

Phillips Exeter Academy  
Exeter, New Hampshire

# The Exonian

The oldest continuously running preparatory school newspaper in America



@theexonian



## CLIMATE ACTION DAY

Read about the Academy's response to Climate Action Day, 1.

## SOTW: CECILY REED

Read about senior Cecily Reed and her journey to the Classics, 4.

**INKWELL COUPON 10% off—  
Students only. Must show valid PEA  
student ID.**

## Academy Community Engages in Climate Action Day

By DANIEL LEE,  
AUDREY KIM, and  
SEAN RICARD

Cherry blossoms bloomed on the branches of quads, the sky clear and blue — yet Exonians were scattered around the vicinity, hiking mountains, exploring trails, cleaning beaches, and traversing farms.

Tuesday, Apr. 21 marked Climate Action Day, Exeter's yearly observance of Earth Day, in which Exonians participate in a variety of environmental activities

on and off campus, allowing them to engage with the environment and learn about its significance. The group-based activities also helped establish a sense of community, collaboration, and appreciation of place among Exonians.

Climate Action Day programming this year was separated by class, with each grade level participating in specific activities related to themes in sustainability.

CLIMATE, 3.



Arisa Yoshino / The Exonian

## Cultural Artifacts and the Preservation of the Ukrainian Heritage with Deborah Ziska



Ziska's Friday Assembly

Sean Ricard / The Exonian

By SOLLIE BEER,  
MARYN BOWMAN,  
and JOHANNA  
HILLMAN

On Friday, April 17, writer and filmmaker Deborah Ziska delivered an assembly address about the preservation of cultural heritage in Ukraine amid the ongoing war. Ziska served as Chief of Press and Public Information at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.

Ziska, a consultant at the Penn Cultural Heritage Center, began the assembly by telling the story of her Ukrainian colleagues' fight to preserve their heritage amid Russian attacks. "What they are doing is just as historical as what the Monuments Men did during World War Two," stated Ziska, referring to a group of men and women during the Second World War who

worked to protect and recover works of art and other items of cultural importance stolen by the Nazis.

Ziska then went back to 2008, describing how she first traveled to Ukraine to lead a workshop with museum directors. When she arrived, she found that many museums lacked computers and software systems to digitize their collections. During the 20 years after the fall of the Soviet Union, the former Soviet republics had very little funding available for the arts or museums. "They were nation-building and developing democracies. There were too many other things to do," described Ziska.

However, the situation today couldn't be more different. Now, "Ukrainians are leading the field worldwide in the use of digital technology to preserve their cultural

heritage in crisis and conflict," according to Ziska. To underscore Ukraine's progress in digital preservation of cultural heritage, Ziska highlighted two of her Ukrainian colleagues: Vasyl Rozhko, the founder of the Tustan State Historical and Cultural Preserve, and Ihor Poshyvailo, founder of the Maidan Museum in Kyiv.

Ziska explained how the two men met shortly after Russia's invasion in 2022, while, as she described, "the bombs were falling." They discussed how to organize their colleagues to preserve Ukraine's cultural heritage, including collections at thousands of museums, hundreds of monuments, eight UNESCO Heritage Sites, and a vast legacy of architectural heritage. The two men decided to form the Heritage

ZISKA, 2

## Exeter Debate Attends the Tournament of Champions

By ADRIAN CHAN,  
LUKE CHON, NICOLE  
SUBKHANBERDINA,  
PEARL HARA  
YAMAZAKI

From April 11 to 13, members of Exeter's Daniel Webster Debate Society competed at the J.W. Patterson Tournament of Champions (TOC), hosted at the University of Kentucky in Lexington. The competition is largely regarded as the most prestigious high school debate tournament in the United States. Matched against a field of the nation's top debaters, the team finished in the upper half of entries.

To compete at the TOC, debaters must first qualify by acquiring bids, which are earned by performing well at select high-level tournaments during the season. Five Exonians were chosen to compete: senior Ezra Segal, uppers Aryan Agarwal and Minnie Kim, lower Emre Oklu, and prep Valmik Dagayach. The group qualified by earning

bids at two TOC qualifying tournaments, reaching the finals at both—winning one as grand champions and finishing as grand finalists at the other.

Beyond regular meetings and practice sessions, preparations intensified only a few weeks prior to the tournament, when the debaters were first informed of the topics at hand. "We received the prepared motion sometime during spring break, around the first or second week of March," Agarwal explained. "We called as a team several times over break just to talk out the motions, but we asynchronously assigned the prep."

Due to the tight time frame, preparations felt rather rushed. "A lot of the work was done as we got closer to the tournament naturally because it's hard to prepare over spring break and we're all busy once we're at Exeter," Agarwal noted. "So I will say that a lot of the preparation was actually done on

our travel time... we left Friday morning and only really started debating Saturday morning, so we had 24 hours to talk about the motions and actually work them out."

On Saturday, the team boarded a two-hour flight to Cincinnati, OH. From there, accompanied by club adviser and Instructor in Mathematics Adam Chawansky, the debaters drove over to the venue in Lexington. For the next two days, members debated tirelessly, working around a number of challenges and differences, such as a rule banning the use of electronics.

Despite this, things initially played out in favor of the Academy. Debaters were made aware of the first two motions, but had to go completely impromptu for the others. "We were three-one by the end of day one," Dagayach said. "And so we were feeling very confident. We only needed one more win to break," or to advance to the elimina-

DEBATE, 3

## Editors' Picks

**LIFE: The Cecilysey: An Epic, of Sorts, 4.**

**LIFE: Annual Take Back the Night Event Takes Back EPAC, 5.**

**SPORTS: COTW — Carrying a Bag of Connection: Varsity Golf Captains, 11.**

# News

## » BRICKS ON CAMPUS

Read about the installation of bricks across dorms on campus, 2.

## » DEBORAH ZISKA

Read about Friday's assembly with Deborah Ziska, 1.

## » EXETER DEBATE

Read about Exeter's Debate team being sent to compete in the Tournament of Champions, 1.

## Students React to Bricks



Sean Ricard / *The Exonian*

By **BUCHAKABOGU, ELEANORPONTZ, ARJUNVELAN and ANNA YANG**

In the past weeks, many students have noticed a dark grey block mounted in their dorms — the Brick. This device can be used to manually block specific apps. This initiative is led by Student Council President Ari Benenson to help students self-regulate their phone usage. The Brick has already positively impacted life around campus, as multiple students report using it to help keep them in check throughout the day.

Some students noted that the bricks have been a success. Prep Eliza Grossman explained, “It’s really helpful, because I actually don’t feel like going to the brick to unbrick my phone, so I’ll just end up doing work instead.” One of the bricks’ tactics is that you have to physically go somewhere to use your phone, which discourages impulsive scrolling. Grossman stated her daily bricking average was “around two and a half hours.”

Even students who don’t use social media find the bricks helpful. “I just block everything except what I might be using to do homework,” Prep Camille Gumersell said, “so then I don’t get notifications.” She also argued that the bricks are “a much better alternative to taking away your phone.” In her opinion, there is no point in having something like a universal phone ban, because bricking teaches self-control, and if phones were taken away, students could

just use their computers.

Prep Jessica Fan added, “I use the schedule function instead of the manual function.” Explaining how this allows her to prematurely block distractions, “I don’t have to remember to turn it on, which I find really useful, because if I try to go on the app, I find that it’s already blocked.” Fan mentions her daily average is 15 hours, through taking advantage of the app’s scheduling feature.

The administration is equally passionate about the implementation of phone Bricks. “I had heard great things about the bricks from students who have already been using them, and I’ve been so pleased to hear that more students are giving it a try,” remarked Dean Ashley Taylor. Taylor emphasized that the Bricks were a joint initiative between the administration and StuCo, citing, “We supported Ari and StuCo in this vision coming to life! We helped order the break and our incredible facilities management team installed them over the break.”

Despite overall positive feedback from Exonians, students also expressed thoughts on how the Bricks could be improved. Grossman suggested “putting [Bricks] in classroom buildings, like EPAC or the Academy Building.” Fan gave a similar idea: “I would say to put them in a place in the library that’s more accessible, since I still don’t know where the bricks in the library are.” Prep Luke Swamidoss added, “I wish we had more [Bricks], because I know it’s a long walk to a lot of them.”

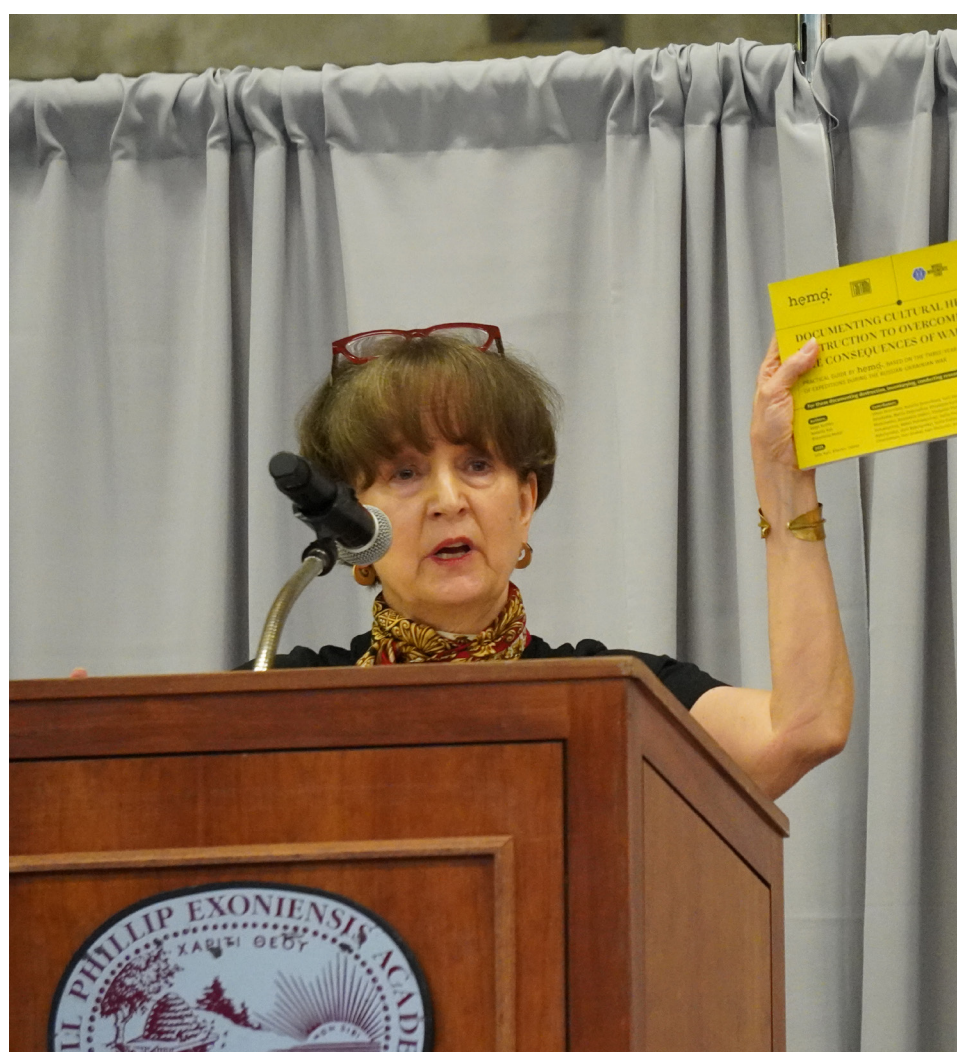
Taylor shared a re-sounding hope that the student body and administration could collaborate on future phone policies in an effort to better sleep and studying habits. “I feel like the school and the students are more aligned than we sometimes think! We are all in this together and want the same thing which is a school where students can grow and thrive,” she remarked.

Another issue for some students was needing to download the app and go through the verification process before even being able to brick. Senior Cindy Mumbo noted, regarding their accessibility, “it’s just a lot of work to get the app on and then have to disable all the apps and stuff.” She continued, “I wish you could get started with them just by hitting your phone.”

The Bricks can be used as a helpful tool, and are currently a way to gauge the impact of cell phone usage. Taylor offered, “[The Bricks] will certainly influence how we think about cell phones on campus and the places where students may or may not need additional structure or support.”

In general, the student body believes that the new implementation of phone bricks has good intentions, but also room for improvement. Each person uses, or doesn’t use, the bricks in different ways that coincide with their lifestyle, phone use, and needs. The future of phone policies at Exeter remains uncertain, but, in the meantime, phone bricks are attempting to help students build beneficial habits and unplug.

## Ziska Cont.



Ziska's Friday Assembly.

Sean Ricard / *The Exonian*

Emergency Response Initiative. Under the threat of missile strikes, Rozhko, Poshyvailo, and many others worked to secure materials to protect and store artifacts and began photographing and documenting destruction of their cultural heritage.

Ziska also shared a video about the effect of using technology to preserve the medieval wooden fortress of Tustan in the Carpathian Mountains. While its only remains today are the rocky cliffs that supported the once-expansive complex, the Tustan Museum was brought to life by Vasyl’s father’s graphic reconstructions, in addition to drones, laser scanning and photogrammetry to recreate five periods of lost architecture through digital and physical 3-D models of the fortress. Ziska described how Vasyl and the team behind the technology expanded to aid museums across Ukraine in using technology to digitize their collections and document wartime destruction of monuments and historical buildings. In 2024, Rozhko formed the Ukrainian Heritage Monitoring Lab, known as HeMo, to continue this work on a national scale. The lab also offers training to museum professionals and recently published a free and easily accessible guidebook on digital preservation of cultural heritage during wartime.

Later, Ziska shared her thought process behind the framing of the assembly. “I knew I wanted to tell a story,” she explained. She also expanded on her reasoning for highlighting the history of Ukraine. “We need to think about the consequences of the erasure of identity, cultural heritage, and history. Ukraine has been facing that for centuries. I don’t think

a lot of people know that history or understand what that means.”

For upper Karolina Kozak, who is from Ukraine, the details about her country held a special significance. “I live in the very east of Ukraine, so seeing the Tustan project being established in the heart of the Carpathian Mountains made me want to visit the west even more,” she said. “Just hearing the Ukrainian accents in the videos, hearing my people, and even something as simple as the name of the city Kharkiv stood out to me. I have some of my best memories there from before Russians started destroying everything.”

History instructor Aykut Kilinc, who runs Phillips Exeter’s assembly program, explained why Ziska was chosen as an assembly speaker. “Mr. Amadou Talla highly recommended Ms. Ziska,” emphasized Kilinc. “We wanted it to be a continuation from Professor Plokhii’s assembly talk on the war in Ukraine.” Kilinc also expressed admiration for the work of Ziska’s colleagues Rozhko and Poshyvailo. “Ziska’s presentation was quite powerful for me,” said Kilinc, stressing the courage required to “go to war zones in order to preserve Ukrainian heritage and culture.”

Students described the assembly as informative and resonant, as well as very relevant to the Exeter community. “I really liked the assembly. It was very informative. I learned a lot,” said prep Aanya Shah. She said the talk “gave me a lot to think about in terms of what parts of our culture that we’re losing... especially considering the ongoing war in Ukraine.”

Lower Penelope Ghisleni agreed with this sentiment. “This

assembly was extremely well timed, with everything [that is going on] at the moment”. Ghisleni noted that she clearly could see “how passionate” Ziska was regarding the presentation.

Students emphasized the importance of the assembly for spreading awareness within the Exeter community. Shah described it as “extremely valuable to Exonians,” explaining that learning about cultural preservation “makes you so much more willing and eager to be empathetic... especially [toward] students on campus who do connect with that culture.”

Upper Max Gerbut connected the assembly to Exeter’s broader mission, noting that values discussed at Exeter — “freedom, democracy, human rights and dignity” are “being defended in Ukraine right now.”

More broadly, the assembly carried cultural and political significance. “Ukrainian culture has had a real impact far beyond Ukraine... and it deserves more recognition,” Gerbut said. He added that in the face of efforts to erase that culture, “one of the best ways to help preserve a culture is to share it with others.”

“I hope other Exonians can see that we are a developed country and that there is so much more to us than the war,” added Kozak.

Ziska finished the assembly with a message for Exonians about the resilience and importance of Ukrainian culture, describing the “decades and centuries of Ukrainians fighting for their identity,” their culture, and their country. “Isn’t it a shame,” she asked, “that it took a war in the 21st century for the world to awaken to the rich and vast cultural heritage of Ukraine?”

## Climate Cont.

Preps stayed on campus, their time divided into three rotations. They spent about a third of their time hiking in the Academy trails and closeby woodlands, about an hour learning about the dining hall's sustainability and composting efforts, and the final portion of their time touring the steam plant on Chadwick Lane as well as the solar panels atop the Love Gym.

The activities for Lowers centered around agriculture and sustainable farming practices. Lowers visited a wide range of local farms and homesteads, learning about biological diversity, sustainable soil practices, organic farming and other regenerative practices. Farms ranged from the vast organic dairy farm at UNH to the small Blueberry Bay farm in Stratham, New Hampshire.

Uppers' activities were themed around marine biology and oceanic sustainability. Uppers had a range of places to choose from, from beach cleanups to tours of local salt marshes to oyster farms, each activity centering on sustainable oceanic practices.

Seniors had the greatest degree of choice, having the option to participate in student-led workshops or building projects, and even bigger hikes up mountains like Mt. Major and Mt. Sunapee. All of the seniors' projects shared the value of getting off of campus and into nature.

The official pro-

gram began at 9 a.m. and lasted until 12:30 p.m., by which students arrived on campus to enjoy their school-provided barbecue lunch with friends and peers. This year's Climate Action Day programming worked inside a different structure than previous years. Last year saw advisory-based hikes and nature walks, while the previous year most students stayed on campus and engaged in workshops similar to those on Martin Luther King Jr. day. This year's structure, with the programming separated by grades, allows for both a deeper connection to topics as well as consistency in the coming years.

Dr. Patrick Kelly, Exeter's sustainability education coordinator, further explained the origins of this year's structure, explaining, "the idea was developed a number of years ago by Dr. Goddard and other faculty. They had worked hard to launch this program in 2020 when COVID prevented them from doing so. This year, Dr. Goddard brought it back as a pitch for what we should do and we ran with it."

Kelly also spoke to the value of this year's structure as it will continue into the future, commenting, "the goal is that students over their time here will get a unique experience every year while retaining the structure, and students will be able to anticipate what's coming and look forward to it."

Climate Action Day operated with a

'digital detox' policy, in which students must leave their phones in their dormitories or homes while engaging with activities promoting environmental sustainability.

Reactions to Tuesday's programming, from students and teacher chaperones alike, was largely positive.

Upper Bellen Anastas, who participated in a beach cleanup on Jenness State Beach in Rye, New Hampshire, shared how her activity both reinforced themes of sustainability and also allowed her to learn something new. Anastas reflected, "there's a lot of trash that you wouldn't consider to be on the beach. For example, you would think when you go to the beach, you're gonna see a bunch of bottles and cans, but really what we found was a lot of rope and small pieces of plastic that's tangled up in kelp and algae."

Prep Nico Bowers, also reflected on the value of learning about the coordination of Exeter's on-campus systems when it comes to sustainability. Bowers commented, "it revealed to me just how coordinated a lot of the background of Exeter is, and how it's hard to make things sustainable with all of that in mind." He reflected further, saying, "all of it comes together so seamlessly, and I think we were just finally exposed to how that actually happens."

Prep Oliver Choi commented on the benefit of taking a break from electronics to the overall well-being of students. "CAD made me realize that, although smartphones

can be useful in studies, it isn't bad to take a break from these devices and try to immerse yourself in the present moment," Choi reflected. Choi also recalled his restful nap following the programming that allowed him to compensate for his decreased amount of sleep due to the intensive school work for the past week.

Lower Srisha Bonapoli added on, talking about how detoxing affected her day, "Even with the new systems implemented around our school to get us off our phones, having a few hours where we were not allowed to bring them out allowed me to really step back and enjoy the beautiful day. Also, my head felt quieter as I was just focused on pulling weeds and helping make a beautiful garden."

Students' and chaperones' experiences fit well into the intended goals of the day, as Kelly put it, "getting people to just be outside for a large portion of the day and get to connect with the place." Kelly further explained the goals, saying, "New Hampshire is an awesome state. It has many unique ecosystems. The structure of our day to day life here at Exeter does not give us a lot of time to leave campus and enjoy them. Climate Action Day is like a really amazing opportunity to get a whole community out."

The goals of Climate Action Day are also closely related to PEA's broader sustainability goals, and this single day exists on a backdrop of larger and constant efforts by the

school to be more sustainable.

The Academy's Climate Action Plan, released in 2023, features three main goals: The first being to ensure that every student has a "fundamental understanding of the principles of sustainability and the issues posed by climate change." The second to reduce scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions (2005 baseline) 75% by 2031, and achieve zero carbon emissions by 2050. The third goal is integration, integrating principles of sustainability into "all Exeter programs and operations."

Kelly spoke to Exeter's current stance about these three overarching goals, saying that the school is "on track" to achieve their 75% goal by 2031, and will continue to move toward carbon zero. Tuesday's programming, according to Kelly, mostly focused on goals one and three: education and integration.

Kelly explained that the school offers a basic understanding of sustainability and climate change incorporated into introductory science courses, as well as offering many electives in the environmental sciences. Alongside the scientific understanding, the school offers a variety of avenues of sustainability education, namely the "critical thinking and ethical thinking tools to engage in questions around sustainability" and "relationship with place," the latter of which is embraced by Climate Action Day.

So by getting students to really understand local ecosystems and

the New Hampshire landscape, students build a relationship and respect for the environment. Kelly remarked, "You can't figure out what's sustainable in a place if you don't know and understand that place."

Climate Action Day amid the backdrop of Exeter's sustainability practices also speaks to the third goal of the Climate Action Plan: Integration. Kelly and many others are inspired by the many conversations surrounding integration that are happening around campus. Integration of sustainability themes into programs and operations can be felt in assembly speakers about sustainability, continuing to expand the Dining Hall's sustainability practices, changes in the curriculum, or global initiatives.

After all, Kelly said, "the solutions to climate change aren't ever going to be one size fits all." To Kelly and the organizers of this year's climate action day, conversations around sustainability and the climate crisis demand unique and diverse perspectives, each tailoring to the specific needs of a given ecosystem.

Whether on a dairy farm, up a mountain, or in the kitchen of the dining hall, Exonians, on Tuesday, had unique experiences to investigate and explore the local landscape and sustainability issues that surround it. By grounding themselves in the land and the place, Exeter, once again, instilled an appreciation of nature and the environment in students that surpassed the boundaries of high-school education.

## Debate Cont.

tion rounds.

Teetering on the brink of breaking, the team's performance on day two fell short. "We didn't win our last two rounds, which left us one win away from breaking," Dagayach said.

Still, the performance was largely perceived as an Exeter success. "We beat a lot of teams," Kim celebrated, "and next year, we plan to dominate the competition!"

Equally important, the extensive travel and nature of the tournament bonded the members together. "I think the chemistry between this team was very strong and having some diversity in terms of age helped as well," Agarwal noted. "There was a lot of intellectual humility in the sense

that we all respected each other as very strong debaters and there was no reason to turn someone's ideas down. We all knew that there was something to value from everyone."

Ultimately, regardless of the results, the outing at the TOC is indicative of the remarkable pace at which the Academy's debate program is flourishing at. Earlier this year, Segal capped a first-place finish at the Harvard National Speech and Debate tournament, in what was one of the most impressive outcomes in recent Exeter debate history. The team's performances at the TOC further emphasizes what is becoming a recurring idea: there are only good things to come for the future of Exeter debate.



Exeter Debate Team in Lexington, Kentucky.

Aryan Agarwal / *The Exonian*

## » SOTW: CECILY REED

Read about Reed's Odyssey on campus, 4.

## » FOTW: ALEX BRAILE

Read about Braile '10's contributions back to the community, 5.

## » MEDITATION

Read about Charlie Vance's journey in understanding his identity, 7.

## The Cecilyyssey: An Epic, of Sorts



CAECILIA STAT ET SUBRIDET GRADIBUS DAVIS

Miles Terner / The Exonian

By **LOLA ACBOOLA, KAYLEE GONG, LYDIA KUHNERT, and DIYA SANDEEP**

*Crescit Eundo*

It grows as it goes.

Most children receive somewhat similar gifts for their 12th birthday: things like toy trains, Barbie dolls, bracelet making kits, or mechanical dinosaurs. And, most children lose these gifts in a matter of a few years — bracelets get broken, dinosaurs stop working, and trains stop running.

On the morning of her 12th birthday, a small, blonde-headed Cecily Reed received those usual things — a new pair of shoes, shiny pens, a stuffed animal — as well as a small envelope from her little brother. In it, he had enclosed a home-made coupon. It read “TEN FREE LATIN LESSONS,” scribbled neatly in crayon.

At the time, Reed wasn't able to redeem her gift; Latin tutors are sparse and hard to come-by, even in a metropolis as busy as Washington DC. But, unlike her glitter pens and new-shoes, the coupon stuck with her. The unfulfilled covenant waited, in the back of her mind, and glued into a little notebook she kept in her room. And, as all promises are, that are truly fas, it would one day be answered.

Today, Reed lives in a cozy room on the second floor of Dunbar Hall, though she would protest that her true home is about a ten-minute walk away, in a booth at Obā. On campus, she's a bit of a ἡγεμών — a hegemon, for those of us who haven't yet had the pleasure (or pain) of taking Greek. Reed runs cross-country, leads the competitive wing of the illustrious Kirtland Society, commands History Club, and sings in a-capella. Her

friends describe her as a bit of a renaissance woman.

Reed was brought up in Washington D.C., quite fittingly when you consider her deep passion for American history. There, she was raised off books — not just any books, but history books. Starting in kindergarten, she refused to read anything that didn't relate to the subject. “I learned how to understand people through books,” she reflected. “My entire sense of the world comes through books. It's given me this feeling that everything is a story, and that you can map any relationship, any space of time, look at the factors, and make a story. It gave me a desire to understand everything.”

Reed was that kid who slinked away from the tree-fort to read her book during recess. Her mother supplied her with endless tomes and encouraged the habit: “Anything that I expressed an interest in, any class I was taking, anything that was like a period in my life, she would get me a full stack of books pertaining to the subject so that I could understand everything about it.”

Engulfed by the worlds of Washington and Jefferson, Octavian and Nero, Reed could have easily left behind the world around her, if not for her father's persistent effort to get her to do some character-building labor. Reed explained, “He would always say, ‘Cecily, you can hate me as much as you want, but I will never let you be boring.’” Long hours spent helping out on a farm, exercising, and trekking about the Virginia woods helped build up Reed's fierce animus.

As she grew, Reed soured more and more on the thought of staying put in D.C.. As early as 6th grade, she was researching the best boarding schools in the country. She was driven by a need for inde-

pendence, an obsessive desire to consume more knowledge, but above all, the hope of finding a community of like-minded individuals: “I really wanted to meet people who cared as much about history as I did, for its own sake, and who I could talk to about it.”

She arrived on the Academy's campus during the Fall of 2022. However, Reed soon realized there was a stark contrast between her imagined conception of Exeter, and its reality. “I had a really hard time adjusting — my immediate instinct was that I had very different values than everybody else. I took it as a sign that I was wrong, and that if nobody else agreed with me, then I was the one who had to change. So I changed everything.”

For many months, Reed's sense of self swayed vigorously. She began wearing poorly-done make-up, wasn't focusing in classes, and even played water-polo. Although she had come to Exeter for it, she struggled in finding a community as passionate about the (admittedly incredibly nerdy) passions she held. The process of then finding herself at Exeter took years, but began in a dark, dingy room on the second floor of the Academy Building.

Reed joined Kirtland Society her prep year, though at the time she took Chinese and hadn't touched a lick of Latin in her life. She was drawn to the club by her love for classical history and mythology, passions derived from her endless childhood reading. It felt like she was back to her roots. “I would go to these Kirtland meetings, and just feel like all of my worries would be left at the doors of the Latin study,” Reed reflected.

At the time, Kirtland was one of the biggest clubs on campus. The Latin

Study was always bursting with people, as club numbers pushed 30, or even 40 consistent attendees. “It was exactly the dream I had had of a shared community of people who cared so much about the Classics,” she explained, “and who were reveling in the joy of learning and sharing knowledge with other people. It was so insanely fun, and all I wanted.”

Quickly after joining Kirtland, Reed was pulled to the competitive side of things. Under the tutelage of then-lower Rishi Gurudervan, the Master Oogway of Latin Quizbowl, she was trained in the glorious combat of Certamen. Senior Jinmin Lee recalled, “She was just buzzing after buzzing on the myth questions. Rishi would throw these Jolly Ranchers whenever you'd get a question right, and I remember she had a whole pile in front of her, a whole mountain. Our respect was immense.”

It was at Kirtland that she met two of her best friends, Lee and now-senior Andrew Gould. Even as preps, the three of them would spend long hours debating philosophy, theology, and the best type of boba. Gould reflected, “What I love most about Cecily is that we can have these really serious conversations about life, about what we want to do, about philosophy, but within the conversations, woven into it, are jokes that were thrown back and forth. We're always laughing. We're not taking ourselves too seriously, even as we're talking about really serious things. It's a really beautiful and unique quality of hers.”

Over the summer of her prep year, Reed attended the National Junior Classical League convention to compete for New Hampshire in Certamen. She got absolutely smoked. Requisite in pacem, type smoked. The team didn't have a

“soul,” as Reed would put it. “It really taught me that a team like a team needs an emotional register as well as just an accomplishment register,” she said. They didn't have it that year — but more on this later.

Reed joined a different type of team when she returned in the Fall — cross-country. After months of Lee protesting that long-distance running was the meaning of life, she finally decided to give in. Halfway through the season, she shot an email to the coach and asked to join the team. Despite the unusual circumstances, the coach took a chance and let her join. “That decision that happened on a whim was probably one of the most important decisions of my entire time at Exeter. My sense of self still wasn't really tethered to anything, but when I started doing cross-country it gave me something that I cared about, that I could put effort in. It was insanely satisfying, and as I became closer with the team, I began to grow a sense of purpose.”

There, she immediately became an essential member of the squad. Senior Lucia Rosen commented, “Cross-country is a brutal sport; a lot of the time you're like suffering as you're running, so a lot of the time you're trying to lighten the mood. Cecily always brightens every run. She'll make jokes, she'll be funny, she'll be loud, and make the whole run so much more enjoyable.”

When she wasn't running, Reed was writing direct-examinations for Mock Trial, studying Chinese, and locking on Roman history. Throughout the year, she grew more and more intense about Certamen, and about the need to win. During her prep year, she had had a moderately toxic relationship with the game: “I would use this mental trick when I was buzzing:

they would say things and I would imagine myself falling, jumping off a cliff and falling through a web of answers. As they said clues, something would catch me and that's when I would buzz. So, every single time I missed a question I would imagine myself falling on the floor and shattering.”

After Nationals in her prep year, she and a few other Certamen players developed the theory of “soul,” and compiled it into a Google Doc. Luckily for all of you, I have gained access to this top secret strategy. The document explains, “Each player on every team in a round has a soul. It is a blend of confidence, mindset, and brain strain. The team with the greatest soul often wins.”

During the first Nationals, her team didn't have a “soul.” After it, every single action the team made while in-round was aimed at either scoring, or protecting that soul. Small things, like fist-bumping, cheering on each other after a mistake, and just having a good time, made all the difference. Throughout lower year, Reed's intermediate Certamen team played extraordinarily well, placing second at Harvard, and third in the country.

She was a Certamen beast. Reed would often buzz on the very first few words of a question. Lee reflected on what makes her such a good player, saying, “I think it's because she just really enjoys reading. I haven't seen someone else able to devour so much about so many different things as she does. It's easy to get a very shallow but broad understanding of things in Certamen, by studying sets, but she actually reads the texts. That makes a huge difference in the quality and the depth of her thought.”

Throughout the year, as she grew more serious

CECILY, 4.

## FOTW: Community Circle with Emily Quirk

By **MAGGIE KOTKOWSKI, ARISA YOSHINO, and ANNIE ZHU**

As the girls approach the finish line of a winding, hilly cross country course, the cheering amplifies. Their lungs ache and their legs threaten to give out, but one voice cuts through the crowd. Ms. Emily Quirk stands near the finish line, shouting words of encouragement as her athletes make their final push. Whether you're in her classroom, in the McConnell common room, or miles into a long run, Ms. Quirk is always rooting for you, her voice the loudest in the pack.

Finishing her fourth year at Phillips Exeter Academy, Quirk is a cherished teacher, colleague, cross country coach, and dorm faculty of McConnell Hall. Her unique approach to teaching and intense passion for coaching have been foundational to building a multi-faceted presence on campus.

Quirk's aspirations for a career in education sprouted at a young age. "I have known I wanted to be an English teacher since I was 16," she reflected. She had always had an intense love for reading, and "I had really amazing teachers and I wanted to spend my life talking about books with students," she said.

After completing her undergraduate degree at Bowdoin College, Quirk completed

a master's degree in specialized education at a school of education affiliated with a charter school. Much of her learning focused on proactive and reactive classroom management, and developing curricula that engaged students. "It was very focused on classroom management and had this expectation that students would not be engaged in the material," she explained.

While this was a unique experience for her, Quirk realized that she had mastered a very specific approach for a specific type of school, and was compelled to pursue a more "traditional" masters in education. "I missed being a student and studying just for studying's sake, and I felt like there were a lot of gaps in the way that I taught," Quirk said. This desire pushed her to study at Harvard's School of Education in a one-year program, where she took classes in "adolescent development, literacy and reading, community development, and creating classrooms that are inclusive."

Growing up in Kansas City, Quirk had not been familiar with boarding school culture. However, once she completed her year at Harvard, Quirk accepted a job at Berwick Academy in Maine, where she lived and worked in their dorm program, consisting of just eight boarders who were mainly athletes. "It was a really rewarding experience, and ... I

really liked the idea of living and working with students in a way that goes beyond just a day school," she reflected. This love for boarding school culture is what eventually drew Quirk to Exeter.

If you've ever had Quirk as a teacher, the phrase "Community Circle," will bring a smile to your face. A unique practice that Quirk integrates into all her classes, Community Circles are discussions at the beginning of class where every student, and of course, Quirk, shares their answer to the question of the day. Questions range from what everyone did over the weekend, to people's favorite character in the class's current book. The ten minutes at the beginning of class that often spill into more create genuine connections between the students in the class, and with Quirk as well. But this is just one of the ways that she fosters true bonds with her students.

"Something that is unique about Quirk is her conscientious approach to one-on-one conversations with students about the writing process," Instructor in English Nova Seals commented. "She asks really good questions to walk writers through their writing in a way that helps them not only edit and revise their papers, but helps writers develop their own style."

This approach allows Quirk's students

to develop an individual relationship with her. "Ms. Quirk knows you, and if she doesn't, then she wants to and tries to," lower Nolan Fletcher said. "She connects with all of her students, and she can spot and draw out the strengths of anyone and everyone so they can do their very best."

Chair of the English Department Barbara Desmond echoed this sentiment, highlighting the high standard that Quirk holds for her students. "She expects a lot, but she is generous with her support and will make you believe that you can take that first draft to the next level with your revision," Desmond shared. "It's this combination of generosity, faith in her students, and high expectations that really sets her apart as a teacher and a coach."

One of the most important things that makes Quirk such a good teacher, though, is her love of books. All English teachers like to read, but with Quirk, it is a true passion that is evident in any discussion with her. "She just loves to read so much and it makes me want to read too," Quirk's advisee Lexie Sebastian shared with a smile. Quirk explained that she is always thinking about if she could teach a book she's reading: "I always get so excited to teach one of the books that I love, so at any point when I'm reading

**QUIRK, ?.**

Blair Li / *The Exonian*

Ms. Quirk sits in front of her desk with a collection of lovely bits and bobs.



## Community Raises Thousands at Relay for Life

By **LUKE CHON, OWEN SAFFORD, ANGEL WAI-HER-NANDEZ, and OLIVIA WANG**

On April 18, laughter and music spilled out from Rink A. Booths, activities, and members of the Exeter community filled the space. As the clock hit seven, Instructor in Mathematics Jared Schofer began running along the track, lined with luminaria bags decorated with names and messages to the lives touched by cancer, to represent the energy of Relay for Life.

Students flooded into the rink, lining up to purchase tickets. With these red tickets in hand, they could participate in fun activities, buy food and

drinks made by dorms, teams, and clubs on campus, and enter the raffle for prizes provided by faculty and staff. As of April 21, Exeter raised \$19,746 as a community, significantly surpassing last year's proceeds and the original \$10,000 fundraising goal for 2026. Adding the funds raised with the Street Cafe collaboration, the Academy will be hitting \$20,000 this year, setting the record of the highest amount Exeter has ever raised at Relay for Life.

Relay for Life is a nationwide event to celebrate cancer survivors, remember loved ones lost, and fight back against every cancer as we come to

**RELAY, ?.**

## Academy Hosts Annual Take Back the Night

By **JOHANNA HILLMAN, ARIAN AMETZGER, and OLIVIA SZCZEPANSKI**

This past Friday, April 17, EPAC was a hub of activity. White T-shirts lined the walls and were strung on clotheslines throughout the space, while students bounced from table to table participating in activities. Students and faculty alike joined together to Take Back the Night.

Take Back The Night is an event hosted by Exonians Against Sexual Assault, H4, and the Office of Student Wellbeing to raise awareness for and to educate people about sexual assault. Nearly 20 clubs set up booths for TBTN, showcasing the strong student support across all grades.

Kaitlyn Martin Fox, a religion instructor and faculty adviser of EASA, explained the reasoning behind the event. "Take Back The Night has historically been an event that raises awareness about the prevalence of sexual assault in communities and promotes ending all forms of sexual violence," said Martin Fox. "Sometimes, survivors can feel like no one really understands what they're going through. I think the kind of awareness that this event brings creates a space that can allow someone to share their experiences, or at least just feel less alone."

EASA cohead and senior Camryn Reimert shared a similar idea, describing the event's specific focus on nighttime. "We are reclaiming a space where we can feel comfortable," said C. Reimert.



She described how, when sexual assault occurs, "there's always blame put on women ... [p]eople say, 'what was she wearing?' or 'why was she out at night?' So we're reclaiming the night," she explained.

"I think the main idea of the event is combating stigma around sexual assault," said Feminist Union Cohead, lower Julienne Morris-Scott. "It's something that's not talked about enough. I'm a new student here, and at my old school, sexual assault was never talked about. It wasn't an event, and it wasn't a conversation," she recalled.

Prep Rowan McNally agreed with Morris-Scott. "People don't speak out about sexual assault," said McNally. "It's something that people are usually embarrassed about, or they're scared of what will happen if they tell somebody."

Some also connected the event to the Consent Training given to the student body at the beginning of each year. "The event goes hand in hand with the consent messaging that we do at the beginning of the year," said senior Lydia Reimert. "I like that this event always ties that back in, because I think it's really important to remember."

"It's such an incredible event for Exeter," commented Sherry Hernandez, the Dean of Multicultur-

**TBTN, ?.**

# Cecily Cont.

about Certamen, Reed also grew more serious about the possibility of becoming a real Latin student: “I began to study Latin by myself because at this point I knew that this is what I wanted to do. I knew that I would get the Classics Diploma or die.”

Graduating with a Classical Diploma is notoriously difficult: you need the equivalent of four years of Latin, and two years of Greek. Unaccelerated, that’s six years of Classical language in total. Reed was going to try to do it in two. By accelerating straight into fourth year Latin — intensive Cicero and Vergil — and taking intensive Greek, it was technically possible, but an immense mountain of work. Instructor in Classical Languages Sally Morris described, “There are two problems for a student ‘who wants to teach themselves the first two years of Latin’ here at Exeter: one is that our Latin programme is very traditional, and requires that you know the grammar absolutely perfectly, so you can defend your choice of translation. The second part is we slowly, slowly start introducing literary analysis in the second year of Latin — very minimally, but we do.”

Naturally then, Reed was advised against it. A lot. “Nobody thought that I could do it. Mr. Unger and Mr. Hartnett sent me a bunch of emails saying, ‘Sure, you can try but it’s always failed,’” she said. Nevertheless, her mind was set. Her brother’s promise of someday getting Latin lessons would be fulfilled.

Reed spent lower summer working a nine to five in China, practicing her Mandarin and reading Latin under the table. Throughout her weeks away, studying Latin held her together and gave her a sense of purpose. She commented, “My bosses would give me work to do, but also not enough, so I would just be sitting there and working on my Latin.” Even upon her return to the States, Reed spent the rest of her summer sitting on a hammock at the beach, scrolling on Whitaker’s

words.

Upper fall. Back to campus. First term of Latin 411, intensive sequence. “I got a C- on the first quiz. I spent six hours studying for that one quiz,” she exclaimed. “I would ask so many questions in class and I felt so stupid. I was sitting there at the table with everybody who knew exactly what they were talking about.”

That didn’t last long. Latin was her favorite class before midterm. Lots of work, time spent in office-hours, and creative analysis got her far. In a matter of months, Reed realized she was exactly where she was meant to be, and where she shined brightest. Instructor in Classical Languages, Nick Unger described, “As a literary critic of Vergil, she was in her own league. She would see things in the text that no one else did, and her questions always propelled the class discussion in new and fruitful directions.”

Morris emphasized, “She’s absolutely fearless, and she sees things in a really colourful way. Even if she’s translating one of the most mundane lines, she’ll use flowery language to make it sound much more interesting. You sort of say, well, what’s the root of that verb or what’s the root of that noun? And she’ll be able to tell you exactly, as well as all the options that she chose from.”

Meanwhile, Reed was nearing the end of upper year, and the end of the U.S. History sequence. Upper spring, she got injured, and no longer had the outlet of running that was so dear to her. I think it’s pretty fair to say that when most people no longer have their usual releases, they turn to things like maybe music, drawing, or even Instagram Reels. Reed turned to Benedict Arnold’s left leg. “The one thing I had was my 333,” she explained. “I know it’s ridiculous, but I had always wanted to write a really good 333, so I was just like ‘you know what? I’m gonna write the most baller 333 that’s ever existed.’”

She met with Instructor



CAECILIA SCRIBIT SENTENTIAS SAPIENTISSIMAS

Miles Turner / *The Exonian*

in History Troy Samuels for a grand total of around eight to nine hours. That’s a lot of 333. Her topic of American relics began as an interest, then became an obsession, and finally culminated in a 30 page (including appendices!) Negley-winning paper. Samuels commented, “It’s an absolute delight to read. It’s really learned, well thought out, incredibly self-indulgent. It’s brilliant, but at the same time, you sometimes want to throw water balloons at the person writing it because they could say the exact same thing with like 70 percent less footnotes, 70 percent less personality and it would still be good, but you would miss something intrinsic to it. I think that’s kind of the fun of working with her: it’s just ‘I am passionate. I have done the work. Here I am on a page.’”

The impact of her intellectual brilliance doesn’t just end on a page, but rather, naturally spreads to those around her and those lucky enough to work with her. Lee related, “Having her as a partner in that English class allowed me to take intellectual risks. Even if I knew what I was doing was a little bit outlandish or something I’d never tried before, I knew I’d be able to get her feedback and make it so much better.” Samuels added that her impact is strongly felt at the Harkness table, raising the standard for the rest of the class: “The excitement and passion she brings makes you want to be engaged,

makes you want to take part, and also puts down a marker of ‘this is what good work looks like.’”

Though one might mistakenly assume Reed’s talents end in the classroom and on the field, she is also an extraordinarily talented artist — in words, colours, and musical notes. In her free time, Reed paints watercolor, gifting personalized pieces to her friends. “It’s my purest love,” she explained to me. “That along with singing. Those are the two things where it doesn’t matter how good I am at it — I just love it.”

It’s necessary for us here to take a brief intermission in order to discuss the fine establishment that is Oba Noodle Bar. I love Oba. You probably love Oba. I guarantee you, Reed loves Oba more than both of us combined and put together. She has been a regular since the first few weeks of prep year. She has a signature drink, called “The Cecily” — three scoops of Boba, mango lemonade half cut with water, and no fruit. The women who work there even know the date of her graduation. Reed is deeply grateful for all of them: “The ladies there have seen my struggles. They’ve seen me come in alone, and they’ve seen me come in with like a whole gang of friends.” She added, “If you go into Oba and you ask them for ‘the Cecily,’ they will give you a taste of heaven.”

Reed has inflicted this “taste of heaven” on almost all her friends. These trips to Oba provide much needed time with friends, after long busy days. Senior Shay Kashif related, “I don’t really care much for Oba, but almost every Wednesday after history club, I go along with her because she drags me there. So we go on these walks, and then usually end up just talking about

what’s been up with our lives and checking in. I get some girl advice from her then, you know? It’s great.”

Even in the midst of senior fall, during a particularly bad week, or right before a test, Reed can be spotted smiling, making jokes, and caring for others. It’s not to be mistaken that this is just an easy, careless way of being. Reed puts in a concerted effort to make sure she is there for others. Lee emphasized, “On the surface, you might think that that’s just who she is, she’s very positive and things just come easier to her... That’s part of it, but she also makes a tremendous effort to make sure she’s always caring for other people. She puts in so much effort behind the scenes that people don’t know about, to be an extremely thoughtful person and have a positive outlook on things even when it’s difficult.”

This thoughtfulness seeps into everything she does. Now a senior, Reed leads the clubs where she first found herself with both care and passion. She is always the first to cheer when someone enters the room, the first to fist-bump you after a good buzz, and, of course, the first to suggest a club Boba run. She has a certain infectious spirit that makes you just as passionate, and just as thrilled to be learning Caligula’s horse’s name (Incitatus, for those wondering).

Throughout four long years of hard work, Reed has managed to keep her passion at the center of everything she does. I think most of us Exonians can relate to feeling the need to do a club or activity we dislike, just because we think we need to in order to be successful. Reed is the antithesis of that. Senior Sam Altman put it best: “She’s a reminder that you can be successful at Exeter with-

out selling yourself out, professing beliefs you don’t believe in, or working dead end jobs in clean-cut clubs you don’t care about. You really can have an authentic Exeter experience and still be very successful.”

That’s not to say that just because it’s been authentic, it’s been easy — Reed has suffered, and worked, and felt the real pain of Exeter, just like you and I. But, that first C- in Latin; her upper Spring injured; her many long hours spent reflecting on the meaning of it all; all these things, everything that has ever hurt, or made her suffer, has, in the end, made her more: *Crescit eundo*. It grows as it goes.

“That’s kind of my take,” she concluded, smiling. “If you come to Exeter and you just succeed, succeed, succeed, then you haven’t gotten anything out of it. There’s no point if you aren’t gonna take a beating. I definitely felt like I was getting quadruple whammied on every front, but that is how you learn from Exeter and that is how you allow Exeter to help you grow.”

Stuffed in the back of one of Reed’s many drawers, is a worn little notebook. In it, you can find every letter she ever received from the ages of 10 to 12, as well as one small coupon. It reads, “TEN FREE LATIN LESSONS.” Well, Reed has taken her Latin lessons. She has fulfilled her covenant, learned, grown, and worked hard off. Unger concluded, “There is a word in ancient Greek — *δαεινός* — that means ‘clever’ but can also connote ‘marvelous, wonderful,’ as in ‘Odysseus is such a *δαεινός* speaker that he seems divinely inspired.’ In my mind, Cecily is a *δαεινή* Classics student.”

A divinely inspired classicist. Τιμή, Cecily. Τιμή.

Courtesy of Cecily Reed



ET LEGENS LIBROS... HORATIVUS!

Miles Turner / *The Exonian*



ECCE! VERO, PULCHERRIMA ARS CAECILIAE

# A Trial of Miles and Many Miles of These Trials: Owen

## Welch's Meditation

By EILENA DING and ELLINA KIM

“A question that always haunts me is whether I would run if everyone on the planet disappeared.”

The church was packed as senior Owen Welch stood to deliver his meditation titled “Running for my Life.” In the front rows sat his cross country and track teammates, his closest friends, and his favorite teachers. However every single person who experienced the words of Welch’s meditation left the church with a greater understanding of his passion, talent, and perseverance. Framed through his running journey, Welch’s meditation taught listeners what it really means to put your entire heart into something.

The final chords of Oasis’s Live Forever faded as Welch’s story began. He described biking beside his mom while she ran, till finally, his competitive nature took over, and he decided to give running a try. Welch explained, “I saw riding the bike when my mom was running as taking the easy way out.”

However this first run

did not come as easy as Welch had hoped. “When our meager two miles were up, I bent to the hands-on-knees fetal position of the done-it distance runner, infumed at the weakness I had uncovered.”

Despite the challenge running posed for Welch, he seemed to keep coming back to it. After a season of basketball, and a season of soccer, Welch decided it was time for the “cleats [to be] traded for lighter, more efficient spikes, and the heavy soccer jerseys swapped for a trim singlet.”

Welch won his first race while running elementary school cross country. After this victory, he dialed in on his training. However running still proved extremely difficult, physically but also mentally. “There were many runs when it was hot, and my stomach hurt, and I didn’t want to keep running, so I stopped, and I cried... not [because of] the pain of the thing itself, but my inability to cope with it. These mid-run panic attacks actually got worse as time passed and I got faster because I had the expectation that running would get easier.”

Once Welch reached fifth grade, he found he could truly call himself a runner. He continued to develop his competitive personality, but never lost his resilience. “I had the strength in my legs to employ the simple expedient of running away from everyone, and that is what I did every race ... but I never got discouraged by being beaten. I would challenge them again and again until they couldn’t play anymore or I won.”

After a humorous anecdote about impressing a girl at his school, Welch confessed, “I loved it when people would be amazed by how fast I was ... I mainly loved the attention I got from running, not the process itself.”

This conflict followed Welch to Exeter, where he joined the track and cross country teams. During his upper winter, Welch was forced to pause his training due to an injury

to his IT band. “I felt like I was blindly moving through my days without rhythm or meaning. For eight months I had to grapple with life without running... you feel tired and moral lethargic who cares if I stay up until 2 a.m. kind of way. This kills... At a certain point I was prepared to give up running.”

But eventually, Welch healed and found his way back to the trails. Welch

concluded that despite his struggles with running, it will always be one of the most important things in his life. “I love running because it tests the limits of my heart, which makes me grow. To have found meaning in that is to have found meaning in life because what is life if not a trial of miles and many miles of these trials?”

“I feel like running

MED, ?.



Sean Ricard / The Exonian

## Relay Cont.

gether for every life. It is an educational and fundraising event for the American Cancer Society to support cancer research. For more than two decades, the Student Activities and ESSO office has been making an effort to raise money through hosting this fundraising event annually in mid-April.

At local relays across the U.S., teams take turns walking or running around a track for 6 to 24 hours, to spread awareness that cancer never sleeps. “At Exeter, we’ve shortened the event to a one-night event, and we try to get people to walk in solidarity on a track to bring more awareness to cancer,” Director of Service Learning Elizabeth Reyes said.

For many Exonians, Relay for Life is an opportunity to both support cancer research and bring the community together. “We host a fun event while educating people on cancer research and making a huge donation,” lower Maddie Barrett, one of the Public Relations coordinators of the event said.

Reyes and the leadership team focused on engaging the entire campus community by encouraging all groups to host a booth at Relay for Life. “[The leadership team] reached out to students from all over campus to try to get all the different clubs, teams, dorms involved, because we don’t want it just to be

a dorm event, or just a sport event, or just a STEM event,” she said. “We want it to be for everyone.”

Planning for Relay for Life began in December of 2025. The leadership team met regularly to work out the details of the event, from the outreach team organizing the booths to the luminaria team organizing the concluding ceremony of the event. Upper Christie Charles explained that the committee would meet almost every Thursday to go over the vision and goals of Relay for Life 2026, and brainstorm new initiatives to make the event even better compared to past years.

The leadership team is composed of multiple teams. The co-chairs oversee all the subcommittees, which include the luminaria team, the outreach team, and the public relations team. Upper Kobi Ajene, one of the co-chairs for Relay for Life, explained this structure, stating, “As a co-chair, my responsibility is to make sure all the subcommittees are on top of their work.”

Upper Ava Pimental, another of the co-chairs, expanded on her and Kobi’s role in the event. She noted, “As co-chairs, we have worked closely with Ms. Reyes to handle logistics and big picture things in planning.”

The leadership committee also emphasized

the importance of student turnout. Upper Regan Coco, one of the luminaria leaders for the event, underlined the importance of this. “I think getting everything out there, so that they all kind of know about Relay for Life, has probably been the biggest thing,” she reflected.

Lower Arisa Yoshino, one of the public relations leaders, echoes Coco’s sentiments, explaining how “we had to do a lot of publicity and marketing, and reach out to people directly.” Through these strategies, Relay for Life achieved a large student turnout, making the event all the more powerful when it occurred.

A new feature that was added to the event was the fundraising collaboration with Street, a fusion restaurant in town. On Tuesday, if students dine in Street, 20 percent of the bill will be donated to PEA Relay for Life. The committee reached out to all the resources they have, both on-campus and off-campus, to encourage participation and donation efforts.

As the night came to a close, the rink quieted and the track slowly emptied, but our commitment to remember, to support, and to fight back. For Exonians, Relay for Life is more than an event. It is a shared act of hope and remembrance. Together, students bring what they learn in the classroom and take the connections they build on campus toward something larger than themselves.

## Quirk Cont.

always wondering what it would look like to teach this book.”

The classroom isn’t the only place you’ll encounter Quirk on campus. “[Exeter] is very much focused on teaching the student but also having a lot of meaningful extracurricular opportunities,” Quirk said, pointing especially to the Academy’s interscholastic athletics. Quirk is also an assistant coach for Exeter’s cross country team.

Coaching cross country has been a key constant in Quirk’s career. “I did cross country when I worked in Boston, I coached cross country when I was at Berwick, and now I’m one of the cross country coaches here,” she said. Although Exeter’s team is the largest team she’s worked with, she credits the coaching staff for making the scale manageable. More importantly, “I love [coaching] because it’s such a great way to see students in a different context,” Quirk explained.

Her athletes feel this change in context as well. Lower Olivia Littlefield, a member of the team, emphasized Quirk’s attentiveness to her athletes: “In a mentally tough sport where overtraining injuries are super common, Coach Quirk teaches us to trust ourselves and is attentive when an athlete does not feel her best.”

“She really tries to make sure that everyone’s enjoying the sport which can get hard,” Senior Lucia Rosen, who has been on the team for her 3 years at Exeter, reflected. “[She] really just pumps the fun back into it and it’s really important to do that since

it’s such a hard sport.”

On race days, this energy is unmistakable. Quirk is always the loudest cheerleader on the course. “I can vouch for most people on the team—seeing her during any race and her screaming, ‘you’re so strong,’ is ingrained in everyone’s mind,” lower Anika Nystedt said.

Seals, whose son is also on the cross country team, emphasized Quirk’s sportsmanship. “She cheers for other teams’ runners when there’s no one cheering for them,” she shared. “It’s just so her.”

Quirk is equally enthusiastic and caring at McConnell Hall, bringing her uplifting spirit to all dorm members. As a dorm faculty and adviser, Quirk has aimed to bring a supportive and lively environment to the dorm, always offering snacks and an ear to listen.

Lower and McConnell member Addi Kuper particularly appreciates the advice Quirk provides. “She’s always in the common room ready to help people out with whatever they need, whether it’s your English homework or you have something personal going on in your life,” she said.

An avid fan of Taylor Swift, Quirk adds a spark to the dorm atmosphere through her love of music, often planning special themed album parties and movies. “She has lots of little events which are so much fun and help get everyone to come together as a dorm,” Kuper said.

Quirk’s unwavering commitment to supporting others can be seen in her advisory. “She’s always

available by text, or by phone call, or by email. I would stop by her classroom all the time,” Senior Sofia Chaudrey said. When Chaudrey had struggled with logistics regarding her ESSO Red Cross club, Quirk did not hesitate to provide support.

A member of Quirk’s advisory, senior Ellie Savino cherishes the close-knit community in her advisory as well as her caring personality. “If she’s noticed that you’re down during the day, or, even if she hasn’t talked to you in a while, she’ll always try to be there for you the best she can,” she said.

It is not uncommon to spot Quirk and her advisees strolling through town, cups of freshly brewed coffee in hand as they chat about their daily lives at school. For many of Quirk’s advisees, such as Savino, walking to cafés around town is a favorite memory and tradition. “She tries to make an effort to go into town a lot, which is something I appreciate, because it gets us out of her classroom,” Savino said.

On occasional nights, Taylor Swift songs can be heard from McConnell, her melodies drifting into the darkening quad. Paired with the lyrics of her new album is laughter from Quirk and other dorm members, as they write their new favorite songs on posters and try the themed snacks they prepared. As others around her sing along to a new song, Quirk advises someone about their upcoming narrative. Whether checking in with students in the classroom and dorm or cheering on athletes at cross country meets, it is clear that for those around her, Quirk will always go the extra mile.

## Med Cont.

is kind of my identity, so I sort of just gravitated right towards that.,” said Welch, “so if there’s anything that [was] going to be really easy to write a 10-page paper about, it would have been running.”

The writing process of his meditation ended with surprising himself. “I’m someone who[se] 333 and all that [were] all done in one night. I kind of expected the meditation to be the same way, but it was just so fun to write that I just plugged away at it whenever I had a free moment... It is called [a] meditation, but it’s also kind of meditative to write.”

All this meditation led Welch to a new level of self-comprehension. When the time came to stand and deliver, “I think I had a lot to say, so it just kind of flowed out. I knew myself pretty well, and running was a good way to explore that... One of my friends gave me the advice that if you’re a pro-

fessor or a doctor [with a] PhD, then there’s a chance [that] you’re one of the five most knowledgeable people in the world about something. And so you’d probably be pretty confident giving a talk about something to a bunch of people.”

“Each person is not just the top five, but the number one best authoritative figure about themselves,” says Welch, recalling advice from a trusted friend.

To senior Ethan Benenson, a close friend and cross-country co-captain, Welch’s meditation stands out as one of the most memorable and touching. “[I have] seen nearly every meditation since prep year [...] His witty, thoughtful prose coupled with a clear and smooth delivery made for an overall incredible performance,” Benenson recounted.

For the cross-country team, Welch’s closing song, “Viva la Vida,” carries a great deal of emo-

tional significance. Benenson described, “It’s the last song we play on the bus home from a meet. Everyone knows the lyrics by heart, and I think it took a good deal of willpower to stop ourselves from singing along.”

To many listeners that have never had experience running cross country, Welch’s story stands as inspiration to find their life’s meaning. Prep Aanya Shah explained, “I feel like a lot about what coming to Exeter is about is exploring different things and finding the thing that you really love. It was so nice to see that [someone] really really really loves [their] thing... Even though he’s had some hardships along the way, he emphasized those hardships and how it really all built together.”

Answering his haunting question, if he would run if everyone on the planet disappeared, “I can say nowadays, apocalyptic conditions notwithstanding, I would,” and that constant state of betwixt Welch has found from running, “is precisely what I live for.”

## THE EDIT: ANDREW KING



Pearl Hara Yamazaki / *The Exonian*

By **IZZY CABRAL,**  
and **PEARL HARA**  
**YAMAZAKI**

Distinct with 60s influence and second-hand flair, prep Andrew King’s style is timeless and sophisticated. Noting “fit and drape” as some of the most important aspects of his wardrobe, King utilizes pieces such as heavy linen jackets

and button-up shirts to construct his signature look.

When asked about the state of fashion at Exeter, King conveyed his favor towards the lack of a dress code and promoted freedom of creative expression. “I think people should just be allowed to do whatever they want ... I’m not trying to change anybody’s fashion

here,” King said.

King’s sense of style emerged from a lesson in manners. “My parents decided, you know what? We’re gonna show my brother and me how being polite is actually cool. So they started showing us James Bond movies ... He dresses well. He’s polite. So I just decided to do it.”



Sean Ricard / *The Exonian*

## Academy Dances Away at Spring Formal

By **GARY GUO** and  
**DOWAN KIM**

On April 11, the music hit before the nerves could. A small crowd gathered in Grainger Auditorium under the lights, dressed up and ready to relax after a long break. Around the edges of the room, small details made the night full. Students drifted between the DJ, the snack table, and the photobooth line, coming and going with cake pops and fresh photo strips in hand.

For prep Oliver Choi, the motivation to attend was simple: Fall Formal was too fun not to run it back. “I wanted to experience the music, have fun with my friends, sing along to the songs, dance, and scream.”

On the side, a variety of snacks and treats were offered to attendants. The cake pops were particularly popular because they were rich in flavor and easy to hold. Choi explained that free food in the venue drove him to participate in the event: “I ate a huge amount of those strawberry cheesecake pieces,” he laughed.

The photobooth was one of the most popular activities during the event. Students could take three or four photos in about 30 seconds, with an average wait of five minutes in be-

tween. Students chose to save the photos on their phones by scanning the QR code or printing them from the staff worker. “It was one of my best memories of the night,” prep Evelyn Huang said. “I was able to capture the memory of the night physically.” For Huang, striking fun poses and being silly with friends made the night especially impressive.

Choi added, “I think these memories will go a long way.”

For the night, Student Council hired a DJ to play a wide variety of music, from modern pop like “Baby” by Justin Bieber to traditional pop like “From the Start” by Laufey. The DJ was able to take song requests, making the night more customizable. In the music, students danced and socialized.

Nevertheless, the event witnessed lower turnout than expected. “The event had fewer students than other Stu-Co events,” Huang observed. She explained that the issue was partly due to the limited publicity and insufficient notification of messages. “Not a lot of people knew about it, and for some people, it was simply too last-minute for them to go,” Huang said.

Choi added that many students had a busy weekend, along with tests and external engagements. To improve the situation, Choi

recommended posting additional Instagram posts and increasing word-of-mouth promotion to make the event more successful.

The timing of the event on a Saturday night also contributed to the low turnout. On the same day, eight teams had away games at locations as far as Wallingford, CT, and nine teams had home games, leaving athletes feeling too tired to stay up late to attend the spring formal.

The students could print only two or four copies of the pictures from the photo booth. Choi shared, “I hope in the future you could print out three or five copies as well, since there can be more than four people taking the photo.”

Although a few logistics students hope to make adjustments next year, most attendees left feeling the night delivered what they came for. “This year’s spring formal was really fun because I could hang out with friends, dress up formally, and eat good food during the event,” Huang shared. With music, photos, and desserts that kept people orbiting back throughout the night, the event gave students a rare pause from the usual pace of the week. “Go to these events,” Choi concluded, “be an active person, since your Exeter experience isn’t forever.”

## TBTN Cont.

al Affairs. “It empowers those who may feel hidden, unheard, or unseen and acknowledges some of the pain that they might be carrying.”

Abby, a volunteer from HAVEN, a sexual and domestic violence prevention and support center that serves Rockingham and Strafford Counties, explained the value of events like Take Back The Night from her perspective as a volunteer who works to prevent sexual assault. “We want to normalize these kinds of conversations and talk to students and younger people about why it’s so important to leave space for this,” Abby said. “Exeter is a perfect population to have these conversations with,” she added.

Martin Fox also emphasized how the event is not meant to be depressing, but joyful. “Obviously, sexual assault is a sad reality in our world and a heavy thing to hold,” she acknowledged. Then, she added, “And there can be a lot of joy in a supportive community around that, right? Difficult things are easier to hold when we have more people to hold them.”

This joyful and supportive atmosphere was reflected in the diversity of activities offered at the various booths, which included gelato, nail-painting, and spaces to write positive affirmations.

Preparation for this

year’s Take Back the Night began at the beginning of Spring Term. “It’s honestly a very well-oiled machine,” said C. Reimert. “We do pretty much the same thing every year. The big planning is reaching out to clubs, dorms, and teams, and asking them to participate.”

Martin Fox explained, “most of the logistics come from Dr. Palmer’s [the Director of Student Well-being] office, so she does the organizing of all that other stuff: booking the space, and getting the gelato, and hanging up the clothesline project.”

The individual clubs, dorms, and teams with tables did their own set-up. Typically, they come with a poster and an activity. This year, that ranged from nail-painting to trivia. Morris-Scott spoke about her favorite activity: “I’m really loving bracelet making, but I’m a little biased.”

One element of the event that stood out to many was the Clothesline Project, an exhibition of student-created T-shirts with slogans that raise awareness about consent and sexual assault and offer support to survivors. For the week preceding the event, Palmer’s office had hung the T-shirts up in EPAC. The event offered an opportunity for students to create T-shirts that will be hung in later years. “I really liked seeing all the T-shirts,” said upper Celia Ephrem. “I think it made

me a little bit more aware of how common sexual assault is, and the steps we need to take to prevent it.”

For many students, it was heartening to see many clubs represented at the event, hosting various booths. “What I liked about this is seeing so many other kids running the booths,” shared upper Logan Liu. “It’s pretty cool.”

Ephrem, who was representing Neuroscience Club, reflected on her experience running a booth. “My favorite part was hosting my booth and meeting new people. I just had so much fun getting to talk to everyone throughout the night,” said Ephrem.

Take Back the Night brought Exeter together as a community. “If there are people wondering if they have an outlet to share something that they may have experienced, this event allows for people to know that there are people here for them and that they will be believed and supported,” concluded Hernandez.

With this event, Exeter joined schools around the country to support survivors and brought attention to sexual assault. “I really hope that it’s not a subject that’s just going to end when this event ends at 8:30 p.m.,” said Morris-Scott. “I hope that these conversations continue to circulate at Exeter to make sure we are supporting survivors of sexual assault, so it doesn’t end when we stop talking about it.”

# Community Competes in Thrilling Integration Bee

By KAYLEE GONG  
and LYDIA KUHNERT

On Wednesday April 15 at 5:30 p.m. in EPAC Forum, the 3rd Annual PEA Integration Bee was held. The competition was open to all students, and qualifying took place on April 8th, which narrowed the field to just eight students. Moderated by alumnus Shiqiao Zhang '25, a current math major at MIT, and livestreamed online, the Bee was an integral opportunity to showcase Exeter's finest student mathematicians.

Zhang and alumnus Michael Lu and senior Albert Lu were the tournament directors. The three of them with Evin Liang wrote a majority of the competition's integrals—including some fun number combinations like 6 and 7. "I am happy to help back [at Exeter and with the math club] because I am personally a big fan of integration as a hobby," explained Zhang.

Furthermore, he sees a greater purpose in the Integration Bee: spreading a love for math to younger students. "Satisfying as it is to create nice integrals that encapsulate key insights, it is even more satisfying when contestants get to see these insights and work out the integrals," Zhang noted. "It is through these kinds of connections that we pass down the torch to future generations of the math club."

The competition consists of two Exonians approaching their respective whiteboard with noise cancelling headphones on and earplugs in to block out the moderator and any additional voices. They cannot see each other's work, and between them, a large slide is projected to the room. After Zhang's command—"Integrate!"—a timer starts and the integral problem is revealed on the slide. From there, contestants have two minutes to circle their answer. After

matches of three rounds and through an arranged bracket, at the end of the evening, the Integration Bee winner would be crowned.

Quarter-finals began with a match between the #1 seed, Oron Wang, and the #8 seed, Leon Xie. Both contestants successfully completed the first two integrals, before Xie slipped up on the third, advancing O. Wang straight to semis. Reflecting on his performance, Xie related, "I think it was satisfactory, though I didn't perform to my fullest ability. I put up a good fight against the first seed and possibly the future winner of this competition."

From there, quarter-finals continued to go on almost exactly as expected, with almost every top seed beating the lower seed. The most exciting moment came in Round 3, with Eli Orbach, seed #4, competing against Ryan Wang, seed #6. The two mathematicians both successfully completed

two integrals, and failed on the third. A tie-break was necessary to determine the winner.

The rules for tie-breakers are simple: the first person to circle an answer is evaluated; if it's correct, they advance to the next round. If it's wrong, their opponent does. Orbach circled "0" after about thirty seconds of furiously working at the board. The room paused, as moderators inspected his answer. Orbach was incorrect. R. Wang automatically advanced. Orbach explained, "Because it was a tie-break, I thought it would be easy, so I rushed out an answer, but it was wrong. At that moment, I felt like a rose wilted over with its petals falling out."

The difficulty of the integrals increased wildly during semis. To the untrained eye, they became practically indecipherable. Orbach commented, "Past quarter-finals, I had no idea what was going on. Like,

it was impossible as far as I'm concerned. These integrals are a branch of dark wizardry, associated with the likes of evil Gandalf and Voldemort."

Nevertheless, our semifinalists powered on. Funnily enough, three out of four semifinalist competitors had the same last name. O. Wang defeated B. Wang, and Blitz defeated R. Wang. It was time for finals. The matchup was set — O. Wang versus Blitz — a match-up most competitors had predicted before the first integral had even hit the screen.

Finals was intense. The integrals were genuinely devious. One of them was something to do with an electro-magnetic field. One of them had a confusing looking graph below it. Some of them were integrals of integrals.

Both O. Wang and Blitz successfully completed one integral, out of the five they attempted. Blitz had a few extremely close calls. In

one case, he had successfully found the correct answer, but simply ran out of time to simplify it. O. Wang reflected on his performance, saying, "I was really nervous and couldn't really think of anything like during Finals. I didn't make a lot of progress in the final questions because I was just too stressed to consider the easy stuff."

Blitz added, "I wasn't too nervous going into the final, but I was when I had 30 seconds left and needed to do a computation, which ended up failing."

After almost half an hour of integrating, O. Wang and Blitz headed into a series of tie-breakers. Unlike the tie-breakers in previous rounds, they continued until one of the contestants found a correct answer. After five rounds of integrals, O. Wang circled an answer. Everyone paused as the moderators inspected it. Senior Albert Lu raised a thumbs up. O. Wang won.

Audience members watch attentively as the bee takes place

Kaylee Gong / *The Exonian*



Competitors integrating at the board, with noise cancelling headphones on.

## » AI IN HARKNESS

Lowers Selasie Amenasor and Annie Zhu AI policy at Exeter, X.

## » HYPOCRISY

Lower Diya Sandeep critiques the use of technology in modernity, X.

## » DANCE REVOLUTION

Prep Pearl Hara Yamazaki gives fresh insight on dance at Exeter, X.

## AI at the Harkness Table

By SELASIE AMENASOR '28 and ANNIE ZHU '28

Pencils scrawl across textbooks as the discussion begins in your US History class. You feel proud of yourself, highlighting important phrases from primary sources and writing points that took you precious minutes to develop. As you are about to cut into the conversation, the person next to you begins speaking.

“George Washington’s formative milieu can be construed as an emergent nexus of proto-republican agrarian aristocracy, wherein his early exposure to Virginia’s planter-elite socio-economics instantiated a hybridized identity oscillating between colonial provinciality and nascent imperial detachment. His experiential accretion—spanning surveyance praxis, frontier militarized engagements, and mercantile-adjacent land speculation—functioned as a crucible for the iterative calibration of his hegemonic dispositions and latent administrative rationality.”

When did we ever talk about proto-republican, agrarian aristocracy? You shrink back into your chair, furiously flipping through the pages and re-reading the text, trying to understand their five-minute-long statement. But the conversation moves on.

The teacher nods, and the moment passes. You missed the chance to say your own developed point, and compared to the organized statement your classmate just made, none of your points seem to be good enough. How did they think of that? You wonder.

You sneak a quick glance at their open computer, and see their point, word for word, spelled out on a blank white website. Emojis are woven between the words, and at the top of the layered paragraphs, you see the infamous words: “Sure! Here is the answer to your prompt \_\_\_\_\_”

A student across from you asks another question about colonialism, and you watch as the “Chat GPT-er’s hands glide over the keyboard, asking yet another question to the all-knowing Artificial Intelligence. You wonder how the teacher hasn’t figured out the fact that the only person speaking so far had been simply reading – not analyzing – generated code translated into text.

The next 50 minutes are ones you’ll definitely never forget, as your statements are lost in the Chat GPT-er’s sea of well-organized points. How are you supposed to keep up with all these points? As the class con-

tinues, the teacher’s pen freezes whenever you start speaking again and picks back up whenever they hear the computer’s efficient responses. 8:50 rolls around, and you find yourself exiting the room with not a sliver of the confidence you entered with.

It’s easy to see how ingrained AI has become in our world in such a short amount of time. Our social media apps are filled with things like “Fruit Love Island” and Character AI. Your parents have probably started to send the obviously fake videos in the family group chat. But all things considered, fruit people and voice-over videos will not affect your U.S. History conversation. So, what aspect of AI will?

Phillips Exeter stands out from other schools because of its pure Harkness education. It’s the first thing that pops up in introductions of the school, likely one of the first reasons you listed in your interview to apply to this academy. The Harkness culture at Exeter stems all the way back to 1914 under the guidance of Principal Lewis Perry, who implemented the plan after a donation from Edward Harkness. Harkness gifted the school 5.8 million dollars to discover a way to better teach young students. He aimed for a classroom where, in his words, “Each student would feel encouraged to speak up. This would be a real revolution in methods.”

Thus, the Harkness method was born. This year has marked eight decades of our teaching style at Exeter. And while it has done a great deal for its students, 80 years is a long time. This style was created during a time when the requirements for college were much less rigorous. While Exeter is still a feeder school, it has become harder each year to get our kids into universities such as Harvard or Brown. This causes anxiety on campus. One bad term and you can say goodbye and Ivy League, the ultimate dream for many. It’s not surprising that kids who spend their weekends in their rooms studying and their summers doing three different things at

once feel the need to be at the top of their game in every single class, every single day.

One of the school’s biggest messages is that mistakes do not define whether you belong here. But that message starts to mean very little when you get a B+ on your midterm papers. In most schools, B+ is a pretty good grade, but for many of us, anything below an A- is world-ending. It’s hard enough to have to compete with 1,000 students using only the knowledge you bring from home, but it’s even harder to catch up. In desperation, students turn to ChatGPT. Instead of spending two hours carefully highlighting key words, you ask for a summary and some good points to make. Sure, it’s a bit deceitful, but all the other students are doing it. If you don’t do the same, it seems as if you will fall flat on your face while you watch others earn the grade you should have gotten as an honest student. After all, using AI would only shorten the distance between you and all the others running in the race to get into good colleges. When you look at your rubrics for classes like English and History, they claim to prioritize authenticity and effort. But do those values actually hold up in the long run? Is it even worth it to do things the hard way and find out? You can display your confusion and risk watching one class tank your GPA, or you could simply ask ‘Chat’ to help you out on the reading you couldn’t finish last night and watch as your teacher writes down another point, filling your Harkness gradebook.

But at what point does closing the gap between you and your peers become an excuse not to critically think about the homework handed to you? To answer the question aforementioned, we decided to learn from an expert in the field of philosophy, Cornel West. Dr. West is an African American philosopher, author, and activist.

When asked about AI and its role in education, he chooses to look at the bigger picture. Schools in some sense have become more cor-

porate than ever. With the crackdown many schools are facing on the part of the United States’ current Administration, institutions like Harvard are becoming more and more restricted. That means spots are scarce, and the requirements for those positions have doubled in size. Thus, a select few of the already tiny pool of eligible students are fighting for a small number of spots. From the perspective of many Ivy League hopefuls, it’s easier to say what the teachers want and get the grades you need to get your foot in the door. That’s where ChatGPT enters the picture. ‘Chat’ has spent hours (and water) finding the best possible answers to your questions. It can give you the answers your teacher actually wants to hear without spending hours hunched over a book at 11 p.m. It’s a win-win situation: you get the grades, closing the gap between you and your other peers, and your teacher can rest well thinking that at least one person cares about the class. But the issue with that is the simple fact that education exists to help people seeking education sharpen their thinking skills. If it weren’t for the human brain’s ability to think critically, we wouldn’t have modern medicine, greatly revered art, or even ChatGPT itself.

West discusses this; he prioritizes something highlighted in our history classes: critical thinking. Fundamentally, West describes the process of critical thinking as something that is uncomfortable for humans, yet also something highly necessary in society. To think critically is to doubt the truth of something and to explore it for yourself before accepting it as a fact or a law. West believes that every one of us must be critical thinkers, and that without critical thinking, we will merely be comfortable servants to those who did take the time to think.

Pairing this with the Exonian mantra of “Knowledge and Goodness”, we see a pattern: students are provided with plenty of “knowledge” by AI, yet not enough

HARKNESS, X.



Courtesy of Ohio Capital Journal

## Hypocrisy in the Name of Ease

By DIYA SANDEEP '28

We live in a world where connection is more easily accessible to us than it was to every other generation ever combined. I can call my grandparents, who live on the other side of the globe, and speak to them in real time—using a device that fits right in my pocket. I can post a video and hundreds, maybe thousands, of people can watch it wherever and whenever. Of course, there are problems innate to the concept of over-accessibility. People are more distant, physically, mentally, and emotionally. The things we do and say have much more impact now than before the era of mobile devices by means of the sheer reach provided by the internet. So, not everyone can, or should, be trusted with the intense potential for outreach that we find in our palms.

Recently, a consistent debate has formed over who should be granted this access, more specifically concerning the age brackets of internet users. When does a child become old enough to experience a screen? Why are people even worried about that? How should these restrictions be handled? The answers to most of these questions have been left to the whims of individual parents, who (hopefully) understand their kids and their individual circumstances in far greater depth than any onlooker.

And yet, access to screens for children has already had massive im-

pacts on society. The average age at which a child receives a phone is 11. To preteens and teens who do not have phones, it may seem as though they are missing out. After all, they may be the only one among their friends who has not been handed that privilege. For these kids, it is harder to make plans with friends; they may feel less safe, but lack of a phone may also increase productivity by removing many distractions. And yet, early access to phones has been found to lead to poorer sleep, worse mental health, less time spent engaging in healthy activities, and higher rates of obesity. Clearly phones create a hoard of issues for the youth.

So why do I bring this up? After all, we all know that kids probably should not have access to devices; it just makes life easier for the rest of us, and so we have decided to make the trade-off, under the guise of trusting them to be safe, or preparing them for the world, or because their circumstances demand they need one. But as society evolves, new blocks to that train of logic arrive. And it seems that either we must accept our own hypocrisy, cease these excuses, or let them spiral into something dangerous in the face of the newest form of media: generative AI.

If the above list sounds familiar, it is because those are the same arguments we employ to justify the usage of generative AI, hereby referred to as AI,

HYPOCRISY, X.

## Dance Revolution

By PEARL HARA YAMAZAKI '29

As an Exonian, I feel obligated to say that my dream career as a child was something intellectual, such as a doctor. Sure, I loved school from very early on. But to tell the truth, I always dreamed of being a dancer. I still remember a 7-year-old me who would spring up from the couch to copy Tracy Turnblad’s moves from the film adaptation of “Hair-spray” playing on TV.

“Mom, who is better at dancing: me or Tracy?” I asked again and again. After every absent-minded “Tracy” my mom uttered while focusing on the movie. I sighed, telling myself that some people just cannot recognize true art.

Due to COVID, I stopped taking hip-hop, ballet, and rhythmic gymnastics lessons, and my passion for dance started to fade away. However, when I saw the table dedicated to IMANI at the Club Fair in Sep-

tember, all of the fun I had popping, locking, and shuffling as a little kid rushed back to me, and I decided to audition without any hesitation. Now, I am part of IMANI, BoA, and Dance Company, and I plan to be involved in more dance groups next year.

As an active person who also loves the arts, dance is the perfect medium to express myself while simultaneously being able to move my body. Diversity of genres allows for everybody to find something that they enjoy. Ballet awaits those who are calm and disciplined, and the active ones with an itch to move can always rely on hip-hop. Jazz, contemporary, Latin, and countless other styles are also enjoyed, and for the creatives, choreography is another option that can be pursued.

Dance is also a great channel for cultural connection and activism. In the most recent Super Bowl,

DANCE, X.

## Hypocrisy Cont.

in our daily lives. “People know how to be responsible with it,” “Everyone’s using it, if we do not learn, we will fall behind,” or “it is just this one time, I am desperate.” And yet, AI is still constantly abused by its target audience—grown adults who use it for menial tasks, to write papers, and to help them through every moment of their day. According to one study, 10 percent of adults report daily usage of AI.

AI itself carries a host of problems people do not like to acknowledge. Chatbots themselves have led to an international mental health crisis. I highly recommend an article called “The Comfort of Artificial Love” by Blair Li and Olivia Wan, published in the April 9, 2026, issue of *The Exonian*, for a more thorough investigation into the problems instigated and propagated by these chatbots. But beyond the roughly 20 percent of young people who are growing into chat-

bot dependency, an alarming number of adolescents are beginning to rely on AI for minuscule reasons.

And this rising usage of AI will certainly lead to degradation in the minds of its users. In one small-scale study done by MIT’s Media Lab, a direct link between lower brain engagement, laziness, as well as poor behavior, and AI usage was found. If you do not write your paper, then you will not get better at writing papers. If you let AI do your homework, you will not learn from it. If AI plans your day for you, will you ask it to plan your whole future?

The younger the user, the more susceptible they will be to the so-called “efficiency” and “ease” of AI. Their brains are not even close to fully developed, and AI stunts their learning—and by association, their growth. Childhood is the era of making mistakes. You trip and fall and get up again. You forget your homework

and suffer the consequences, so next time you remember. You make friends with real people who will continue to know and support you throughout your life. AI may give you short-term success, but it will never replace human critical thinking skills. And kids deserve the chance to build those skills.

It does not make sense to deprive the next generation of the freedom of childhood. They should not feel the need to use it because there should not be such intense pressure to succeed in the first place. Of course, there still will be, but that should not lead to a turn to AI. AI usage does not necessarily become more acceptable as time goes on, but there is no reason for a nine-year-old or 12-year-old to outsource their minds, creativity, and free thought to a machine or program. We have done enough damage by handing them phones. Power down the ChatGPT.

## Harkness Cont.



*Courtesy of Google*

“goodness” to use artificial intelligence responsibly or to spend the time necessary to think critically and to analyze the historical sources they are given. Slowly but surely, we will see the Harkness method deteriorate inside our classes, especially within our humanities classes. Unlike Math or Science courses, there is no set formula, no specific equation that will guarantee a successful point or a thoughtful contribution during humanities Harkness. Rather, the student must read the different sources each time, and using their own original thought, must create new points unlike any other observations previously made. While this process is difficult, without it, we cannot function.

Aside from changing essentially permanent structures such as the college acceptance process, there are still other measures that both our administration and our students can change. At the beginning of each course, teachers can let students know how to use AI to help their personal learning, so that students can both benefit from

the vast quantity of information AI has, and also continue to learn how to conduct original analysis for Harkness and papers. Simply telling students that using AI is detrimental to their learning will not change any decisions to include artificially generated points; given a seemingly free-to-use online resource, students will continue to resort to ChatGPT out of desperation. It is better to teach students how to integrate this new and increasingly important online tool into their academic lives, so that students understand not only the dangers of using AI, but also how to utilize its benefits to their advantage.

As students, we must understand the benefits of Harkness and believe in the fact that this learning process will actually help us in our future careers and communication skills. With combined efforts, hopefully both students and staff can realize the effect of AI in a Harkness classroom and understand that artificial “intelligence” does not equate to the intelligence each one of us possesses in and outside of the classroom.

## Hypocrisy Cont.

for example, a bustling set depicted the Puerto Rican community in New York City through a festive mambo and reggaeton-style choreography to Bad Bunny’s hit “NUEVAYoL”. This cultural aspect of dance can be taught from a young age: Japanese children are taught the slow choreography danced alongside “Tokyo Ondo,” a classic that likely holds a similar sentiment to “Sweet Caroline” in New England. My friend, originally from Nashville, would always look forward to line dancing at her church-hosted parties.

Due to the lack of

conventional elements of sports, such as running, many people do not regard dance as exercise. Even the Olympics do not hold dance as a sport. Dance is not officially regarded as a sport by academic institutions either. Athletes who dedicate hours each week to perfecting their craft have the opportunity to be recruited into college teams. Though dancers may spend the same amount of time as a varsity athlete perfecting moves, college recruitment is not a culture that they can rely on in their pursuit for an undergraduate degree.

One thing that

dance and sports have in common is competitiveness. As mentioned earlier, highly talented athletes can be recruited into their dream universities and play for their teams. However, recruitment is highly selective and many do not get recruited by their dream schools. This competition is amplified in the world of professional dance. For a dancer to be recognized, they usually go through dozens (and even hundreds) of auditions. The chances of succeeding as a dancer are so slim that, oftentimes, it discourages people from pursuing it professionally. For instance, the popular girl group KATSEYE consists of six members (currently five due to a tem-

porary hiatus), but the six were selected from 120,000 submissions—a 0.05% chance.

Growing up in Japan and living in Malaysia for two years, I grew up extremely conscious of the stereotypical Asian standard: at the bare minimum, a classic “Asian kid” is expected to get good grades and play an instrument. In Japan, it is normal to do many extracurriculars growing up. My week was busy: ballet, hip-hop, acting, singing, violin, piano, and math tutoring were just a few afterschool activities I participated in during elementary school. An aptitude for music or a knack for literature was celebrated by parents around

me, but my time spent towards dance was viewed as more of a frivolous hobby. This attitude towards dance could also be another reason why less people pursue it professionally.

Does Exeter provide enough resources for dancers to pursue? Of course, we are not a world-renowned conservatory. Goel is an excellent facility for dance, considering the fact that Exeter is not a school that specializes in performing arts. Most high schools do not have dance facilities nearly as good, let alone any at all. On the other hand, there are only three studios, which can be difficult to manage on weekends or times when

multiple groups want to practice at the same time.

Whether it is watching ensemble performances at the Oscars or doing 50 relevés in my room, I try to find as many ways to incorporate dance into my life as possible. It is the hobby that I find resonates with me the most. Although it can feel underappreciated by those around me, I try my best to spread the beauty of dance and the joy it brings to so many people. There might be people who dance in their room who would love to dance on stage instead, but that bridge to committing to dance needs to be strengthened for more people to discover dance as a passion.

## Guidelines for the Publication of Opinions Pieces in *The Exonian*

*To clarify our standards for Op-Ed, the board has outlined a brief list of expectations. Ideally, a quality op-ed will . . .*

- ❖ Be factually correct, clearly citing credible sources. Writers will be required to provide a list of cited sources to editors during the editing process.
- ❖ Be in some way relevant to issues or events at Exeter or with the intention of prompting conversations on campus.
- ❖ Present an argument that is original, mature, and in good faith, challenging predominant narratives or providing a new angle for said narratives on campus.
- ❖ Exclude any hate speech, which *The Exonian*, in conjunction with the Academy’s E-Book, defines as irrational, uninformed, derogatory, and oppressive language directed toward or harmful to specific communities or individuals.
  - Debatable cases will be discussed by editor(s) and adviser(s) with the writer(s) to be removed or reframed.
- ❖ Be well written, with a clearly stated thesis, logical line of thought and no extraneous content.
- ❖ Undergo revisions cooperatively and in a timely manner by the direction of editors and advisers.
- ❖ Not be used as a means of self-promotion or the promotion of corporations, violence, crime, conspiracy theories, oppression, or injustice.

# Sports

## » COTW: VARSITY GOLF

Read about the stories of the Varsity Golf captains, X.

## » PE TENNIS

Read about what students do in the PE tennis course, X.

## » VARSITY SOFTBALL

Read about Varsity Softball's loss again Lawrence Academy, X.

# Carrying a Bag of Connection: Varsity Golf

By KAYLEE GONG,  
DOWANKIM, and  
ARISA YOSHINO

*"In the big picture, what truly matters more is the lives we touch."*

— Tiger Woods

Nearly every spring afternoon, starting from when the temperature is at its highest until the air begins to cool at dusk, competitive shouts mixed with laughter ring across Breakfast Hill Golf Club. The air smells of freshly mowed grass, hints of sweat and sunscreen, and the familiar tang of pesticides. Grains of bunker sand and grass seeds cover the backs of shoes, and miscellaneous tees hide in every pocket. 21 kids are spread out between the first tee and the final green, and although long to-do lists and assignments await them back at school, these daily three hours on the course — playing golf, surrounded by the team, and having fun — will make memories they'll cherish forever.

At the center of it all stand three captains: senior Ananya Ray; senior Brendan McCarthy, better known as "BMac;" and upper Marvin Shim. Each carries with them their own experiences in golf, the team, and life. When together, though, they carry a mutual bag: a red golf one reading "Phillips Exeter Academy," but also an intangible one of team spirit, care, and connection.

Annually, near the end of each spring season, head coach Bob "Beetle" Bailey arranges a team vote for the following year's captains. He himself steps back to allow the team to choose their future. "Coach Hew and I have found out that for all the years that we've been [choosing captains] this way, the right people always seem to get chosen. It's a good process," he shared.

And Bailey's assessment rings true. This year, Ray, McCarthy, and Shim have united the team like never before. "Golf is a co-ed

sport for a reason, but last year and during previous years, all the boys went with the boys, and all the girls went with the girls," explained Shim. "It was very divided." However, this year, "team chemistry" is what all — members, captains and coaches alike — have highlighted.

"This year, it's the strongest it's been in a while," said lower Joe Sasso, who pointed to the team's preseason trip over spring break in Orlando, FL. "We went to play mini golf, and it wasn't just a bunch of separate groups, which usually used to happen. This time, because of the captains, it was the whole team, and everyone had fun together."

The captains have continued to connect the team into the season as well. "One of the biggest places where we saw a division last year was in the vans," elaborated Shim. "But through our own efforts as captains, that has changed. Everyone is actually interacting with one another."

The bonding is evident in team lifts, practices, and something new: team dinners.

"[Assistant Coach Reichardt] and I go to the dining hall at night, and we see the whole team sitting together eating dinner. That may seem small to the kids, but to coaches, that's huge," praised Bailey. "It's nice to see the team unites and cheers for each other." In the past, golf team dinners never succeeded, but thanks to the current captains' leadership, the entire team shares something more than a round of golf, a ride in a van, or a bite of food: they share real friendships and fun.

Another novelty to the team this year has been its members. With last year's seniors graduated and a new, unfamiliar simulator added, the team has welcomed eight new players and an additional assistant coach. Nonetheless, the captains have warmly integrated them into the team community.

"I was surprised

about how inclusive and tightly knit the golf team is," new upper Caroline Chadwick remarked. She described the range of ages, identities, and golfing experiences. "Everyone is really included, and I think the captains are integral in that."

Even the smallest phrases of support from the captains have made a difference and uplifted the team. Prep Gorden Zeng explained how during his first match on the preseason trip, he felt very nervous before teeing off. However, just by supportively saying, "Don't be nervous," McCarthy relieved Zeng's anxieties.

Since then, comments like that have propagated into consistent pep talks. However, it's more than just the words being said that comfort the newcomers; rather, it's the captains themselves. Prep Chelsea Kim also opened up about feeling nervous before matches, but she noted, "With the captains and all their experience, I know I can trust them when they say 'everything is okay.'"

Under the leadership of the three captains, everything does become okay, if not great. "This trio of leaders and captains has done a great job," praised assistant coach and Instructor in Mathematics Brandon Hew. Highlighting this year's successes in team unity, he also noted what has allowed the captains to make such a great impact: "They rely on both their own strengths and each other."

For Ray, her strength has been her uplifting and connective presence. New upper Sofia De Filippo pinpointed a moment when Ray cheered her on and encouraged her to keep pushing during a demanding team lift workout. "Ananya was super supportive, as always," she said.

Even though De Filippo has only known Ray for one season so far, Sophia Lala '24 — an upper on the team when Ray came in as a prep and a close friend of hers since — vouched



McCarthy, Ray, and Shim smile at the camera. Anoushka Sarathy / The Exonian

for Ray's timelessness. She described the first interaction she had with Ray: when Ray knocked on her door during the preseason trip. Even though she didn't know anyone, she still stepped forward and laid the foundation for a life-long friendship. "Ananya's been committed to the team since the first day," reflected Lala. "She's always made sure to form connections with everyone."

Ray has been able to not only form but also maintain the connections she makes. Angelina Gong '25, a former team captain, highlighted a memory of Ray coming to visit her in college this spring. "Ananya unprompted took a selfie of us and sent it to Beetle. It was super funny, and it shows how she's able to keep her connections and connect others."

Ray's ability to act as a "bridge," which Gong analogized, comes with an inherent thoughtfulness and care for others. Lucy Jung '25, another team captain last year, praised, "Ananya is tactful in the sense that she's able to read the room and figure out what's best. If some of our teammates were feeling down, she would be quick to catch it and say something to uplift them."

Along with her character, Ray has brought

great technical skills too. Before Exeter, she succeeded in many elite junior golf competitions, and Bailey highlighted, "Ananya has been one of our strongest players for the four years that she's been here."

"Ananya has been able to stay focused both in the classroom and on the course. That's a hard thing," added Lala. Speaking directly to Ray, Lala also emphasized, "Continue the work ethic that you've been showing for the past few years and don't forget how hard you've worked. You are capable."

Much like Ray, McCarthy also began golf at a young age. He frequently enjoyed going to the driving range with his father, and he got into competitive golf in middle school. Additionally, McCarthy played a lot of elite ice hockey. He was the boys varsity ice hockey captain during winter term, and his experience in team sports — compared to golf's traditional individuality — has been evident in his effect on the golf team.

"BMac is a competitor," emphasized Bailey. "He's played on teams, so he has that spirit embedded into his being. He wants the team to do well; he tries his best to support everyone, and he has done a very good

job at that."

Team spirit starts with a notion of collaboration and competitiveness, which is reflected in McCarthy's approach to leadership. "I'm more of a morale guy," he explained. "I think just trying to keep high spirits out on the golf course helps kids play better in turn. We all want each other to do well and being supportive of each player is the key to team success."

"BMac takes care of everyone," noted Zeng, who has been moved by many of McCarthy's uplifting comments. "He has a really nice positive energy, and he shares it toward the team."

Shim also credited McCarthy as a key proponent to the success of team dinners, and thus the new team dynamic. "He really believes in team chemistry, and you can see that in the team growth this year."

Despite being a new upper last year, McCarthy has seamlessly stepped up as a leader and driven the team forward. "He always sets a good example for all of us to follow," Sasso praised.

For Shim, his process on the team and his approach to leadership has come with

GOLF, [X]



# In the Pursuit of Greatness: PE Tennis

By GARY  
GUO, ARIANA  
METZGER, NICOLE  
SUBKHANBERDINA,  
and WILLIAM ZHAO

The steady pop of tenniThe steady smacking of tennis balls rattles across the courts as students in PE tennis trade rallies, laugh with their friends, and develop their skills in one of the most relaxing yet fun and active classes at PEA.

Depending on the weather, students play inside or outside. A typical PE tennis practice begins with a short warm-up before moving into rallies and match play. As lower David Meng explained, "we start off with a warmup, whether it is running around the track, doing a little workout, or just playing a few points of short

court tennis." After that, students start to play full-court tennis, practicing singles or doubles.

Oftentimes, practice emphasizes less skill improvement but more recreation and socialization. "We just find our friends, get some balls, and start shooting," upper Eli Orbach said. One of the best parts about PE tennis, according to Orbach, is playing tennis with friends. At the competitive level, tennis often becomes less enjoyable as players focus more on strategy and technical skills, rather than creativity and joy. "I am finding a way to both be active and socialize at the same time," Orbach explained.

Similarly, prep Ellie De Montfort Walker appreciated the opportunity to socialize compared to the competition

of junior varsity and varsity teams, "It's a lot less pressure and more about getting out there and having fun." She particularly values how PE tennis can offer comparable team dynamics while also being a more manageable time commitment.

The fun and balanced competition of PE tennis is an important aspect. Prep Bran McDonough described, "I rally with a bunch of people, and I have a lot of fun." He also noted that, "Everyone's pretty much at a close level, so it's pretty fun." He added that his favorite part is actually improvement, as he mentions, "Being able to watch other people get better, too...and be able to have better rallies with each other."

For lower Son Do, this program provides

both physical and mental benefits, acting as a relaxation tool. "My favorite part is it gets me relaxed during the day," he said, adding that, "it also gives me exercise...I also get to like just meeting some people."

Meng highlighted the flexibility of this class. "My favorite part about PE tennis is how loose it is. You can pretty much play with anyone you want, and also play whatever you want. Sometimes it's not just limited to tennis; you can play pickleball and run around. It's just such a free and loose part of my day that helps me relax a bit after or before having classes."

Competitive tournaments aren't often held, as most players prefer to have the most fun during every practice.

"Coach Hall is really good at balancing actual hitting and entertainment," Orbach said. Hall would always lead warm-up exercises before hitting to prevent injuries. Occasionally, she would offer advice on how to play more consistently, but mostly, Hall preferred to let students play in their chosen format.

Classes often conclude with a fun game, with Meng mentioning, "towards the end, we usually play a bit of King of the Court." It is a game in which a player starts as the "king," and the other players act as "challengers." The king only needs one point to win to secure the position, while the challengers need to win two points against the king to become "king" themselves.

One other fun challenge Coach Hall would give to players is to try to hit the ball into a certain small square on the court. "It is really fun because most of us are beginners," an anonymous student recollected, "when someone succeeds, we would all burst into cheers because it takes extreme precision and control to place the ball that well."

By the end of each practice, the score rarely mattered. What lingers is the inside jokes between points and the small victories that often don't show up on the racket—the first clean serve, the first fast strike-through, and the first winner. In a school where so much is measured, PE tennis demonstrates the idea that life doesn't have to be a constant chase for perfection.

# Highlight: Varsity Baseball

By REX JANG and SEAN RICARD

The past week has been eventful for the varsity baseball team, losing to Lawrence Academy on Monday, April 13 with a close score of 5-6 and splitting a double header against Cushing Academy on Saturday, April 18, losing the first game 2-0 and winning the second 5-4.

The loss against Lawrence Academy was a setback for the team, as captain

Mo Hood stated, “it should have been a game we won.” However, the team was able to learn valuable lessons through this game. A post-graduate in the baseball team, Logan McIntyre, explains that “playing baseball, anybody can beat anybody. We learned that we have to respect our opponents, no matter how good they are or how bad they may think they are.”

Similarly, Hood recalls the team to

have “went down early, kind of got complacent.” and considers it imperative to realize “we’re not invincible, and bad teams can beat us... and now, moving forward, we’re going to use that to try to fuel us and help us.”

The team, according to coach Timothy Mitropoulos, remains in a good position in their league standings. Exeter’s baseball team plays in the Central New England Prep Baseball League (CNEPBL), which in-

cludes schools such as Deerfield, Worcester Academy, and Phillips Academy Andover. The team is currently 3rd in the CNEPBL, touting three wins and two losses.

Mitropoulos shouted out multiple players that helped the team secure their victory in game two of the double header at Cushing, saying, “Mo Hood had a big game at the plate and led us offensively and defensively. Jake Attaway chipped in with some key hits as well.”

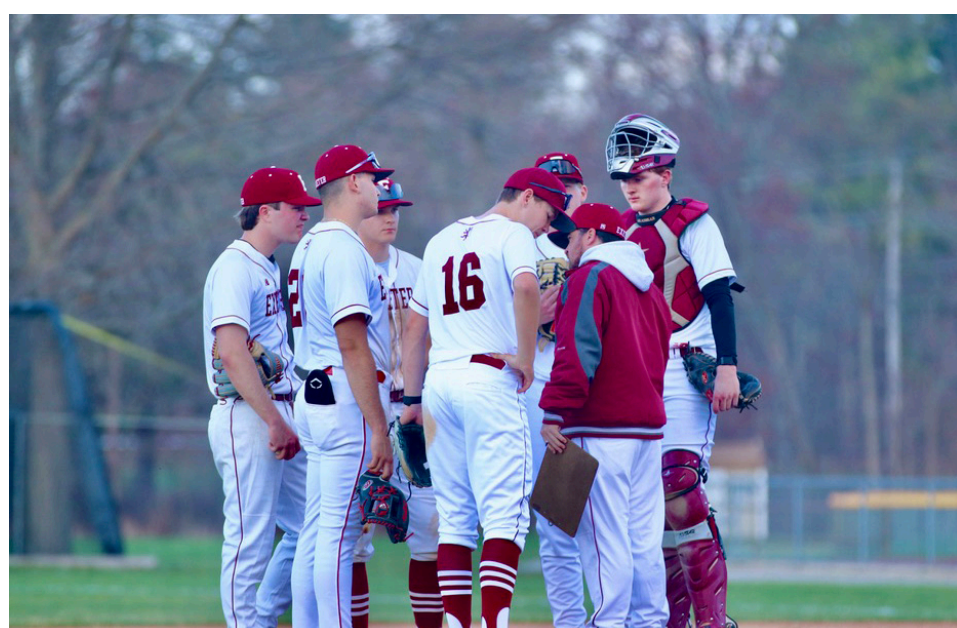
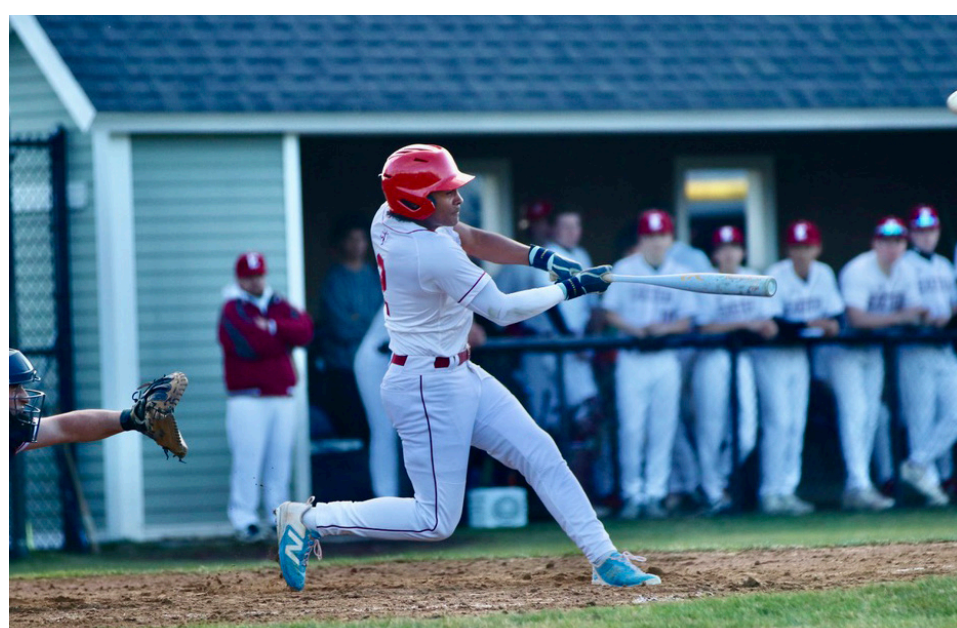
On the pitch-

ing side, he shouted out Logan McIntyre, John Rodriguez, Josh Dunn and Devin Boles, saying in particular “Josh Dunn proved helpful in the second game win and got out of some key jams to keep us in the lead and win the game.”

The baseball team has a bright future with their goals set. Rodriguez finds Coach Mitt and the rest of the coaching staff very supportive, saying “Coach Mitt knows a lot about the game and I think he cares about us a lot. He really wants to put

us in a good position to win.” With great coaches and players, Rodriguez remarks, “the number one thing we’re placing emphasis on is the outcome at the end of the day. We’ve got to win ball games for sure.”

Coming up, the team has their first league home double header against Deerfield on Saturday, April 25, which Mitropoulos says “will play a big role in where we end up in our league standings.” Deerfield currently ranks fourth in the CNEPBL.



Candid captures of varsity baseball.

Anoushka Sarathy / *The Exonian*

## Golf Cont.

challenges — internal, mental ones. He joined the team with extensive elite competition experience and precise technical skills. However, with his high talent has also come high self expectations.

Jung, who was very close to Shim, described the tumult of his mind. “There were moments when Marvin — being his meticulous, dedicated, passionate self — began to question his ability in golf compared to before [Exeter] whilst balancing academics simultaneously.” Taking rigorous courses, Shim found himself unable to dedicate as much time to golf as he wished, and his deep care for both academics and athletics resulted in harm to both areas. It got to the point where Shim would think about a particular golf shot while sitting at the Harkness table.

The same detrimental expectations continued on the course. Shim shared a story about a prep year match when he felt extremely angry at himself afterward about his performance, but he had only played poorly because of his mental game. So, Paco Sze ‘25, one of last year’s captains and an upper at the time, intervened and took Shim out to dinner at Szechuan Taste.

Seeing himself and his own past mistakes surrounding self expectations in younger Shim, Sze reflected, “I

told him that golf, especially with an Exeter schedule, isn’t about being perfect. Rather, it’s about being able to play competently, even when you don’t have your A game. It’s about showing up, showing resiliency, and being kind and respectful to your opponents above all else.”

“We had a really long talk,” recalled Shim. “It was very memorable for me because before that, I had just been playing for my own score. But that was when it really sank in — what it means for golf to be a team sport.”

Now, Shim consistently plays as the number one seed on the team.

Despite conquering his own game, Shim’s mental doubts returned when he was chosen as captain. From his perspective, the role of captain is a “duty” to be a good role model for the rest. It requires a “confidence that you are

capable” in being the figure everyone trusted you to uphold when they voted for you. But under a self-imposed expectation to exceed in his “duty,” Shim lost his self belief. Especially as the youngest captain, Shim commented, “Sometimes as an upper captain, you question whether you do in fact have authority.”

Instead, Shim has found comfort in the approach of leading by example, rather than by voice. “I do the action and hope people will follow me. I practice golf now so that I can be confident for the people on my team.” Also finding solace in the “team chemistry” the captains have successfully fostered this year, Shim admitted, “I’m grateful for that. I am proud of that.”

Past Shim’s humble and selfless view of himself, the team and coaches value him deeply. “Marvin is a great model for the team,” said Jung. “He has this quiet type of presence and charisma, yet it ties everyone together because we are all aware of how dedicated he is.”

“Marvin knows how to motivate the team, he really does,” Bailey emphasized. “He doesn’t give himself credit, but he really gets the best out of the kids, and that’s what a good captain will do.”

Together, all the captains get the best out of the team. Ray brings her supportiveness, McCarthy his teamwork, and Shim his example. Together they all are “good” captains who have united a team, who carry that mutual red bag of clubs and connections. De Filippo reflected, “The captains have all pushed me to be my best in different ways. It’s made it so that I want to continue on what they’ve started with me and have that positive impact on everyone else.”

“Golf comes with team camaraderie,” concluded Shim. “It comes with mental skills. It comes with confidence. Because golf is more than just a game of hitting a ball with a stick, and that’s especially true when you’re on a team.”



Shim marks his golf ball on a putting green.

Courtesy of PEA Athletics

## Boys Varsity Crew Season Opener

By RAYANN CISSE, CAROL LEE, and ARJUN VELAN

On Saturday, April 18, the boys’ varsity crew competed against Kent School. Exeter placed second to Kent. However, senior Peter Roper pulled out of a lot of watts helping boat 1 towards their win.

Despite some of their teammates being sick the team pushed through. The team has been working together in preparation for the big day. Coxswain upper Osbert Chang said, “We’ve been training since preseason, and we put a lot of work during practice and outside practice, like lifting, team bonding, eating

together, and just trusting each other and knowing that we could get across the line ahead of Kent.”

Lower John Tsien said, “We’re gone for the next race...I think we lost a little bit of our form...toward the end of the race, when people were getting tired. We got a little sloppy, and...my calls could have been a little more flexible.” For future regattas the team is working towards maintaining energy and technique.

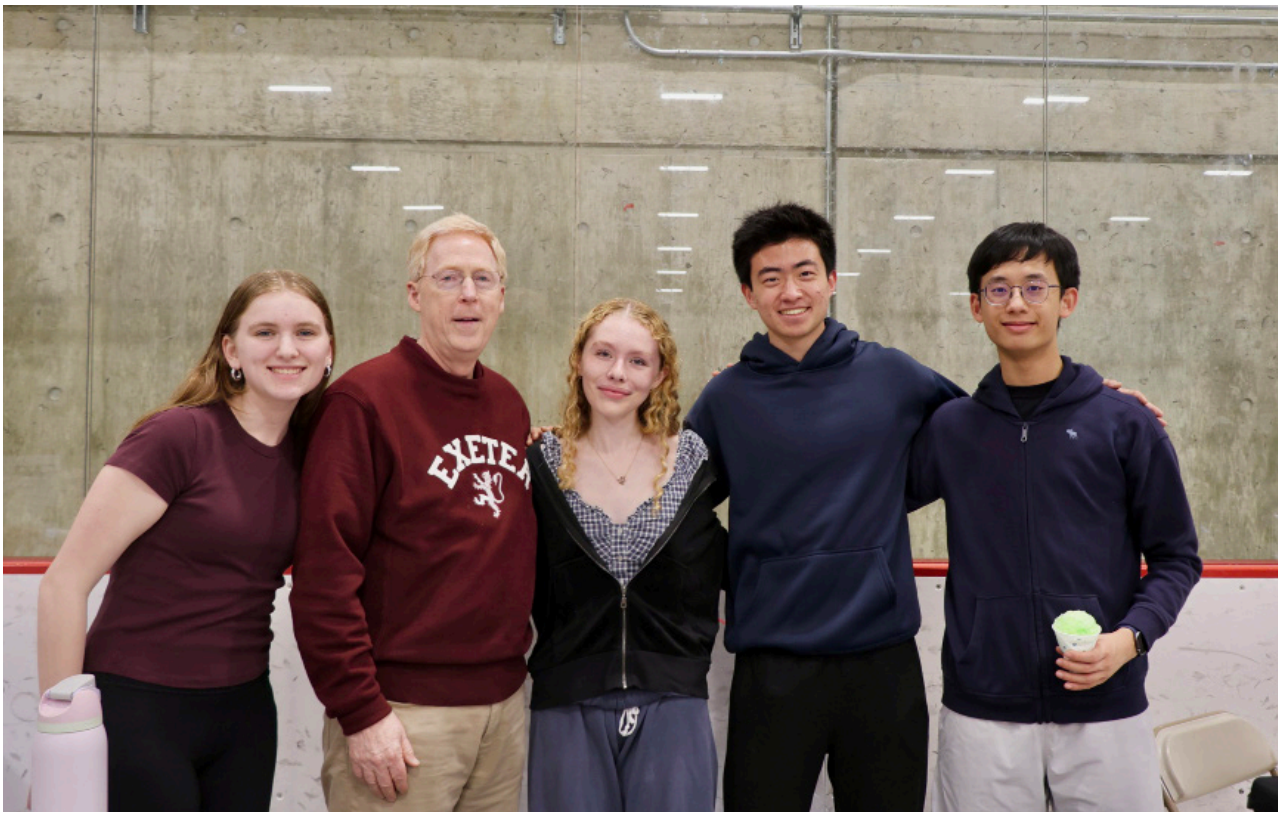
The team’s next match will be on Saturday, May 2, against Hanover High School. Make sure to come and support the team for another fiery match!



Courtesy of exetercrew.com

# Relay For Life!

Adrian Chan and Anoushka Sarathy / *The Exonian*



# Climate Action Day

Oscar Zhu / *The Exonian*



# Humor

## » MIDTERMS & THE MOON

Celebrate lower Audrey Kim and prep Gary Guo's playwriting skills, X.

## » BRICKED

Prep Olivia Wang conducts institutional research, X.

## » MOTIVATIONAL QUOTES

Allow lowers Eilena Ding and Lydia Kuhnert to motivate you, X.

# The Moon Mission and My Missing Midterm

By AUDREY KIM '28 and GARY GUO '29

Cast:

A: a romantic poet who genuinely cares about NASA and humans' future

B: a realistic, judgmental, mean person who's allergic to anything that doesn't affect tomorrow.

Setting:

Library, 10:47 p.m.

A table stacked with notebooks, a laptop open to Canvas, and a textbook. The light is fluorescent and dim. A faint hum of stress in the background.

Props:

Laptop

Physics notebook, a lot of books

A cup of coffee (black; no sugar, no milk)

[B is hunched over their laptop like they're about to be absorbed by it. A enters carrying a phone like it's sacred]

A: Feel it?

B: What? My mom's anger, a bajillion miles away, and yelling at me to finish my homework? Yes, potentially.

A: ARTEMIS II. Four astronauts. Go around the moon. In ten days, history will be made!

B: Psh...History? The more important thing is my browser history. Oh look! The most recent search was, 'how to write an essay in 30 minutes.'

[B glares at A while they sit down, eyes shining with dangerous enthusiasm]

A: Ah, you don't get it. It's the first crewed lunar mission in forever. My dad wasn't even born the last time it happened.

B: Who cares! The moon is always there. I see it every night when I'm up until the crack of dawn, struggling with math.

A: You always do this. You act like nothing matters unless it controls your GPA.

B: That's not 'acting!' That's living as a studious Exonian! If Artemis II doesn't appear in my teacher's rubric, it's imaginary to me.

A: You know what is in your rubric? Artemis II orbital mechanics, gravity assists, reentry heat—

B: Stop!

A: I can't stop. Newton won't let me. It's literally the coolest applied physics ever!

B: Yeah, this coffee is even cooler! Violating several laws of nature by keeping me alive.

A keeps scrolling. B just turns to their computer tragically.

A: You know, this is so much bigger than Exeter! It's about humanity. Our grandchildren. Our legacy. Our future real estate where our future generations are going to live and die!

B: Here's my issue. Everyone keeps saying "this matters" or "this is so exciting." But my day-to-day life is still: wake up, sprint to class, pretend I did the reading, eat something shaped like chicken, do homework, scroll, sleep, repeat—and once a term, participate in the midnight scream like it's a required ritual so I can emotionally graduate the semester. I will be long gone before we build a city on the moon. So I'd rather care about my 333 that's due tomorrow and wants me dead.

[Silence.

A puts their phone down and leans forward. B braces.]

A: Ok, let me make it matter for you. Artemis is building systems that last.

B: Incredible. "Systems that last." Do they sell those at the bookstore?

A: Artemis II is the kind of progress you need exactly right now! It's designed to be repeated. Improved. Tested. Again and again.

B: That's disgusting. You mean preparation?

A: Precisely.

[A calmly picks up the coffee and drinks it. Thinking really deep.]

B: Here? Everybody literally crams the test or paper at the last minute, and you are talking about preparation with me?

A: Yes! Now you are getting the point!

[A suddenly stands up from the chair. Walk about B with the coffee cup in hand like a professor.]

Artemis II is the opposite of a 3 a.m. cram. It teaches you how to always survive and be calm.

B: So Artemis II is supposed to teach me how to manage my time.

A: And how is that

working?

B: (deadpan) It's not.

[A takes a deep breath]

A: Artemis II isn't impressive because the moon is far. It's impressive because it has to work twice: out, and back. And the same goes for you. You need to prepare for that paper so you can be ready for your next step after it.

B: I also do that every day. Like, to my bed, ideally before two.

A: So... you admit you are inspired.

B: I admit I'm tired.

A: If NASA can run a ten-day mission with life support and reentry, you can run your week sustainably. Plan ahead, do preparations, make sure you have time to get to everything, and live healthily.

[B lowers his head, considers this. Hates that it makes sense]

B: Fine. Maybe Artemis II matters.

[A turns back and makes a fist: YES!

A Turns around]

A: Good.

B: Not because I suddenly love space and people going around the moon will get me an A tomorrow. But because I should really try to take things step by step, plan ahead like how NASA does it, and save my body from all-day tiredness.

A: That's the spirit.

[B slams their laptop shut like it's a cursed object]

B: If this is on the physics test, I'm blaming you.

A: If it's on the physics test, just remember, it's not about the Moon.

B: It's about—

A: the return trip and how you do it next time

[B stands, gathering stuff with the urgency of a person escaping a boring past life]

B: My return trip tonight is sprinting back to my dorm before my laundry gets thrown around like trash on the floor.

A: That's good! recyclable trash and—sustainable systems.

B: Don't push it.

Exeunt.

# The Ultimate Bricking

By OLIVIA WANG '29

**Institutional Research: The Effect of the Installation of "the Brick" on Student Behavior at Phillips Exeter Academy**

**Introduction**

As we are inundated with rumors about the administration's imminent phone-heist, students at Phillips Exeter Academy ("Exonians"), under the leadership of the Student Council ("StuCo"), have been making an effort to maintain students' ownership of their phones through the installation of physical Brick in dorms and the Brick app on smart phones. Over the past few weeks, discussions about the optimal time to lock your phone using the Brick (to "brick oneself") have been observed across campus. Therefore, this investigation tackles Exeter's uttermost question in the spring term of 2026: How does changing the time frame of blocking smart phone applications using Brick affect a student's productivity and mental well-being? The initial hypothesis is that the longer you brick, the lower the productivity, the worse the mental well-being.

**Method**

The independent variable being tested in this experiment is the time frame during which the smart phone is blocked whilst "bricked," while the dependent variable is the student's rating of the experience (on the Exeter GPA scale) and a list of observations. We are collecting a combination of quantitative data and qualitative data. Please see a list of control variables below:

Trial subject (me)

List of applications blocked: All social media apps including Instagram, SnapChat, WhatsApp, and of course WeChat because I'm Chinese, and I'm actually from China. All video streaming platforms including YouTube. The only game I've installed, Tetris. NO, I DID NOT BRICK DISCORD, JUST SO YOU

KNOW, CUZ I CARE TOO MUCH ABOUT THE EXONIAN. (Note: The main mode of communication of The Exonian, Phillips Exeter Academy's student-run newspaper is Discord)

Physical brick (located on the right side of the first floor of Lamont Hall, 7 Tan Ln)

**Results**

**Experimental Group 1 - During the academic day (7:30-14:30; 7 hrs)**

Rating: A- 10.0/11.0

Advantages:

The 3-hour free I've got? Work actually gets done during that time, for the first time in like a million weeks...

I went onto Spotify instead of Instagram when seeking for entertainment. Now my Spotify wrap at the end of the year will probably be more interesting than just musical theater songs. Hopefully my most listened song won't be A Little Fall of Rain again (listened 131 times in 2025). That kind of Les Mis trauma can't easily be healed.

The wind is blowing crazy outside. Since I can't scroll, I guess I have to put my hands in my pocket. My fingers finally won't turn red when I try to finish four more questions in the last five minutes of my math test.

Disadvantages:

Not recommended if you literally live in the center of campus. Right next to one of the academic buildings. Because your phone addiction will bring you back to your common room during pass periods. However, you will soon realize that 10 minutes are not that long. Your ninth tardy and restrictions are on their way.

**Experimental Group 2 - During "study hours" (20:00-22:00; 2 hrs)**

Rating: B/B+ 8.5/11.0

Advantages:

Did not make a single difference in my boring (exciting) life in New England, because I've been doing homework in the common room since prep fall, with my phone

charging in my room on the 3rd floor every single day. I guess no change is a positive change?

Probably recommended for people actually do work at their desk

9:30 p.m. is the perfect lore drop time. Without the distraction of AI news and fake influencer love stories, I get to hear from my fellow Exonians. Learn more about the personal lives of the people I live with. Well, we never know when we'll need this information.

Disadvantages:

NOOOO I can't doomscroll while I shower!!! Then I might as well not shower at all!!!

I was 3 hours late to see the AI memes my dad sent me...

**Experimental Group 3 - Overnight (23:00-7:00; 8 hrs)**

Rating: D- 1.0/11.0 (can't believe I actually gave you one point buddy)

Advantages: N/A (placing a bricked phone next to your head while you sleep doesn't stop radiation from damaging your DNA or causing cancer, silly, go study bio)

Disadvantages:

What do you mean I can't scroll on my bed!!! I already cannot feel joy. Are you talking away my ability to be content as well???

I missed my 8 a.m.! I did not brick my alarm app (See "Control Variables"), but somehow my notifications are silenced.

It ruined my sleep schedule. I could have slept before 11, and now I have to walk down stairs at 10:59 p.m. to brick my phone.

**Discussion**

Our ancestors from the late 1900s are right; technology should not confine humanity. But at the same time, discipline on the use of technology also should not confine us. In a place literally defined by red brick buildings (well, except the very fresh girls dorm built in 2022 and the miscellaneous houses), the last thing you need is a black icon on your phone that bricks your day.

# Motivational Quotes

By EILENA DING '28 and LYDIA KUHNERT '28

rrior

fore 3 a.m."

"Live, laugh, Larry Lyu."

"This too shall stick in the back of your mind for the rest of the term."

"You miss 100 percent of the grill points you don't spend."

— Wayne Gretzky — Michael Scott — Lydia and Eilena

"What's your least favorite fashion trend?"

'Life.'" — Ye

"Keep your friends close, and your future co-heads closer."

"Believe you can, and you're already halfway to Love Gym for assembly."

"The two most important days of your life are the day you are born and Principal's Day."

"When in doubt, make a smart sounding point and confident eye contact."

"What doesn't kill you makes you more philosophically inclined."

"Keep calm and bulls\*\*t on."

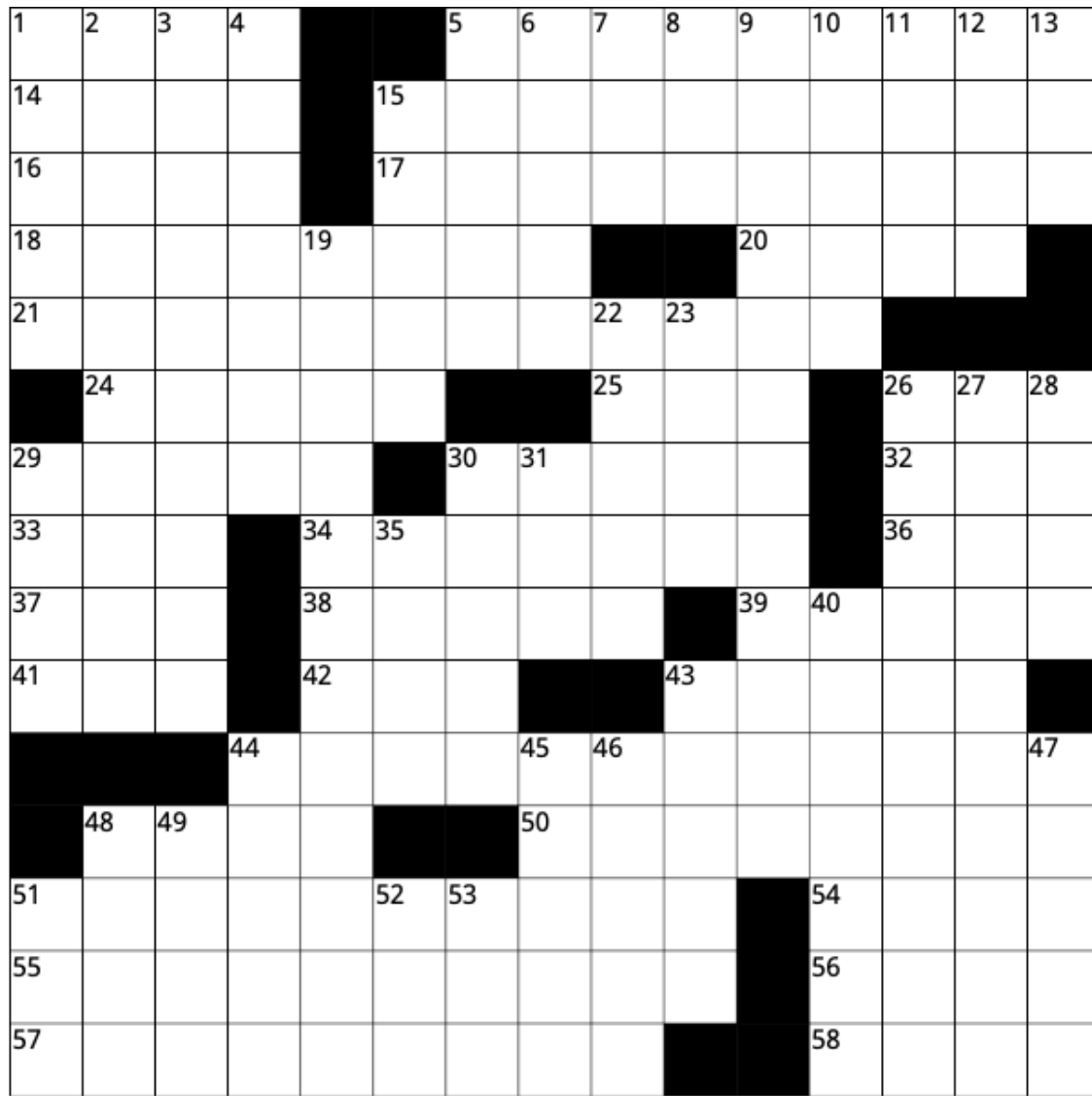
"All's well that ends be-

— some Harkness war-

"A person who never made a mistake never tried Death Chem."

# The Crossword Corner

By CAROL LEE '28



**ACROSS**

- 1-”Teach Your Children” group, initially
- 5-Small audio file
- 14-Suit to \_\_\_\_\_
- 15-Beginning of many a story
- 16-One of the Three Bears
- 17-Game’s turning point?
- 18-Start of a touch-tone telephone instruction
- 20-Dates
- 21-Houses in California and Florida

- 24-Bygone blades
- 25-Grammar school basics, briefly
- 26-Wee, to Burns
- 29-Shapes
- 30-Sacred song
- 32-Long, long time
- 33-Bird: Prefix
- 34-Friendly relationships
- 36-Misery
- 37-Corp. bigwig
- 38-Ebbs
- 39-Aches and \_\_\_\_\_
- 41-Directional suffix
- 42-Grafton’s

- “\_\_\_\_\_ for Burglar”
- 43-Woes on toes
- 44-Step-by-step guides
- 48-Lit \_\_\_\_\_
- 50-Submits, as a verdict
- 51-Where to buy Sherwin-Williams or Valspar products
- 54-”Don’t think so”
- 55-To be made braver
- 56-”Stay” singer Lisa
- 57-Straight-kneed military movement
- 58-Car loan figs.

**DOWN**

- 1-Roughs it
- 2-Goes from the top
- 3-Victim of Hercules’ first labor
- 4-Fermented
- 5-Gleamed
- 6-Like Cheerios
- 7-News letters
- 8-Some Windows systems
- 9-Implement with mousse or pudding
- 10-Ontario natives
- 11-Traditional knowledge

- 12-”Last one \_\_\_\_\_ a rotten egg!”
- 13-Carolina’s \_\_\_\_\_ Dee River
- 15-Angry
- 19-Contest with dramatic shifts
- 22-Cager Gilmore
- 23-Family \_\_\_\_\_
- 26-Where \_\_\_\_\_ threads are picked up
- 27-White lightning maker
- 28-Hydrocarbon suffixes
- 29-Nutmeg spice
- 30-Capital of Belarus
- 31-Suffix with

- Capri
- 35-Postal delivery
- 40-Salad green
- 43-Wept
- 44-Lushes
- 45-Steakhouse order
- 46-W-4 collector, for short
- 47-Hoity-toity types
- 48-\_\_\_\_\_ pants
- 49-Part of RNA
- 51-Cribbage piece
- 52-Radical ‘60s org.
- 53-Vietnamese New Year

## The Exonian

We would like to acknowledge the Squamscott/Penacook peoples who were the first peoples of this land. We would like to honor their ancestors, descendants and future generations for caring for this area and allowing us to be here today.

**ANDREW YANG**  
*Editor-in-Chief*

**ARYAN AGARWAL**  
*Managing Editor*

**CHLOÉ LIND**  
*Director of Writing*

**GRACE YANG**  
*Director of Media*

**ERIC ALEY**  
**GAVIN ZHAO**  
*Chief Digital Editors*

**ADU ILANGO VAN**  
**JOSHUA MULLEN**  
*Business Co-Chairs*

**DIRECTORS OF INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING**  
Carly Canseco  
Karolina Kozak

**NEWS EDITORS**  
Leon Xie  
Aaryan Patel  
Marvin Shim  
Angela He

**LIFE EDITORS**  
Jillian Cheng  
Alex Lim  
Meghan Tate Zee  
Henry Wise  
Hanna Wei  
Nick Baker

**OPINIONS EDITORS**  
Melia Thibault  
Aya Samson  
Sarah Manor  
Andrew Pham  
William Inoue

**COLUMN EDITOR**  
V Murdaya

**HUMOR EDITORS**  
Amerson Liang  
Annie Zhu  
Tiago Bilyk  
Audrey Kim

**SPORTS EDITORS**  
Kevin Thant  
Adelle Pitts  
Samhita Koltur  
Sean Mahdavian  
Abigail Asfaw

**CRUCIVERBALIST**  
Carol Lee

**LAYOUT MANAGER**  
Emily Kim

**HEAD COPY EDITORS**  
Jade Yoo  
Arjun Velan

**SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGERS**  
Eilena Ding  
Carol Lee  
Arisa Yoshino

**HEAD PHOTOGRAPHERS**  
Anoushka Sarathy  
Sean Ricard

**PHOTO EDITORS**  
Adrian Chan  
Blair Li

**HEAD VIDEOGRAPHERS**  
Kaylee Gong  
Altay Bayraktar

**HEAD ARTIST**  
Kevin Chen

**ANCHOR**  
Buchi Akabogu

**PODCAST MANAGERS**  
Katherine Luo  
Sean Mahdavian

**ASSOCIATE ARTISTS**  
Carol Lee  
HB Reeder  
Blair Li  
Ariana Metzger  
Katherine Luo

**ASSOCIATE LAYOUT EDITORS**  
Carol Lee  
Kaylee Gong  
Arisa Yoshino  
Lydia Kuhnert  
Ellina Kim  
Eilena Ding  
Kristine Qiao  
Olivia Wang  
Luca Zhu  
Tony Zhu

**ASSOCIATE COPY EDITORS**  
Owen Safford  
Olivia Szczepanski  
Lydia Kuhnert  
Luke Chon  
Levi Stoll  
Gary Guo  
Chāngyǔ Jiěong  
Buchi Akabogu

**WEB BOARD**

**TECHNICAL DIRECTOR**  
Aaditya Bilakanti

**HEAD CONTENT**

**MANAGERS**  
Evan Chen  
Carol Lee

**BUSINESS BOARD**

**CHIEF ACCOUNTANT**  
Ben Lewis

**MANAGING DIRECTOR OF SUBSCRIPTIONS**  
Ting-Ting Hsieh

**MANAGING DIRECTOR OF ADVERTISING**  
Hugo Shinn

**MANAGING DIRECTOR OF MARKETING**  
Logan Beckerle

**MANAGING DIRECTORS OF OPERATIONS**  
William Lefebvre  
Jun Kuang

**SENIOR ASSOCIATES**  
Joanie Meng

**FACULTY ADVISORS**  
L.J. Cooper  
Jessica Emory  
Erica P. Lazure  
Christopher McCormick

To subscribe to or advertise on *The Exonian*, contact [exonian@gmail.com](mailto:exonian@gmail.com) or call 603-777-4100. A subscription to the paper costs \$120 off campus and \$150 overseas.

*The Exonian* welcomes Letters to the Editor sent to the care of [hyang6@exeter.edu](mailto:hyang6@exeter.edu).

*The Exonian* reserves the right to print Letters to the Editor in a timely fashion and to edit them for content and clarity.