

The Middlebury Campus

Vol. 107, No. 17

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Since 1905

12,000 students lobby for change

By Jaime Fuller
News Editor

From Feb. 28-March 2, nearly 12,000 college students converged on the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C., for Power Shift 2009. The national youth climate change summit offered a chance for student leaders to exchange ideas on how to prevent global warming on both a national and local scale, and offered a plethora of panels, workshops and speakers with experts sharing their knowledge on the issues. The event culminated on Monday with a lobby day at the Capitol, the largest in our nation's history relating to climate and energy policy.

Middlebury demonstrated its fidelity to the environmental cause with a delegation of 194 students, bested by a narrow margin by the University of Vermont's group of 198 students. Middlebury was not only well represented by its youth — several faculty members made an appearance at the weekend's events including Scholar-in-Residence Bill McKibben and Luce Professor of International Environmental Economics Jon Isham.

Isham expressed his enthusiasm for the energy and scope of the conference while moderating a panel titled, "Cap Carbon & Trade: Invest? Auction? Dividend? A Conversation that Explores all the Options!"

"This is a moment to celebrate," he said. "A pinch-me moment for

many of us."

McKibben felt he had to counter some of the overpowering optimism at Power Shift with a dose of urgency and a quick reality check.

"I feel like I am being Captain Downer, but it's been my job for a long time," said McKibben, during a panel titled, "The Road to Copenhagen: The Future of International Climate Change Legislation." "The window is starting to close, not just on our species, but on a lot of other species too."

However, McKibben's realism does not stop him from being an outspoken environmental activist. He is one of the creators of the www.350.org movement and he helped organize the mass civil disobedience march at the Capitol Power Plant on March 2, where activists occupied all gates to the government-owned coal-fired power plant.

The panels and workshops ca-

SEE YOUNG ACTIVISTS, PAGE 3



Cloe Shasha

A record number of Middlebury students flocked to the rally in D.C.

Liberal dining may disappear

By Cloe Shasha
Staff Writer

Since the announcement of the budget cuts at the end of Winter Term, speculation about the implementation of a meal plan has become a talking point on campus. But according to Director of Dining Services Matthew Biette, the discus-

sion among faculty and staff is at an early, non-definitive stage. No specifics have been established about the type of meal plan Middlebury might develop.

"We are discussing possibilities as we should in this economic climate," Biette said. "We need to look at every way we do business and contain costs while providing quality meals within a budget. The meal plan discussion falls within these parameters."

But Biette emphasized that changes in the College's dining

system will probably not be implemented in the next year — if at all — because this type of change would require a long planning process.

Students who heard rumors about a meal plan felt that it would have a major impact on the College.

"Having no meal plan makes us eat more healthfully," said Brad Becker-Parton '11. "It's nice to be able to come in at 5 p.m., get a bowl of soup, and then come in later to eat more, rather than stuffing our plates in one

SEE FUTURE, PAGE 3

Distrust leads to H.C. vote

By Hilary Hall
Staff Writer

In a report that could significantly change Middlebury's entire academic climate, the Honor Code Review Committee (HCRC) suggested several changes be made to the Honor Code, including the removal of the current ban on faculty presence during exams. The full report includes nine specific amendments, three of which require a student vote as they involve changes to the student constitution. Two of these three are simple revisions meant to make the Honor Code concurrent with the handbook, but the first and likely most controversial suggestion asks for removal of the language that prohibits faculty in the exam room.

The Honor Code currently forbids faculty members from sitting in on exams unless the Academic Judicial Board has specifically granted them permission to do so. It puts the onus on students to report cheating; if they do not want proctors, they must be willing to monitor themselves and each other. The report, however, suggests that students no longer want or take advantage of this responsibility.

"It is clear from the feedback ... students and faculty are in agreement that students not only are not reporting each other, but also that they do not wish to be expected to report each other," the report stated.

Citing extensive statistical research, the report presents a compelling case for the necessity of this change. In Acting Dean of the College Gus Jordan's 1998 study, he found

SEE HONOR CODE, PAGE 2



Allie Needham

MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM DOMINATES NESCAC

The Panthers beat out Amherst 77-68 in the NESCAC finals on March 1, capturing the championship title before a record turnout of fans.

Local hot spots still faring well

By Anna Briggs
Staff Writer

The economic downturn is taking its toll on the town of Middlebury, but has been hitting some businesses harder than others. Student spending off-campus has remained strong at some local hot spots, but has come to a relative stand-still at less fortunate locations.

"I'm aware of [the recession] with all the empty shop windows in town as stores close, and it makes me more conscious of what I'm spending money on," says Jennifer Ridder '09.

While trends in particular business sectors have played into the success of some establishments — businesses in food service have had stronger sales than those selling consumer goods — what seems to be the biggest factor in success with the student demographic is a close relationship with the College.

John Melanson, owner of Carol's Hungry Mind Café, has seen the café's business doing well despite the recession. In fact, on a day-to-day



Grace Duggan, Photo Editor

Despite economic strains, students continue to favor the local flavors.

basis, the café is doing better than in previous years.

"Individually, spending is up," remarked Melanson. He attributes the café's success to two factors: a close relationship with the students of the College, and to Adam, the café's resident baker, who Melanson says has been "baking better things."

"I like to think [the students] like to support me," says Melanson. "I do make friends with students, and I hire students," and it seems that students of the College reciprocate the appreciation Melanson has for them.

SEE TOWN, PAGE 4

this week



Mountains beyond Midd
Community members and students alike gather to hear global health leader Paul Farmer speak, page 12



The price of pleasure
Robert Jensen delivers "men only" talk about pornography and pop culture, page 5

Meet the candidates
Look inside to see who's running before placing your vote, page 4



Young activists overrun capital

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

tered to people interested in the many facets of the climate change movement, and even offered options that focused on broader social justice issues. Session tracks included campus organizing, skills training, new media, international, green jobs and the economy dismantling oppression, faith and spirituality, as well as many others.

Prominent speakers such as Van Jones, Adam Gardner and Majora Carter were featured in the nighttime program, and were often met with standing ovations and thunderous applause. President Barack Obama's role in the quest for climate change policy was an unmistakable theme of the conference, and many of the speakers and panels focused, or at least mentioned, the new administration.

"We are in the Obama era," said Carter in her keynote address on Friday night. "I have to tell you its not only Obama the president, but Obama the acronym. Obama is an acronym for 'Officially Behaving as Magnificent Americans.'"

The high level of organizing and thought put into the Power Shift national summit can be seen on a local level in the amount of planning required to transport and house 194 Middlebury students 500 miles from campus. Two buses, powered by biodiesel, transported most of the students to and from the conference, and housing was mostly decentralized, with native students offering their homes to friends and others crashing with friends of the family or anybody willing to offer a floor to a Middlebury student.

The aura of youth and change pervaded Power Shift this year, and was especially apparent in the event's reliance on new media and technology to communicate with participants and to share what was occurring at the conference with the rest of the world. In order to know where panels and workshops were being held and to receive updates on changes to the schedule, participants sent text messages frequently throughout the weekend. Speakers, like Repre-

sentative Edward Markey (D-Mass.) and former mayor of Salt Lake City Rocky Anderson, even called for students to text during their speeches, and the organizers of Power Shift told participants to tag their photos and videos on YouTube and Flickr so they could use participant-generated content for a slide show. Middlebury students also were involved in documenting the conference; Mori Rothman '11 filmed much of the weekend, and plans on posting his video on YouTube sometime next week.

All of the activity on Saturday and Sunday was in preparation for Lobby Day on Monday, where around 5,000 activists overtook the Capitol and pushed their representatives to move quickly to pass climate change legislation. However, the blizzard that struck D.C. on Monday, while not daunting for the energized youth, did prevent several well-known speakers in national government, such as Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and Markey, from attending. According to Sarah Simonds '11, this did not stop the visit to the Capitol from being an inspiring event.

"We managed to visit representatives from all 50 states, and there were 12 to 50 people at each meeting," she said. "You couldn't walk down the hallways without seeing groups of young people in green hard hats."

An oft-repeated theme at the conference was that the majority of the action taken to prevent global warming would take place not at

the conference center or lobby day, but at a local level when participants returned back to their respective campuses. The Middlebury attendees who are also active members of the Sunday Night Group (SNG), the largest environmental group on campus, were positive that they would be able to transform the energy and ideas at the conference into tangible change back on campus.

It's awesome to see so many inspired young leaders in the same place for the same reason," said Nathan Blumenshine '09.5. "Knowing we have 10 percent of the student body that is willing to travel, listen and change their habits for the weekend gives me hope that we can reach the whole campus instead of just SNG."

Many of the Power Shift participants who have never been involved with SNG have already expressed interest to use what they learned in D.C. to help accomplish things in Vermont.

"I always have been interested in the environment ... but am always busy and never have time to really do anything on campus," said Laura Budd '11. "I heard about Power Shift and thought it was a great way to learn things and get involved. I definitely plan to attend SNG meetings in the future."

SNG plans to have a post-Power Shift meeting this week for all 194 students to preserve the momentum started this weekend and to make sure environmental activism was not a one-time deal for the participants.



Grace Duggan, Photo Editor

SENIORS CELEBRATE 100 DAY MARK ON FEB. 29

The McCullough Social Space played host to the Blackout, Blacklight party on Saturday.

SGAupdate

by Aseem Mulji, Staff Writer

Despite the turbulence brought on by former president Bobby Joe Smith's '09 resignation, the Student Government Association (SGA) pushed through its agenda on March 1, displaying a collective desire for a seamless transition into the rest of the spring semester.

The meeting began with a discussion with Acting Dean of the College Gus Jordan about the proposed Honor Code changes unveiled last week.

Senior Senator Roger Perreault expressed his disappointment in the language of the third constitutional change proposed by the Honor Code Review Committee (HCRC). The amendment changed Article III c. to read "alleged violations [of the Honor Code] will be handled according to the academic disciplinary policies of the current Middlebury College Handbook."

This change, explained Perreault, "dilutes the student voice in [determining] what the judicial process is." He argued that the amendment removes any specific language concerning the judicial review process from the constitution (a student-ratified document) and replaces it with a sort of "hyperlink" to the College Handbook (a faculty-ratified document).

Jordan flatly disagreed with Perreault's reading of the amendment and assured the SGA that the intent of the language is

merely efficiency. According to HCRC, the language of the new clause allows for minor structural changes to the judicial process. In revising the College Handbook, faculty can make quick changes to the judicial process as needed. He argued that students are kept involved via the Community Council.

Perreault, not swayed, said that he would urge his peers to vote against this suggested amendment.

Following a full 40-minute deliberation on the Honor Code Review, the SGA moved on to discuss a bill sponsored by Senior Senators Katie Hylas and Molley Kaiyoorawongs which makes class evaluations available to students. In order to respect the privacy of faculty members and to make class evaluations more accessible, Hylas and Kaiyoorawongs proposed that as a part of the evaluation process, students respond to a separate set of questions to be viewed by peers online. www.middkid.com, they said, is unused and ineffective.

The SGA was in full support and approved the bill unanimously.

Correction

The amount of the 2009-2010 academic year comprehensive fee recommended by the Student Comprehensive Fee Committee was not \$51,622 as *The Campus* mistakenly implied last week in a headline. The committee recommended raising the fee to \$50,783. *The Campus* regrets the error.

college shorts

by Jaime Fuller, News Editor

Financial crisis forces states, families to cut

State universities across the country are expecting record-breaking application numbers this spring due to the precarious financial situation facing many families. However, the high number of qualified applicants makes admissions decisions much harder.

SUNY New Paltz, which had an unprecedented 24 percent of accepted students enrolling, must now send out 1,000 fewer acceptance letters this year.

As students flock to the SUNY system because of its affordability, the state has had to make economic concessions of its own, cutting \$210 million from its \$1.4 billion annual state appropriation for four-year schools.

"That's the conundrum," said Megan Galbraith, a spokeswoman for SUNY, the largest public university system under a single governing board in the United States. "There's increased demand for what SUNY has to offer in this economy. But with this budget, there will be challenges meeting that demand."

— The New York Times

Students expect "A" despite minimal effort

A recent study published in the *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* shows that students feel entitled for higher grades simply for attending class and doing the required reading.

Forty percent of the 800 students surveyed felt they deserved a B for completing a course's required reading, and a third thought they should get a B for showing up to class. The study was conducted by University of California-Irvine professor Ellen Greenberger, who used confidential self-report questionnaires to examine the attitudes of two groups of students at a southern California university.

Greenberg thought that this mindset of entitlement may be exacerbated by Web sites where students rate professors on their grading styles.

"I never look at these sites," she said in an e-mail. "But I'm well aware that many students shop for easy courses or professors who give mainly As, etc., or drop courses midstream that they are not doing well in. It follows that grades will 'go higher' and that some students will be chagrined when their expectations for a good grade for modest effort aren't met."

— The Daily Texan

College news travels to Web at slower pace

As the nation's biggest newspapers are reassessing the role of print media in today's Internet-reliant culture, college newspapers around the country are debating their format as well.

Some colleges are using their need to cut print production in a positive way by expanding content online and embracing blogs, podcasts and videos as a new way to get the news out on campus. Stephen Dockery, editor of *The Daily Orange* at Syracuse University, said that their editing board's decision to have four print editions and one online-only paper per week has turned out to be a productive change.

"It's turned out to be a great thing," Dockery said. "It's giving people experience in new media."

"The high percentage of students who still read their campus daily in print, though, speaks to why cuts at college newspapers have come more slowly than at their professional counterparts," said Chrissy Beck, advertising director of *The Duke Chronicle*.

— The Duke Chronicle

Future of meal plan undecided

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

go. We might lose that healthy attitude with a meal plan."

Ken Grinde '11 worked at the admissions office in the fall and noticed that prospective students are drawn to Middlebury's current dining system.

"In the admissions office kids were really turned on by the idea that our dining halls are open," said Grinde. "They thought it was so cool."

Hillary Gerardi '09 thinks that the social qualities of the dining halls would change with a meal plan.

"The dining halls are major social spaces on campus right now," she said. "Right now, people can eat, go to class, come back, and find their friends still there. A meal plan would make dining hall culture less relaxed."

Some students believe that a meal plan could help the College save money and food.

"I think a meal plan would be great," said Angela Evancie '09. "It would encourage people to waste less food. In fact, if there was a penalty for wasting food with our current dining system, we would already save a lot."

Andrew Powers '11 suggested another way to save money other than with a meal plan.

"If we want to reduce our waste and save more money, we should have some visual evidence of the amount of food that we waste," he said. "If the College showed the students the amount of food that is regularly squandered, I think it might have an effect on peoples' tendency to waste. But a meal plan would change the atmosphere of our dining halls — they would be more like restaurants and less personal."