the United States, it is important to better understand what pollutants specifically are in the air, their sources, and how we can mitigate pollution.

In Los Angeles, smog consists of high levels of two pollutants in particular: PM_{2.5} (airborne particulate matter with a diameter up to 2.5 microns) and ground-level (or tropospheric) ozone (IQAir, 2023). PM_{2.5} particles have been linked to heart diseases and respiratory illnesses (IQAir, 2023), and inhaling ozone can trigger chest pain, shortness of breath, and more. Note that there are two types of ozone: while stratospheric ozone forms naturally higher in the atmosphere and helps shield us from UV radiation, tropospheric ozone forms closer to Earth's surface as a result of reactions with pollution from human activities. Specifically, tropospheric ozone forms when sunlight reacts with nitrogen oxides — found in car exhaust, factory emissions, etc. — and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) — from gasoline, paints, etc. (EPA, 2004). In the Los Angeles area, the heavy traffic congestion, shipping industry, and geography (where surrounding mountains can trap pollution) all contribute to the persistent poor air quality. As a result of these factors, Los Angeles does not meet Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) national air quality standards for both PM_{2.5} and ozone (IQAir, 2023).

Given Los Angeles' air quality status, several efforts to mitigate pollution have been made for a couple decades and are continuing to be made via governmental regulations on emissions from transportation and industries. For example, the Clean Air Act was passed in 1970 which increased air quality and emission monitoring (IQAir, 2023). In more recent years, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) has also helped promote awareness of air pollution and its harmful effects on public health, and devise new approaches to address air pollution issues (California Air Resources Board, n.d.). The government has also encouraged increased use of electric vehicles to address that motor vehicles are currently the main culprits behind the PM_{2.5} and ozone pollutants. Overall, legislation to reduce emissions holds promise for the future. On a smaller scale, I encourage everyone to make simple, cost-



Smog and air pollution at Pasadena Highway, Los Angeles.

Retrieved from:

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=3703917>

effective actions when possible to help reduce the accumulation of pollutants. For example, people can use natural airflow by opening their windows instead of turning on the AC. Also, gardening is beneficial for the environment because plants can sequester carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, improving air quality on a smaller scale.

If the use of motor vehicles, ACs, and other nitrogen oxide / VOC emitting devices continues to increase, the air quality of Southern California will continue to dwindle. This can set the stage for respiratory illnesses, increased acid rain, and holes in the stratospheric ozone layer — thereby increasing exposure to harmful UV radiation from the Sun. As such, to ultimately combat SoCal pollution and the increasing rate at which pollutants accumulate in the air, I strongly recommend that we continue to work toward a much healthier environment, through both governmental and individual contributions.

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Fall Recipe: Mini Pumpkin Cheesecakes

Article by Irene Jung

Art by Yating Lin | Designed by Aanya Pratapneni



Looking for something sweet as winter draws near? These mini pumpkin cheesecakes are sure to satisfy your fall cravings and set a cozy ambience this holiday season! This recipe's flexibility also makes it perfect for bakers of all skill levels.



You can substitute the graham crackers with any kind of cracker/ biscuit/cookie! As long as you have some form of dry crumbs to work with, the cheesecakes will turn out well.

If you're in a rush, the cream cheese doesn't have to be at room temperature. However, it's much softer and easier to work with when it is, so I highly recommend letting your cream cheese sit on the counter for a bit before you begin.

White granulated sugar can be used as a substitute. Brown sugar just adds a slight caramel flavor to the cheesecake that compliments the pumpkin very well. Just make sure that you're using granulated sugar, not powdered! The two are very different when it comes to baking.



2 hours for prep,
2-3 hours for cooling



Makes 9 mini
cheesecakes



Ingredients

For the crust:

10 graham crackers, crushed
4 tbsp (½ stick) unsalted butter
1 tbsp brown sugar (optional)

For the filling:

8 ounces (1 block) of cream cheese, room temperature
½ cup brown sugar
½ cup pumpkin puree, fresh or canned (not pumpkin pie filling!)
1 egg
¼ tsp salt
1 tsp pumpkin pie spice (optional)
1 tsp vanilla extract (optional)



If you don't have pumpkin pie spice at hand (like most people), cinnamon is a great substitute. You could also make a small amount of your own pumpkin pie spice for this recipe! Just combine ½ tsp cinnamon, ⅓ tsp ground nutmeg, ⅓ tsp ground ginger, and a pinch of ground cloves or allspice.



Preparation:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. Line the cupcake tin with liners.

Making the Crust:

1. Microwave the butter in a heat-safe bowl until just melted.
2. Add the crushed graham crackers and brown sugar to the melted butter, stirring until the mixture is well-combined and the texture is similar to that of wet sand.
3. For each cupcake liner, take a tablespoon of the crust mixture and press it into the bottom of the liner, packing it down until it feels firm to the touch.

4. Place the cupcake tin to the side while we prepare the filling!

Making the Filling:

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine the cream cheese, brown sugar, and vanilla extract until smooth.
2. Add the pumpkin puree, pumpkin pie spice, and salt, then mix until well-incorporated.
You can taste the filling at this point and make adjustments as needed before adding the egg!
3. Finally, add the egg, and mix well until combined.

Assembly:

1. Fill each liner with around ¼ cup of the cheesecake filling, dividing the batter evenly between the liners.
2. Bake for 20-25 minutes, or until the tops of the cheesecakes appear matte.
3. After taking them out of the oven, let them cool for around 30 minutes, then place them in the refrigerator for around 2 hours until they have completely cooled and feel firm.
4. Remove the liners, plate your cheesecakes, and enjoy!

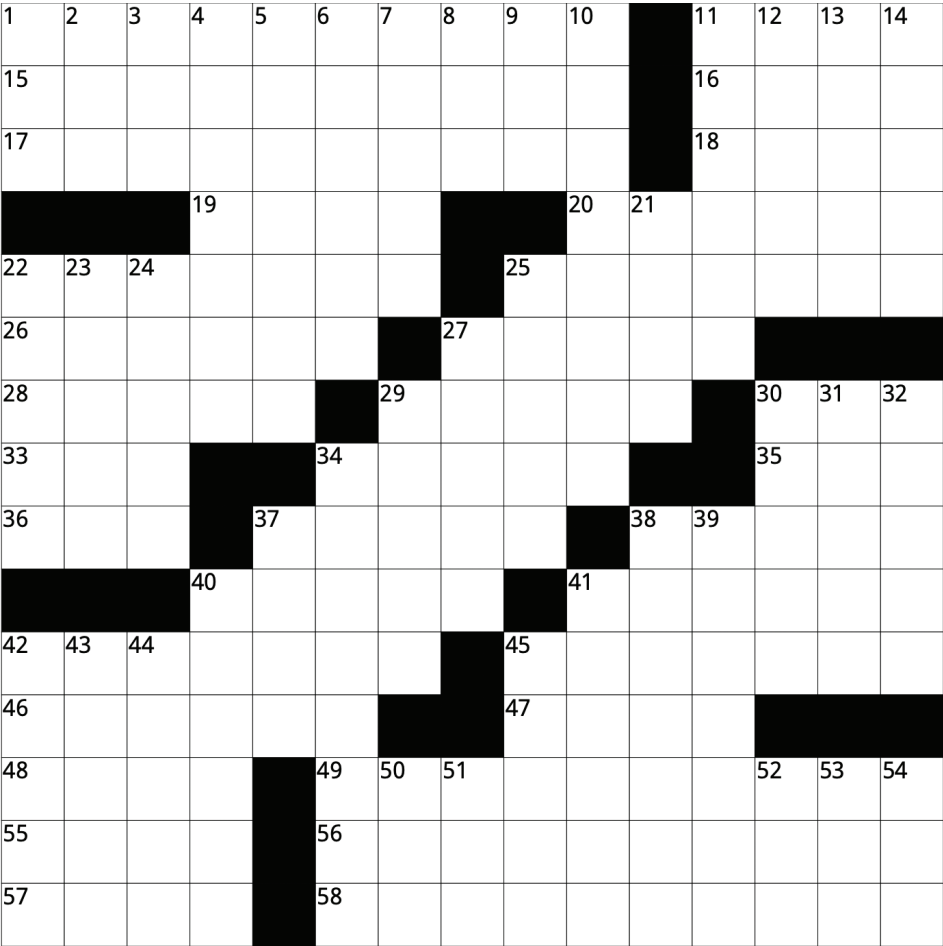


Note: Ingredients containing dairy can be substituted with non-dairy alternatives (such as plant-based butter/cream cheese).

Recipe adapted from Butternut Bakery's Pumpkin Cheesecake recipe: <https://butternutbakeryblog.com/pumpkin-cheesecake/>

Milestones

Puzzle by Kishore Rajesh | Layout by Avani Anne



ACROSS

- 1 Rudy, or Rocky
11 402 in Rome
15 A hat-trick scorer, for example
16 Fan sounds
17 Misclicks or forbidden inputs
18 Spanish card suit
19 “Where did ___ my keys?”
20 Actor Gordon-Levitt of 500 Days of Summer
22 Braughs who played Neils Bohr in Oppenheimer
25 White or brown sauce with strained or puréed onions
26 Comes to light
27 The eighth had six wives
28 Pays to play
29 Records
30 ___ Arbuckle, Garfield’s owner
33 Seinfeld played one
34 Does 45A
35 Latin 101 verb
36 Donkey

- 37 Say it loud and there’s music playing / Say it soft and it’s almost like praying
38 Whitewashed
40 Burger topper
41 Plunder
42 American abolitionist Tubman

- 45 Diet
46 Irish-themed Vegas Casino
47 “Peter Pan” baddie
48 Tony’s cousin
49 “Be patient”
55 Posterior
56 Pac-man, for example
57 A long time
58 20A, 22A, 27A, 30A, 37A, and 42A, in relation to Mudd

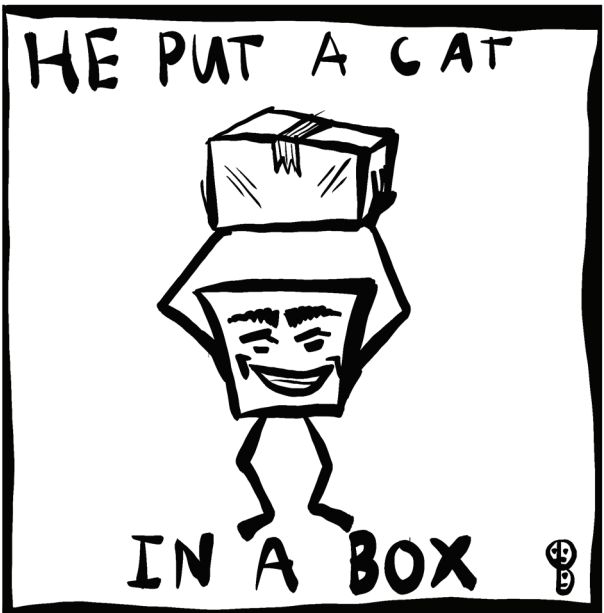
DOWN

- 1 Disco ___ of The Simpsons
2 Acidity measurements
3 Mine find
4 Get more soap out of
5 Prairie homes
6 Walks with a swagger
7 Actor Colin of “Love Actually”
8 Texter’s qualifier
9 The once-___ of Lorax fame
10 Title partner of “me” in a 1972 Billy Paul #1 hit
11 Bing singing
12 “Should I suggest it?”
13 Makers of many links
14 “This ___”: formal phone response

- 21 Couple’s word
22 Sacred site in Islam
23 Sea eagles
24 Evenings, in ad-speak
25 Nasal walls
27 Invites over
29 Fortune cards
30 ___ Lee Curtis of Everything Everywhere All at Once
31 Signs
32 Parents and children in a tree
34 Mug exchange
37 Mother of Hermes
38 Got dark
39 Start of some school anthems
40 Pug and Corgi
41 City west of Baghdad
42 Commotion
43 ___ as a whale
44 River of Cologne
45 ¿Cómo ___?
50 Pirate greeting
51 Rocks
52 ___ Diego
53 CPR Expert
54 Some MIT grads

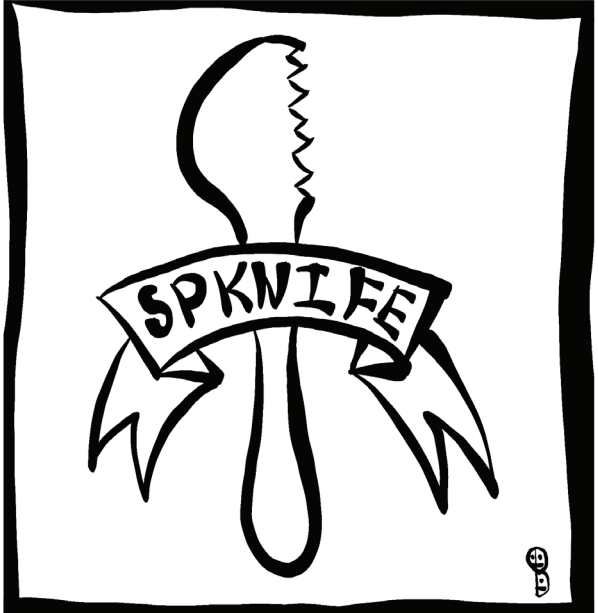
ADVENTURES OF WALLY THE WART Physics Major Appreciation

By Dry Sockets Bob



BAD TATTOO IDEAS Sp-knife

By Dry Sockets Bob



Bursting the Mudd Bubble

Story by Mikayla Mann

Art by Amy Yuan | Layout by Becca Verghese

In the beginning, there was Barbie — or so you thought. Before even Barbie, there were Mudders™.

Meet Pass-Fail Frosh. They are a special edition Mudder that crops up consistently every year around the end of August, although their cost increases noticeably every year. One particular Pass-Fail Frosh — let's call her Patty — is a few weeks into her first year in MuddBubble, and she is absolutely loving it. Oh, perfect, it looks like she woke up just now! Let's check in and see how she's doing.

Patty sits up and stretches from the top of her many-tiered bunk bed (no, really, she doesn't mind living in a quintuple because her roommates are all the best of friends!). Her alarm cheerily rings with an enthusiastic reading of the MuddBubble mission statement as she gets ready for the day. Patty smiles at her reflection in the mirror while thinking to herself, *I am so excited to assume leadership in my field with a clear understanding of the impact of my work on society when I graduate!*

Each of Patty's roommates is a unique design of the Pass-Fail Frosh Mudder, customized by their different interests, majors, and senses of style. One of them happens to be her best-best friend, Sabrina, who walks cheerily alongside Patty on their way to their first class of the day. In Patty's opinion, Sabrina clearly has the best fashion sense features in MuddBubble. The custom closet Sabrina got on move-in day was stuffed to the brim with clothes that all fit her perfectly, and they could be combined in every permutation possible. But Patty wasn't jealous — that wasn't an emotion that a Mudder could feel!

"Hey, is Nelson coming to the Hoch with us for lunch today?" Sabrina asks, jerking Patty's thoughts away from stylish outfit combinations.

Patty frowns. "Hmm, I doubt it." Nelson, another one of their roommates, has unfortunately been endowed with a "Never Gets Out of His Room" feature. So far, all efforts to challenge this trademark have failed. But Nelson is perfectly content to remain in his comfortable swivel chair every day, and Patty is certain that no Mudder would judge him for that!

As Patty and Sabrina pass Platt, Patty gazes around in wonder. She can't help but exclaim, "I just love how gorgeous our campus is!"

"I know, right?" Sabrina smiles back. "I think the warts are the cherry on top. Did you know that the person who designed the Museum of Modern Art also designed MuddBubble?"

Patty gasps in wonder. "Oh, that's amazing! That explains why everything is so aesthetically pleasing."

"Hi, Patty! Hi, Sabrina!" Both Mudders swivel their

heads to see their friend Fred skipping towards them with a bright grin on his face.

Sabrina squeals with excitement and gives him a vigorous handshake — the conventional greeting among Mudders (not too strong and not too weak, to prepare them for the working world). "Fred! I haven't seen you in ages!"

"I know." Fred bashfully dips his head. "It's because I just became a Mudder Who Has Free Time!"

Patty and Sabrina jump up and down. "This means you can finally hang out with us, since we're still Pass-Fail Frosh with tons of free time!" Patty declares, overjoyed.

"Yes — wait, actually, hang on." Fred closes his eyes, a furrow between his eyebrows. As his eyes reopen, a distraught look flashes across his face. "Apparently that was a limited edition that was only available for ten seconds, so I guess I'm busy again. Sorry guys, I have to run to the Parsons basement!"

The two Pass-Fail Frosh can only watch him sprint towards Ac End, twin disappointed expressions on their faces.

"Maybe he should get a skateboard accessory? It would save him a valuable two minutes getting to class every day," Sabrina wonders out loud.

"Yeah, but those are sold separately," laments Patty.

The two continue their walk to Shan, moods quickly bolstered by the perfect weather. In MuddBubble, the climate never strays from sunny and 75 degrees.

"Oh! Sabrina, I was meaning to tell you," Patty turns towards her friend. "Earlier, I was listening to the MuddBubble mission statement, like we all do every morning — but today it felt different. I feel like I can really make an impact on society when I graduate!"

Before Sabrina can answer, a speedwalking stranger crashes into both of them with the speed of a particle collider (or so it feels like).

"Hey, watch out!" The stranger, clad in an eye-catching combination of khaki pants and a polo shirt, rears back and glares at the two Mudders. Immediately, his expression shifts into surprise. "Wait, are you Pass-Fail Frosh?"

Patty manages to squeak out, "Y-yes...?"

The man's eyes narrow. "Ah, I figured from the way you two were talking about the MuddBubble mission statement," he scoffs. "I need to tell you something. Let's go up to the third floor of Shan."

Sabrina and Patty move to follow him without a second thought — after all, weird strangers are not a concept in MuddBubble. The man whips his head over his shoulder and shouts, "PETE, GET OVER HERE!"

Another stranger, about the same age as the khaki enthusiast, hurries over from the circle of Mudders he was immersed in. "Sorry, Sheldon, I got sidetracked asking those West-edition Pass Fail Frosh if WIBSTR is still our motto!"

Sheldon rolls his eyes, and Patty realizes that now would be a great time for some introductions. "Hello, Sheldon and Pete! I'm Patty and this is my friend Sabrina. I think we caught both of your names, but could you tell us a bit about yourselves?" She sticks out her hand cheerily.

Pete fumbles for words as Sheldon mutters testily, "So we're still introducing ourselves with handshakes and elevator pitches here?"

Luckily, Pete gets his words back enough to stammer, "Oh, hey, I'm Pete — sorry, I haven't had practice recently with this question, ever since I've been at my Tech Bro Job — umm, I'm an antique Mudder — that means I'm an alum — but I really wish I were still a Pass-Fail Frosh!"

Short story continues
at themuddraker.org:

