

Phillips Exeter Academy
Exeter, New Hampshire

The Exonian

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UFO FESTIVAL

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SENIOR OF THE WEEK

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Opening Assembly Commences 2026-2027 School Year



Principal Jennifer Karlen Elliott addressing the student body and faculty at Opening Assembly.

Sean Ricard / *The Exonian*

By AUDREY KIM, ELLINA KIM, ANNA YANG, and ANNIE ZHU

The start of a new school year always brings a mix of emotions. For the seniors, in the front row of Love Gym, it’s both excitement and nostalgia that mark the beginning of many lasts. For the preps in the bleachers, nervous anticipation marks the beginning of

something completely new. But no matter where you sit in the crowd, the Opening Assembly sets the scene for the year. Promises of belonging and academic opportunity, along with recognition of both retired faculty and incoming faculty, turn a crowd of strangers into a community.

On Friday, Sept. 4, in Love Gymnasium, Principal Jennifer Elliott de-

livered her first Opening Assembly, commencing the 2026-27 school year. Before her speech, students performed the annual flag bearing ceremony and Assistant Principal Eimer Page acknowledged the Academy’s longest-serving faculty and its faculty emeriti. Lower Ivanka Guo was astonished by the number of years that the five longest-serving facul-

ty had collectively spent at the academy, totalling over 200, and noted that they “definitely deserved the respect that they got.”

Likewise, Senior Chayyah Lewis was happy to see the appearance and recognition of several of her former teachers: “I loved seeing some of the teachers that I had who just retired, like Ms. Watterman, Mr. Robinson, and

other beautiful teachers like that.”

Being a new member of the community elevated the importance of the assembly. Elliott expressed her enthusiasm to integrate into the Exeter community, and her understanding that it would take effort on her part: “My first responsibility is to be a student of this place and its

ASSEMBLY, 3.

E-Book and Phone Policies 26-27: From Old to New

By GARY GUO, DIYA SANDEEP, and OLIVIA WANG

Whenever an Exonian is unclear about a specific school rule, whether it’s regarding the attendance policy, dormitory appliance regulations, or their lion card access to buildings on campus, they will be directed to check the e-book. Over 130 pages and put together by the Office of the Dean of Students, the E-Book serves as a guide that sets the standard for what is expected of an Exonian, covering rules and regulations from course selection and diplomatic credits, to dormitory life and student activities. It also provides advice and recommendations to help Exonians navigate academic and residential life at the Academy.

Every summer, the E-Book undergoes a series of reviews and modifications. As outlined by Dean of Community Life Matthew Hartnett in the family newsletter sent to Exeter students and parents before the start of the 2026-27 school year, modifications to the e-book serve to provide more clarity to Exeter’s rules and regulations. The Academy actively works to enhance student experience on campus by providing more framework.

A noteworthy change to the e-book this year is that being absent from the dorm after designated check-in hours will be considered a major disciplinary

offense and result in a Level 3 conduct case by default. This change reinforces the Academy’s goal to ensure student safety; especially during the night, the school wants to know exactly where a student is, so that in emergency situations, students can be promptly accounted for and the appropriate support can be provided.

Another major modification is that starting this fall, boarding students are permitted to have one refrigerator per dorm room. Previously, students who needed a refrigerator for medication or other health reasons had to contact the Dean of Students Office for permission. Now, all students who wish to have a fridge in their rooms are permitted to acquire one, as long as it is UL-approved, smaller than 3.3 cubic feet, and does not draw more than 1,200 watts.

The deadline to submit a weekend Orah pass has also been moved from Friday 3 p.m. to 8 a.m. in the morning due to an increasing number of weekend off-campus travel requests. This modification will give the Dean of Students Office more time to approve passes, as well as for parents to endorse such requests. Formerly known as “fatigues,” the three opportunities for students to be excused from a required appointment per term will now be named as “flexible absences.”

E-BOOK, 5.

Downer Fitness Center Pool Facilities Expand



The Downer Fitness Center expansion is underway.

Sean Ricard / *The Exonian*

By TIAGO BILYK and NICOLE SUBKHANBERDINA

Announced last spring, the Academy’s expansion of the Downer Family Fitness Center and addition of a new 5700 sq ft pool facility continues to make progress as we head into the fall.

The new facilities will include a four lane pool with a shallow end. This addition provides a significant logistical bonus when it comes to hosting swim meets. The Academy will now be able to host warm ups and warm downs in the smaller pool while competition is held in the currently used eight-lane Nekton Pool. The pool will range in depth from 3.5ft to 7ft. The inclusion of a shallow end means to allow the swimming

program to expand its ability to teach students and community members how to swim.

The construction also covers the expansion of the popular Downer Family Fitness Center. Jason Baseden, Director of Athletics and Physical Education, describes this project as having “two spaces,” although noting that they are to be connected. One of the big advantages of the new space, noted Baseden, is the inclusion of windows. “It will be an opportunity for the community to have an attachment to the outside, visually, when exercising,” he said.

Speaking on the development of the new construction, Director of Facilities Management Mark Leighton said the following “Construction has progressed well on both proj-

ects. The pool project started slower than expected due to spring weather and ground water issues but is back on track. The planned date to have the new pool operational is in February 2027. The fitness center expansion started in June is on track to be complete in March 2027.”

As a core part of Exeter’s athletic facilities, the renovations to the Nekton Championship Swimming Pool will be felt throughout the community.

Upper George Wang, a member of the boys’ varsity swimming team, reflects on how the expansion will affect the team’s future: “This renovation will make us more comfortable during the season, but it would be especially beneficial

RENOVATION, 4.

News

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» CLUB EXPO

Read about the annual Club Expo, with over 100 clubs represented, 2.

Exonians Attend Club Expo

By ADRIAN CHAN, AUDREY KIM, OWEN SAFFORD, and DIYASANDEEP

On the evening of Saturday, Sep. 12, Exonians chatted their way through the maze of diversely decorated club tables from Genetics Club to Black Students of Excellence. The Expo was a snapshot of Exeter beyond the classroom with no shortage of options for Exonians to consider.

Earlier, on Wednesday, Director of Student Activities Joanne Lembo introduced the ClubHub platform, replacing Blackbaud. Students can now sign up for and remove themselves from clubs directly, removing the previous one day delay for manual removals and coheads can now make announcements, schedule events and customize their pages all in one place.

Exeter Comic Association Cohead Upper HB Reeder mentioned that her club did not have a booth despite having signed up for one, with “booth sign ups kinda unclear.” However, the organizers were able to find a space for them quickly. Reeder stated, “I wanted to raise as much awareness that the club exists, so comic lovers will come in naturally.” Upper Veda Acharyya, co-head of Exeter Comic Association shared that they had “comic strips for people to come by and draw their own comics. We had a display board to put up the comics.”

Robotics advertised five teams to new students this year. APEX Captain Senior Arwa Alnazer mentioned that they tried handing out “business cards with our Club Hub QR code so that when people empty their pockets at the end of the night they remember our booth.” which made her realize “just how many people we interacted with and sent information to.” Kirtland

Society went further by having their members visit the beginning Latin classes on campus to help drum up interest.

Lower Justin Zhang, helping out at a few clubs including Hong Kong Society, underscored that when advertising a club “I have to be honest, because if you’re not honest, and you get these people to join your clubs, and it’s completely different from what you told them, that’s sort of bad.”

Exeter Math Club and Exeter Computing Club Cohead Upper Gavin Zhao shared that their “count the Skittles” activity could be “easily done [in] 30 seconds” but they also handed out a problem sheet with “frankly quite hard” Olympiad level questions to appeal to different audiences. Prep Philip Colcord aptly enjoyed employing “mathematical area formulas to get an advantage” in Skittle guessing as well as engaging with the math problems both at the Expo and later in the dorm. Exeter Computing Club similarly encouraged prospective members to jailbreak an AI with ECC meetings “explaining how that works or explaining why people care about jailbreaking”

Prep Andre Chan provided a new student’s perspective, saying “For someone who was looking to try something new, having these introductory activities was really helpful. Food, of course, is a great seller but playing with coheads at Chess Club was really engaging.” Colcord echoed that he was drawn to the fencing club because of its “catch a cone with a sword” activity. He was also drawn to clubs with a lot of “big and flashy” awards. Prep Felix Rescher shared that he looked for clubs that either are “pop in, have fun and have a little chat” or those he had “some more experience in like art club.”

Upper Rocco Valencia be-

lieved that this year’s Club Expo held more energy with people “more excited to ask new students to join their club.” He added that he found several clubs he wasn’t originally interested in, but now is considering, such as DRAMAT, Neuroscience Club, and Exeter Pinoy Society.

Upper Yeonwoo Cho described this Club Expo as “equally overstimulating” to previous Expos. She mentioned that while she hadn’t noticed many new clubs, “the clubs that had live music or very interactive booths caught my eye.”

Alnazer suggested for new students that they check out as many clubs as possible. She clarified, “I regret not being able to meet more people and find more things I’m interested in.” Balaraman agreed, and mentioned that, for preps especially, “fall is for trying out new things and you can always narrow it down later.”

Valencia emphasized, “If you have to ask the question, ‘Should I join this club?’ the answer should always be yes. You can always just go to one club meeting and never go again, but if you find a club that’s right for you, you can make friendships, find community, and learn more about whatever topic/skill that club teaches you.” Conversely, Reeder advised, “Don’t overextend yourself with clubs, if you can’t handle certain clubs or don’t like one, don’t feel too obligated to show up.”

Walking through the Love Gym, students glimpsed into the possible experiences that students may have during their journey here, and the introduction of the new platform, ClubHub, made it easier to stay connected. As several club leaders emphasized, the goal is not to join everything, but to try widely enough to discover communities, skills, and interests.



Students at booths of 100+ clubs. Adrian Chan / The Exonian

Fries for FRIES: Celebrating a Day of Consent Fest

By AUDREY KIM, SEAN RICARD, and ANNIE ZHU

On Saturday, Sept. 6, uppers and seniors immersed themselves in games and interactive activities as they roamed from table to table, collecting colorful stamps and smiley faces on their cards. Outside, Kona Ice trucks and popcorn waited. Ultimately, the joyous atmosphere was dedicated to a more serious topic: consent. Welcome to Consent Fest 2026.

Consent Fest — a new event as of this year — saw students rotate through a series of stations focused on consent, relationships, and communication. Instead of a lecture, these students took part in this event for prizes and fun activities. Organizers hoped that the three-hour event would give students enough time to meaningfully engage with each activity. Students expressed varying opinions on the event.

Dr. Christina Palmer, the Director of Student Well-Being, alongside CAPS, the Health and Human Development Department, H4, and EASA, took the lead in organizing this event. SafeBAE, an external nonprofit organization dedicated to sexual assault prevention, also partnered

with Exeter for most consent workshops and consent-themed events.

Palmer shared that other than the event serving as an opportunity to “think about consent, relationships, communication, and the vital role it plays in their lives,” it was also “done in a way to respect those harmed by sexual violence, by having some activities that allowed students to show their care and support for them.”

Senior Myles Oluwo, who worked with Safebae as a student peer educator and helped run the bracelet booth at Consent Fest, commented on the takeaways he hoped students would get from the event. “Consent is not something to be afraid of talking about,” he said. “It’s definitely serious, but it’s not something that’s unspoken.”

The event was only required for returning uppers and seniors, reflecting its intentionality. “They have at least two or three years of direct consent training with HAVEN or Safe Bae,” Palmer mentioned, “along with having attended HHD classes and enough programming to engage in Consent Fest in a healthy way.”

During the nearly five months of planning, “we developed activity ideas and ensured that the con-



Max Loghinov ‘28 participates in the “These Hands Don’t Hurt” activity at Consent Fest.

tent matched what our student body has been learning, then let SafeBae work on creating the activities,” Palmer shared.

Planning the event was “a heavy lift,” Palmer said, “because most of the detailed work happened in the summer, and not a lot of people were around.” But with the help of on-campus resources such as the Health and Human Development Department, Student Activities, Campus Safety, CAPS, the Deans’ Office, H4, and EASA, the event ran smoothly.

Students shared their experiences with Consent

Fest, with a range of reactions.

Upper Fiona Liu shared her views on the naming and the aims of the event. “[The event name] kind of downplays the severity of consent,” she said. The nature of the event also seemed concerning to Upper Rocco Valencia. To him, the benefits of the interactive event stations did not outweigh its shortcomings. “Gamifying [consent] and turning it into some sort of carnival really makes the issue a lot less heavy, a lot more desensitized than it otherwise would be,” he said.

Liu also commented on

the 75-minute time commitment students were encouraged to dedicate to the event. However, “a lot of people sped through it,” she noted.

Senior Owen Cosgrove, on the other hand, thought that the amount of time that the organizer carved out for the activities was appropriate. Going into it, he said, “I was thinking, it’s only eight required booths, so that should take 20 minutes. It actually took pretty close to 75 minutes. In my experience,” Cosgrove assessed, “they were kind of

CONSENT, 4.

Exeter Celebrate 62nd Annual UFO Festival



Downtown Exeter celebrates the annual UFO festival.

By JOHANNA HILLMAN, SEAN RICARD, LEVI STOLL, and ANNIE ZHU

On the morning of Saturday, Sept. 5, an unusual gathering of cars, people, and stands was seen in the typically quiet town of Exeter. Near the bandstand, one beheld an even stranger sight: crowds sporting tinfoil hats and golden retrievers with green antennae springing from their heads. Revelers in neon green costumes filled crowded streets for the annual Exeter UFO Festival, a highly anticipated event.

The Exeter UFO Festival, occurring yearly on Labor Day Weekend, celebrates the “Incident at Exeter,” a UFO sighting that occurred on Sept. 3, 1965, in the nearby town of

Kensington. Teenager Norman Muscarello first spotted the UFO, and it was also seen and recorded by two policemen and another eyewitness.

The festival attracted many interested in the extraterrestrial and paranormal, but it also included a variety of stalls and activities. According to Connie Cox, one of the organizers of the event, all proceeds from the event were donated to the Kiwanis Club, a local charity. The Kiwanis, Cox described, use much of the proceeds from the festival to fund scholarships for local low-income high school students to attend college, last year donating \$12,000.

One of the festival’s main attractions was the trolley tour, which took festivalgoers two miles away to Shaw’s Hill in Kensington, the incident’s orig-

inal site. During the short ride, visitors were told the story of the 1965 incident, including that it was only one of many reported during the 60s. According to a guide, “the sightings were so common that the students from [Phillips Exeter] Academy used to go out at night and sit in the bleachers, hoping to see something.”

Another key offering of the festival was the costume parade. On Saturday at 1:30 p.m., excited adults, children, and pets alike clad in flashy alien costumes marched from the Exeter commons to the town center, where they took over the gazebo.

Doc Rimkunas Nickerson, an organizer of the costume parade, spoke fondly of this year’s turnout. “Every single year, it gets bigger. It’s really fun and

playful. All the kids get a ribbon, all the dogs look adorable, and ... for the most part, everybody has a pretty good time,” Nickerson said.

George Sommers of Quincy, Massachusetts, wore a full-body shimmery jumpsuit with an alien mask. “I like science fiction and horror and all that kind of stuff,” said Sommers. “This is my mini Halloween preview.”

Along with the trolley rides, costume contests, and the celebration of aliens and UFOs, the festival also hosted multiple speakers in the Town Hall, ranging from relatives of individuals involved in UFO sightings to experts in the field of ufology. Entry tickets cost \$40, which some, including Sommers, found pricey.

The UFO festival was also

Sean Ricard / *The Exonian*

enjoyed by many members of the PEA community. Preps Laila Arroyo and Carolina Bobadilla enjoyed observing the various costumed festivalgoers. They also participated in an alien-themed raffle at Inkwell Coffeehouse, which they found exciting. “It seems like a great Exeter tradition,” said Bobadilla.

Theater and Dance Instructor Lauren Josef visited the festival with her daughter, Lily, who especially enjoyed making a spaceship out of recycled materials. Josef had not previously attended the festival, as Labor Day historically fell before the beginning of the school year, when many Exeter faculty traveled to visit family. “We’ve been wanting to try it out for the

UFO, 5.

Assembly Cont.

people.”

As for her plans for the school year, Elliott outlined Exeter’s values against a polarizing political climate. “We must prove—to each other and the world—that we can examine our assumptions, consider a wide range of perspectives, and engage constructively with each other.” However, Elliott also explained how even in a pursuit of excellence, one must not lose sight of their well-being. She emphasized the importance of prioritizing joy and balance amidst a stressful schedule.

Elliott’s speech was a result of reflection on the Deed of Gifts, coaching from past principals and colleagues, and examining her own values alignment with the community’s values. Because of this preparation, her speech was widely well received by students and faculty alike. Elliott appreciated students’ “respectful attention” and “kind remarks” following her address.

There was, unfortunately, a misunderstanding at the end of the Opening Assembly. Traditionally, seniors are allowed to stand and leave the assembly hall before the rest of the student body, as a way of honoring their last year. At the conclusion of this year’s assembly, however, there were no explicit instructions given to underclassmen, and all stu-

dents stood to leave. Elliott explained, “Dr. Page and I connected to think through how I can honor this practice when we open the Assembly Hall later in the year.”

Addressing the unfulfilled senior tradition, Assistant Principal Page sent out an apology email to all seniors. Instead of approaching Principal Elliott during the livestream, Page thought it wiser to send an email explaining the circumstances after the assembly concluded.

“It’s my responsibility to make sure Principal Elliott knows our traditions,” she said. Page proceeded to explain that although she had covered the “Senior Class” to conclude every assembly, she had not spoken to Principal Elliott about the annual tradition for non-senior classes to remain in their seats at the end of Opening Assembly.

Lewis shared her disappointment about having her last Opening Assembly in Love Gym, rather than the old Assembly Hall in the Academy Building, but noted, “I got to appreciate all the different parts of assembly a little bit more. At my last few Opening Assemblies, I either got there too late or I didn’t have a good view. So it was nice to be in the front and feel appreciated.”

For senior Amrit Dharmija, a meaningful part of the

Opening Assembly was the flag-bearing ceremony. She explained, “seeing my best friends holding the flags and waving them made me really emotional.”

Many felt moved by Principal Elliott’s passionate delivery: “Something really memorable was the way she was speaking,” Dhamija reflected. “She was very emotional, and she was clearly really happy to be here.”

Anglin was impressed by her transition from the style of William K. Rawson’s classic Opening Assembly address and said that she “did a brilliant job of incorporating elements of Principal Rawson’s Opening Assembly address while still keeping her own voice.”

Many Exonians were disappointed by the handling of the ‘senior class’ tradition. Anglin, who said that this was one of the traditions she was most excited for as a senior, recalled her own first Opening Assembly in prep-year, where the seniors “made sure we followed the years-long tradition of letting seniors get up first after the principal said ‘senior class.’”

Upper Srisha Boinapalli agreed, pinning this year’s mix-up on a “lack of specificity.” She further stated, “Now I am worried that new students will not know about this tradition because it is quite niche. It’s a sign



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Senior Justine Chen waves flag at ceremony.

of respect for the seniors because it is the last Opening Assembly.” Senior Isha Jha added, “I don’t know if any other assembly could kind of equate to that, so it was a bit disappointing.”

With Principal Elliott giving her first Opening Assembly speech and welcoming new students to Exeter, this assembly reflected a community in transition. Speaking to the student body, Elliott included both her own voice as well as

referencing and strengthening the motto that former Principal Rawson always reminded the student body of. “You can do the work, you will make lifelong friends, and absolutely you belong here,” she cited. And at the end of her speech, Principal Elliott added the powerful reflection: “Gratitude, love, and joy are expansive, infectious, and deeply motivating. They serve our pursuit of excellence and learning.”

Roundabout Opens on Front Street



Sean Ricard / The Exonian

Construction for roundabout for improving traffic flow finished.

By SOLLIE BEER, IAN KOO, and LEVI STOLL

After a month of construction, a new roundabout has opened in front of the Exeter Inn. From Aug. 6 to Sept. 5, construction crews transformed the formerly K-shaped intersection on Front Street into a roundabout. This change is intended to “improve traffic flow, reduce delays, and enhance safety for all users traveling through the intersection,” as described by the Town of Exeter’s Public Works. During its construction, traffic was diverted via Gill Street and Court Street, allowing students and faculty a means to travel to the Academy for their arrivals in late August and early September. Now fully constructed, the roundabout will be traveled frequently by day students, Academy teams, and visitors to the Inn.

Day students, some of whom travel through the junction every day, took notice of the changed traffic pattern. Senior Owen Cosgrove found the detour “really annoying” but was glad to see a change on Front Street. Before construction, he said, parked cars often blocked drivers’ views of traffic, adding that “it was a mess, and no one knew what they were doing.”

Upper Cormac Page similarly called it “never a convenient junction to drive on,” noting that heavy traffic often slowed drivers even when they continued straight.

Senior Sophie Morrow described the intersection as “absolutely horrible,” saying that drivers trying to turn left could wait four or five minutes.

The new rotary seems to have improved this pattern. “[The junction] has been much better now, much quicker and safer,” Morrow said. Traffic splits before entering the intersection, where four crosswalks surround a lightly landscaped central island. Gale Park, which borders the roundabout, was entirely preserved, while some parking spaces were removed in front of the Inn.

Cosgrove appreciated the addition of new crosswalks. “In the past, running along Front Street and Pine Street would require crossing two crosswalks, and with four different types of traffic coming at you, you had to get everyone to see you,” he said. “I think [the new design] is going to be less dangerous because at a roundabout, cars are already yielding anyway.”

Now that one traffic concern has been addressed, the attention of some has focused on a similar junction downtown. A few day students were concerned with the intersection around the town’s bandstand, which is sandwiched by parking spaces and sharp angles. Morrow emphasized this concern, asking for “limits to parking areas as it is ridiculously hard to see oncoming traffic when cars are parked on both sides of the roads so close to intersections.”

Given the popularity of the Front Street roundabout thus far, some students see the town as fit for another. Page described the bandstand intersection as another “weird junction that feels arbitrary.” How could the town solve this? “It would probably be more natural just to turn it into a rotary,” Page said

Renovation Cont.

if the pool is open during the off-season.” Wang said that adding a new pool could fill the gap that swimmers may experience when there are neither school nor commonwealth practices: “Currently, if swimmers want to stay in the water during these weeks, they must swim very early in the morning. An extra pool may offer us time options during the off-season, either in the main or new pool.” Instructor in Physical Education Don Mills similarly said that he was “excited to be able to expand [the] teams and programming.”

Mills further noted that the new pool “will benefit our teams but also our community as a whole.”

In the past, the pool has posed problems when it came to hosting NEPSAC’s. Exeter has been incompatible with hosting the championships due to the pool’s size limitations, explained Wang: “Warm-up and warm-down become extremely important during these big meets, as they

can make or break your swim... Meets without that extra space often become the most tiring, since we can’t flush out lactic acid as well.”

Given the addition of a second pool, the Academy would be eligible to host such events, creating new opportunities for growth, experience, and achievement. “It would provide a home advantage, removing the hassle of bus rides and hotels. This saves a lot of time and energy, both of which are important to conserve,” describes Wang.

With renovations on track to be completed by the end of the academic year, these changes to the Athletic Complex will represent some of the most significant in recent history. In addition, the ability to teach members of the community to swim should prove a significant improvement to the swim program. For students and faculty alike, the new facilities in the Athletic complex promise to be a true increase in the quality of life.

Consent Cont.



Students with fries cutout at photobooth.

Sean Ricard / The Exonian

right on target with how long it should take.”

Oluwo commented about the inclusivity of the event’s prizes, describing that some students were concerned about the lack of darker skin tones for the makeup prizes. “I think that’s something that could be improved on,” he said.

Cosgrove also appreciated this year’s style of consent workshop, and how it differed from previous programming that returning students had done. “Since people got to be with their friends, there was no programming that drew a wedge between [them],” Cosgrove said.

Liu also appreciated the qualities that encouraged participation, especially compared to other forms such as a lecture. “It seemed that everyone there really cared about what they were

doing,” Liu reflected. “Because they made the event fun, it was more interesting for people to participate in.”

Some students wished that lowerclassmen, especially lowers, were also involved in the Consent Fest event. Given that the age of consent in New Hampshire is sixteen, some thought that the information shared inside stations was also applicable to lowers, many of whom have reached the legal age.

Although she doesn’t feel left out, lower Belén Valenzuela hopes that the next Consent Fest will also include lowers. “Everyone’s around people who are different ages,” she said. “It makes sense for more people to go, at least definitely lowers.”

Palmer clarified that preps, lowers, and all new students will be required to

attend a Consent Workshop with HAVEN that will be held on Saturday, Oct. 10, and attributed the lateness to Labor Day this year, which prevented HAVEN from doing their typical training with the new students that would have happened during the first weeks of school.

Consent Fest was an attempt to move consent education beyond the classroom and into a more interactive setting. Some students enjoyed the games and made it easier for them to discuss consent, while others believed that they diminished the seriousness of the issues involved. As organizers consider future Consent Fests, student responses suggest that the challenge will be not simply getting students to attend, but finding a way to balance accessibility and engagement with the subject itself.

Community Reacts to NH Democratic Senate Primaries



Manzur, who ran for the Democratic Senate Nomination.

Courtesy of karishmaforsenate.com

By LYDIA KUHNERT, ARIANA METZGER, and ARISA YOSHINO

On Tuesday, Sept. 8, Granite Staters flocked to the polls to vote in New Hampshire’s 2026 Democratic Primary. The race was primarily between two candidates, former senator

Chris Pappas and Karishma Manzur, parent of current upper Elias Koch-Manzur. Due to Manzur’s relation to the community, the race held special importance for many students across campus. However, after a day of polling, Pappas won the nomination with 99,943 votes to Manzur’s 50,260 and will face Republican

opponent, former New Hampshire Governor John Sununu, on Nov. 3.

Koch-Manzur explained his mother’s decision to run: “She had worked for years as a peace activist and non-profit leader, and we knew we needed an honest progressive to run for the

E-Book Cont.

Other modifications to the e-book include the change of street address for student mail from 20 Main St. to 16 Tan Ln. and expansion of the definition of prohibited controlled substance in the “Major Offenses” section.

The phone policy, now officially in the e-book, also caught the attention of many Exonians. In May 2026, the Academy launched a phone pilot policy and formalized the policy for preps and lowers this year. The class of 2029 and 2030 became the first classes in Exeter history to receive regulations on night-time phone use on school nights. “On school nights, 9th and 10th graders are expected to store their cell phones in dormitory lockers during study hours (8:00 to 10:00 p.m.) and overnight (10:30 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.),” according to the e-book dated Aug. 27, 2026.

The phone policy received mixed reactions from the class of 2030. Prep Olivia Cho shared that she found the phone policy helpful to improve her focus when studying. “Without the visual distraction of a phone along with the constant urge to scroll, I’m able to focus on my homework better. The physical act of taking my phone, locking it, and being unable to see it consciously helps me transfer into a ‘study mode’ that clearly distinguishes the time to study and the time to have fun.”

“In theory, many people say not to study with your phone next to you, but because it’s been just told repeatedly and not actually done, I’ve noticed that few

people actually adhere to this practice,” Cho further elaborated. “Having to actively walk to the common room and lock my phone definitely influences me to be in a focused state when studying.”

While some Exonians found the policy as a beneficial framework, others pointed out critical limitations of the phone restrictions. Upon hearing about the phone policy, prep Matthew He said he felt “kind of disappointed and upset.” “[As high schoolers], I don’t think we need that much help in controlling ourselves,” He reflected. Coming from junior boarding school, he has already built a study habit that allows him to finish his homework before night comes. “Even if I have my phone during most of the day, I still choose to study because I know I have homework that I need to do,” He said.

Additionally, He shared that his peers do not all have the same studying habits. Therefore, he is not sure whether the new phone policy necessarily helps younger students build better study habits. “Usually when it’s time to turn in my phone, I would just use my computer or hang out with my peers.” He said.

Students usually set their own password for their phone box and can access their phones at any time in the common room. He expressed concerns regarding how the policy is implemented. “It’s ridiculous to ask people to turn their phone off when they’re studying and take it out themselves when they’re not studying.” He pointed out, “People are

not gonna have the honesty to just do that.”

“If you don’t trust us to keep our phones in our room, why do you trust us to just lock it and then take it out ourselves?” He said, noting that there are so many ways students can bypass turning in their phones at night that the policy is built on trust between students and the teacher, which should have been there when students are allowed to manage their own screen time 24 hours a day.

Prep Sophia Kim raised a similar concern regarding the effectiveness of the phone policy. “I don’t really see the difference [between having a phone policy and not], because I have access to YouTube and Instagram on my other devices too.” Despite having their phones temporarily locked away, students are still not kept away from their major distractions.

Another recurring comment on the phone policy from preps and new lowers is that they were not made aware of the phone restrictions before they arrived on campus. “I learned [of the phone policy] from the lowers and the uppers,” He shared. Cho recalled that she learned about it a few days before arriving on campus through her roommate.

Kim said that she only heard about the policy during one of the first assembly sessions. “I wasn’t really prepared. [Without my phone], I have to set alarms on my Apple Watch now, but it doesn’t really ring all the time.”

This lack of direct communication about a new policy raised a broader question about how the Academy communicates policy changes to students. While the

e-book provides a centralized record of school rules, students’ experiences suggest that the existence of a written policy does not necessarily ensure that those affected by it are aware of the regulations before it takes effect.

Academic departments on campus have made changes in or formalized department policy as well. The Classical Languages Department has solidified their stance on devices no longer being used in class, instead opting for notebooks and textbooks.

Chair of Classical Languages Sally Morris explained the department’s departure from devices, saying, “Research shows that handwriting enhances memory retention and creative thinking. Devices are tempting for quick glances at any number of distractions other than the Latin or Greek text we are reading, which is why we ask our students to use the textbooks assigned to the course.” She hopes that “students will benefit from having a common platform and focus for all of our work together in the Harkness classroom.”

The English Department has similarly strengthened their policy that students must be transparent about their writing processes with their teachers, although this is not entirely new.

Chair of English Barbara Desmond shared the intention behind the decision: “The English department is starting this year by sharing the expectation that all students should make their writing process visible in full to their teachers. In addition, it is expected that students will give their teacher access to all materials and notes used. This is not really a change of practice

as English teachers often collect early drafts of assignments or ask students to show their brainstorming and the version history of a paper. Making it a formal expectation allows us to be very clear about our values, emphasizing the importance of process and productive struggle to the development of critical thinking and writing skills. We want our students to think and write on their own without resorting to the tempting shortcuts offered by LLMs.”

Taken together, this year’s changes illustrate the e-book’s evolving role beyond simply documenting Academy rules. From allowing refrigerators in dorm rooms to implementing phone restrictions for lowerclassmen, the Academy’s policies actively respond to student and faculty needs, as well as paradigmatic changes happening in the world such as the rise of artificial intelligence. At the same time, student responses to the phone policy also reveal a gap between how a policy is articulated as a written document and how it’s being understood by the students expected to follow it.

As the Academy continues to revise the e-book, the effectiveness of those changes may therefore depend not only on how precisely the regulations are written, but also on how they are communicated and carried out in the lives of every Exonian. For a document intended to establish a common understanding of what is expected of an Exonian, ensuring that students know not only what the rules are, but why they exist and when they change, remains a crucial part of that purpose.

Senate Cont.

open Senate seat this cycle. When no one else was willing or able to step up to the task, it seemed only natural that she would run herself.”

Manzur and Pappas spent many weeks campaigning, both engaging with the Academy in different ways. Manzur came to campus last spring to host an open Q&A session with Exeter Political Union, while the Democratic Club also met separately with Pappas at a Democratic Party event last year.

While there was a diverse range of perspectives regarding the election on campus, many students appreciated the greater political engagement before, during, and after it.

“There’s kind of a buzz on campus regarding the election season and these two different sides that are

fighting for different values,” lower Izzy Cabral said. “As Exonians, part of our job is to engage in respectful discourse, which is something that I’m seeing a lot and I really love.”

As for the election itself, students had various predictions. Senior Aslan Bilimer, a co-head of the Democratic Club, shared that he believed Chris Pappas would win the Senate nomination.

“I was pretty confident that he would pull through, despite the growing momentum behind Manzur’s campaign,” Bilimer said. However, he also saw how Manzur’s campaign challenged Pappas’: “He loves New Hampshire. He’s invested in his constituents, and that’s always very important. I think he lost some support because of the less

than productive record record he has in Congress when it comes to actually enacting policy.”

Victor Angeline, senior and co-head of the Exeter Political Union, agreed, adding that Pappas had been up in the polls, had much more campaign funding, and was backed by the Democratic establishment.

“I think what Democrats wanted out of this race in particular was not a hotly contested primary,” Angeline said. “They wanted a safe and secure candidate who would be able to go up against [John E.] Sununu in November.”

Some found Manzur’s stance too progressive for New Hampshire. Upper and a co-head of the Democratic Club, Will Miller, added, “Radical socialists and their ideals are antithetical to everything New Hampshire

means. The motto of New Hampshire is Live Free or Die. The current Republican Party doesn’t represent this belief, and neither does the DSA.” Miller even observed people around him feeling relieved upon learning the outcome.

Koch-Manzur had a different take. “While many agreed with [Manzur’s] policies, the Democratic establishment had spent years demonizing the Republicans and pushing the message that only a “moderate” would win in NH,” he described. “It was exhausting to try and convince people that just because someone had a D in front of their name didn’t mean they were a good lawmaker that supported real democratic values.”

Democratic Club discussed some of the issues they’d noticed with the Democratic Party. “I’d say

there is general frustration within the club about how Democrats have not only failed to govern the way many had hoped, but also to bring about progressive policies, such as Medicare for All,” said Bilimer.

Many supporters of Manzur hoped that she would implement these policies. “In the end we all want universal healthcare, liveable wages, affordable housing, and an end to all of these costly and terrible wars,” said Koch-Manzur.

With midterms still up ahead in November, the community is looking at a hotly contested race, which could cost the Republicans control of the Senate. The nation’s eyes will be watching, and the Exeter community will surely continue to be a place of meaningful, convicted, but respectful political discourse.

UFO Cont.

past ten years,” said Josef. She also enjoyed seeing tourists who wouldn’t usually visit Exeter.

Yet not all who visited were so spellbound. Upper Theodore Stien found the festival “very strange,” and doubted the veracity of the alien sighting, saying, “I think we’re just celebrating falsehood here.” Despite his skepticism, Stien was still excited by the festival’s offerings.

For shop owners in downtown Exeter, the festival’s attraction of tourists meant an increase in visits to their stores, a welcome development. Ian Smith, the owner of Travel and Nature Adventure Outfitters, called the event “phenomenal.” “The foot traffic’s fantastic,” he said.

The event also featured Shimmy Shenanigans, a local belly-dance group. This was the group’s first year performing. “This event gave us the opportunity to interact with the com-

munity and educate them about Middle Eastern dance and body positivity,” said the group’s leader, Sabrina Lichtenwalner.

Local artist Alyssa Watters, who runs a shop called Art By Alyssa, made special UFO-themed prints and postcards for the occasion. Fortunately for Watters, the extraterrestrial art sold well. “This year’s been crazy busy,” she said.

However, some took issue with the festival’s use of promotional AI posters. Sumru Ozdemir, a children’s bookseller at Water Street Books, called the use of AI “a bummer.” Ozdemir continued, “I know a lot of people with kids who wanted to come but decided to boycott the festival because of the use of AI.”

Another impediment to the UFO Festival was the simultaneous Anti-Abortion protest. The protestors were members of the organization Abolish Abortion

New Hampshire, a political and evangelical movement firmly rooted in Christianity. They staged a demonstration featuring signs, some depicting graphic images. Members of the organization encouraged passersby to engage in discussion. Most observers ignored the protesters, though others offered either messages of disapproval or agreement. The protesters sparked debates with pedestrians, and their presence disrupted the festival’s family-friendly, apolitical atmosphere.

Despite this detriment to the extraterrestrial festivities, Cox looks forward to another lively UFO Festival next year, hoping to have “even more people” and “more wonderful things to see.” As one of the festival’s nine organizers, Cox marveled at how much the scope of the event had grown. “We do it every year, and we do it with love,” she said.



Alien.

Sean Ricard / *The Exonian*

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Find out about Christina’s contributions to the dance community at Exeter, 6.

» FOTW: SEAN CAMPBELL

Read about Mr. Campbell’s involvement with the Design Lab, 7.

» NEW FACULTY

Get to know 20 new faculty members joining PEA this year, 11.

Senior of the Week: Christina Hu

By AUDREY KIM, JUNE KOH, MAGGIE KOTKOWSKI and PEARL HARA YAMAZAKI

At four in the morning, when all the other floors’ residents were peacefully asleep, the second floor of Amen Hall was still awake. During their lower year, Seniors Christina Hu, Shiloh Ffrench, Ava Salvatore, and Jillian Cheng were crowded into a dorm room, belting along to the Addams Family soundtrack and laughing loudly enough that the proctor next door eventually asked them to keep it down.

For Hu, whose quiet nature disappeared as soon as she was with this group, every lyric sung burned away the lingering fear of talking to new people. The night should have ended hours ago. Still, this moment would become one of the memories that she would remember most today.

This story may seem ordinary for the Hu that Exeter knows today; but when she first arrived at Exeter, this kind of scenario was almost impossible to imagine. Back then, Hu was so quiet that even her closest friends now struggled to make conversation. In one instance, Salva-

tor, Ffrench, and Hu went to Me and Ollie’s. Trying to get to know her, they asked about Hu’s hometown and interests, but the conversation quickly went dry. As awkward silence filled the air, Hu, searching for anything to say, broke the silence: “Does anyone want napkins?”

Three years later, her friends still laugh about the moment. Not because there was anything funny about asking for napkins, but because it captures just how much Hu has changed since that first awkward day. The once-shy prep has become the friend who stays up until four in the morning laughing with her friends, who breaks into spontaneous dance sessions, and who can turn even the most ordinary moments into memories.

“We had so many late night talks, before bed, and we would be up until 2 AM, just talking and talking and talking.” Ffrench, Hu’s prep year roommate, remembered.

Getting to that point, however, was not always easy. Before Exeter, Hu’s world was rooted in Paradise Valley, Arizona, where she grew up with her two older sisters. The age gap between them was large: Hu’s oldest sister



Hu smiles in front of Lamont Art Gallery.

Kaylee Gong / The Exonian

was a significant 20 years older than her, leading Hu to joke that she had “three moms” growing up. At home, she also had a constant companion in Ash, her black cat, whom she still misses while living on campus. Additionally, at Hu’s former school in Arizona, boarding school was unfamiliar, and she recalled that many of her former classmates viewed it through the stereotype that students were sent away because they had

“done something bad.”

So, arriving alone to Exeter as a quiet and shy version of herself, Hu had to find different ways to express herself.

Dance was a constant in Hu’s childhood. She began with ballet, jazz, and hip-hop before eventually joining a Chinese dance studio. In the years leading up to Exeter, Chinese dance became an important part of her life, even though it was an expe-

rience she rarely encountered outside of the studio. That changed when Hu arrived at Exeter. At the Academy, she met students who had grown up with similar experiences, making something that had once felt unusual to her feel more familiar.

Hu reflected, “Back home, besides the friends that I had been dancing with, I didn’t know anyone else that was

HU, 9.

Class of 2027 Kicks Off the Year with Senior Events



Seniors gathered in Phelps Stadium for Senior Sunrise.

Arisa Yoshino / The Exonian

By VALMIK DANGAYACH, KAYLEE GONG, NICOLE SUBKHANBERDINA, and PEARL HARA YAMAZAKI

On the evening of Thursday, Sept. 3, the class of 2027 gathered in the Hahn Room for the second annual Senior Class Dinner — a celebration marking a

beginning of the end. The night featured professional improv comedians from iO Chicago Theater, and select members of the grade performed improv too. Early morning on Friday, Sept. 11, seniors came together again for Senior Sunrise. Hot chocolate and cider donuts were provided, sweetening the start of seniors’

final year.

Reflecting on Senior Dinner, class president Dani Méndez appreciated the event as an opportunity for the senior class to come altogether. She highlighted that the grade “had a blast” and hoped the relatively new senior-dinner traditions

EVENTS, 9.

Best Buys for Dorms

By EILENA DING, BEN KIM, CAROL LEE, and ARISA YOSHINO

What actually belongs in your dorm room? With countless products, gadgets, and goods all marketed as “must-have essentials,” deciding what to buy for your dorm can feel overwhelming, daunting, and also quite expensive. To separate the actual necessities from the stuff that’ll collect dust in your closet, a few Exonians shared their best, worst, and most savvy dorm buys.

Best Overall:

Mounted Coat Rack

While it may seem random, upper Eliot McCarthy insisted that, after securing it with about 20 command strips, her mounted coat rack is her best purchase yet. Hanging items like sports hats, bags, jackets, and more, “it’s very multi-purpose,” she explained. “It just reminds me of the things that I care about.”

Full-length Mirror

Lower Aanya Shah’s answer was a full-length mirror, an item whose absence made the experience on campus noticeably harder. “I was stuck without a full-length mirror for the first few days of the term, and I was struggling. I had to go to the bathroom every time I wanted to see myself.” She now considers a full-length mirror as “quite pivotal in your Exeter experience.”

Wallpaper

Making your empty, typical white dorm wall feel homey may feel daunting, but upper Isabella Orellano has

found her solution. Wallpaper. Though it didn’t immediately come to mind when considering her room decorations for the new school year, it’s quickly become her “favorite part of the room.” Able to coordinate the wallpaper with the color scheme of her bedsheets and posters, “it’s so homey and cozy,” she shared. “It makes me excited to come back to my room.”

Fridge

Grateful for the new policy on fridges, senior Anika Khichadia regards her fridge as an essential. “I feel like that was a very important part of transitioning to living in a dorm,” she explained. While most dorms also have a communal fridge, having one in your room can be especially convenient for “whatever you’re so pleased to put in there,” and can be a necessity when “the dining hall isn’t open yet and I’m studying in the early morning,” she added.

Photos

Upper Rayann Cisse recommended a very cost-efficient purchase, photos. For \$9.25, she printed 26 photos of her family and friends at Walgreens. “It reminds me of home and grounds me after a hard day,” she said. “I can look at these photos of good memories and really reset myself.” Even though it may seem unnecessary, Cisse strongly advises students to take the time and print some fond memories from home to bring to Exeter.

Helpful but Not Necessary Purchases:

DORMS, 7.

Meet Exeter’s Newest Faculty!

Kwasi Boadi

Ford Boozer

Davies Cabot

James Fortin

Charlotte Gingo

Amy Gostzyla

Claire Hawkins

Dan Houston

Peter Kelley

Avantika Kumar

Curtis Musser

Laura Nickerson

Fernando Pomar

David Reyes

Raegan Russell

Katya Scocimara

Henry Stevens

Idli Szekely

Wren Wolterbeck

David Womack

Faculty of the Week: Sean Campbell

By AVA CHUNG, CHANGYU JEONG, AMERSON LIANG, and TONY ZHU

Hard at work, either tinkering with his own projects or encouraging students to test, adjust, and try again, students who frequently visit the Design Lab know him well. As a computer science teacher, director of the Design Lab, member of the Agenda Committee, and holder of the Alfred H. Hayes ’25 and Jean M. Hayes Teaching Chair in Science, Sean Campbell spends his time at Exeter mentoring curious students on a range of topics. Whether guiding a student through their code or helping fix errors while in the 3D printing process, he creates a welcoming environment where students aren’t afraid to make mistakes and ask for help.

Campbell began teaching at Exeter fifteen years ago. Born and raised in Texas, Campbell had worked at Pinco Ranch High School until he found a job posting to work at the Academy. “I thought it would be an interesting adventure...I’d never even been to New Hampshire

before.” At his previous high school, Campbell taught AP computer science and compares it to the CSC 590: Selected Topics in Computer Science that he is looking forward to teaching in the winter.

As a computer science teacher at Exeter, his students have all held him in high regard for his way of teaching. As upper Max Loghinov noted, “[Mr. Campbell] knows a lot about what he talks about, and I think he’s a great teacher ... He would have everyone in the [computer science] class understand and give you examples for you to work yourself.” In addition, when Loghinov delved into his final project for computer science, his team wanted to integrate more information than the curriculum covered. As a result, Campbell was “willing to go the extra mile to help me learn stuff outside of the curriculum and teach you what I needed to know,” said Loghinov.

Upper Catherine Chen similarly agreed, remarking, “I was on my Biology 470 project, which was like using aluminum cans to create art with them. And [Mr. Campbell] helped us



Campbell smiles in the Design Lab.

Sean Ricard / *The Exonian*

brainstorm and offered a bunch of ideas. He was super supportive throughout the whole process.” In addition, Campbell supported Chen and the robotics team. Whenever she had a problem or needed help to fix an issue with printing a specific part, Campbell was always supportive and often helped change

different-sized rods or the various other problems encountered with creating a robot.

Since Campbell advises the Design Lab, he often interacts with many clubs such as Sewing Club, Engineering Club, Architecture Club, and Rocketry Club all use the Design Lab. Campbell also advises D.J., WPEA

(Radio), and Computing Club. While it’s known to many that Campbell has a passion for computer science, he also enjoys D.J.’ing among other things.

Describing himself as a “jack-of-all-trades,” Campbell has several hobbies. As previously

FOTW, 8.

Exeter Summer

By EILENA DING, KAYLEE GONG

The lights dim in Goel as students shuffle in. On the stage is a Harkness table, where Instructor in English Mercy Carbonell sits. A poem is laid out before her, and it’s the same poem that each student clutches in their hands. The kids are here for a Harkness demonstration — an entryway into Exeter. The stage lights illuminate the table. Faculty fill each seat. Welcome to Exeter Summer.

This past summer from July 6 to August 6, the 108th Exeter Summer program — separated into Access Exeter (rising 8th and 9th graders) and the Upper School (rising 10 -12th graders) — hosted around 548 students from 38 states and 42 countries. Each student took three academic courses and one

physical education class, chosen from a course load of over 100 options. Around half of the program’s faculty consisted of teachers from the Academy; the other half hailed from middle schools, high schools, and colleges all around the world. As Director of Exeter Summer Jeff Ward emphasized, students and the faculty came together for the purpose of “learning for the love of learning.”

Exeter Summer first began in 1919 with 65 boys as a remedial program for troublesome Exonians and as an introduction to the Academy for new students. However, around World War II, Summer School — what they called it at the time — shifted from helping boys catch-up to helping them get ahead. The students aimed to go to war earlier by accelerating their education. In 1961,

the Summer School admitted a cohort of 13 girls, becoming co-educational before the regular session in 1970. The program provided opportunities to experiment with the curriculum and systems of the Academy. “In the summer, we’re more willing to take risks,” said Director of Summer School Colin F. N. Irving in an issue of *The Exonian* published on May 22, 1965.

With that willingness for change, Exeter Summer has been able to “do a great job at recognizing what students are looking for in a summer program,” praised Exeter Summer Academic Intern Coordinator Sean Sennott, who has been with the program for the past 30 years. Summer School used to be divided into having academics north of Front Street and athletic camps on the south side. However, in the early-2000s, the athletic scene changed. Groups of young athletes that usually attended Exeter Summer’s athletic camps went to college showcases instead. Thus, with the closure of the athletic camps that previously occupied half of campus, Exeter Summer expanded further. In 2002, then-Director of Exeter Summer Doug Rogers created Access Exeter and invited middle schoolers onto campus. Now, Ward noted how Access Exeter’s enrollment has been steadily increasing, and the Upper School’s is decreasing.

Today, students attend Exeter summer for a wide range of reasons — to experience living away from home, to learn with Harkness, or even to hopefully help their Exeter admission. Aanya Shah, a current lower who went to Exeter Summer before coming to the Academy, decided to attend because her older sister had already been accepted into regular session. “I thought Exeter Summer was kind of like a stepping stone to going to Exeter,” said Shah. “I wanted to get a taste of what

Exeter would be like before coming here for the real deal.”

Senior Kobi Ajene, who attended Exeter Summer as seventh grader, echoed that the program was helpful for “confirming whether I could actually picture myself here” before applying. Emphasizing the Harkness skills that he acquired during Exeter Summer, Ajene highlighted that just after five weeks of the program, people back home had already noticed he’d become a “much more attentive listener.”

When comparing their experiences at Exeter Summer to their later experiences as a regular session student, both Shah and Ajene pointed out that the two environments differed. Shah felt that Exeter Summer was “much lighter than real Exeter and didn’t prepare me for the workload my prep fall.” Ajene mentioned that Exeter

SUMMER, 10.

Dorms Cont.

Additional Shelving Units

“I feel like I used them last year because I had more space, but this year I’ve been just fine without it,” McCarthy explained, emphasizing that the school-provided furniture is sufficient. “You just gotta be smart about what you have available. You don’t need a million shelves.”

Medicine

Flu season can be a frightful period for parents of boarders, so Shah’s parents sent her to Exeter with “huge packs of natural Ayurvedic medicines.” However, Shah highlighted the Academy’s health services and ability to provide treatment: “Whenever I did get sick, I would just go to the health center, and they would give me medicine.”

Whiteboard

Orellano’s parents insisted on buying her a large whiteboard, but “it’s pretty useless because you would probably write something down on a notebook or an iPad or something,” she shared. With the exception of possibly memorizing biology notes, Orellano sees no use for her whiteboard and advises new students to skip this purchase.

Savvy Purchases:

LED Lights

McCarthy’s string lights, which line the perimeter of her ceiling, only cost about \$10 but are invaluable to her. “They allow me to not have the overhead lights on when I have on my other two lamps,” she explained. “It makes it feel like a much more calming atmosphere, which is really nice to come back to the dorm to.”

Tide Pens

For lower Izzy Cabral, her Tide pens were an item that she had forgotten to bring, and ended up scrambling for them once the term began; she soon found that they were exactly the kind of thing worth having on hand from day one. “They are super easy to find at the local Walgreens,” she said, which made the fix a quick one, but she definitely recommends arriving with a few already packed “just in case something happens,” since a stain rarely waits for a convenient trip into town.

Extension Cords

While extension cords may not quickly come to mind while back-to-school shopping, Shah



Arisa Yoshino / *The Exonian*

and Orellano consider them the best things they could have gotten for their rooms. Both stressed the small number of outlets in their rooms. “The cord for my fan couldn’t reach the plug if I tried to put it on the window because my only one was under my desk,” Orellano said, but with the help of an extension cord, she was able to keep her room cool. For Shah, an extension cord allowed her to keep her entire Apple ecosystem alive: “I love that it’s all charged in one place now, it’s quite convenient.”

Shareable Snacks

Many Exonians tend to stay up late studying, or accidentally skip a meal. With no way to acquire a snack after check-in, Khichadia, Orellano, and Shah point to their snacks as one of the most frequently taken items from their rooms. Posing as a nice study break or opportunity to help a hungry friend, Shah sees meal-like snacks as particularly helpful during these moments of adversity. Friends and dormmates tend to give Shah a visit, “hungry for a snack or having forgotten to eat dinner, so

having a meal snack more filling than chips like ramen or mac and cheese is great.”

As we can see, the best buys aren’t the most expensive or aesthetic items. Whether it’s a functional extension cord or a wallpaper that makes your room a little bit more like home, the most worthwhile items are the ones that make our lives more comfortable. So before adding another “essential” product, ask yourself: will this buy make your room better to live in, or harder to pack up during move-out?

Tales From Town: A Picture’s Worth A Thousand Words



Siegel poses in his bookstore downtown.

By **TIAGO BILYK** and **CAROL LEE**

When walking down Water Street, it is easy to get lost in the many display windows that line the sidewalk. None, however, is more beautifully designed and more captivating to a fan of literature than that of the used bookstore, A Picture’s Worth a Thousand Words.

For more than four decades now, A Picture’s Worth A Thousand Words has occupied its space in downtown Exeter, drawing generations of Exeter students and residents. John and Jennifer Siegal, the co-owners of the shop, opened the store in 1985 at the age of 27.

John Siegel’s love of used books began in high school and deepened during his college years. As a student at the University of Colorado Boul-

der, he became a regular at the city’s used bookstores.

“I had fallen in love with used bookstores as a student,” John recalled. “Boulder probably had six good used bookstores that I would haunt.”

Then, during his junior year, he went on a study-abroad program to Lancaster, England, where his fascination followed him. There, he spent hours in a bookstore housed in an old stone building in the town center. Though he occasionally bought books, John Siegel said much of the appeal came from simply being there, “a kind of an immersion in the magic of being surrounded by interesting old books.”

After college, the Siegels spent five years working in a variety of fields before deciding to build something of their own. Jennifer Siegel had worked for a picture framer in Boston, one of the jobs

she had particularly enjoyed, while John Siegel remained drawn to old books, prints, and maps. Together they envisioned a shop that would combine those interests: Jennifer Siegel would frame pictures while John Siegel would focus on the print inventory.

“At 27 we weren’t ready to start a family, but we were ready to start a business,” John Siegel said. “So we took a flyer on it, maxed out our credit cards, and opened our doors.”

A graduate of Phillips Andover, Siegel was well acquainted with the New England area, and when the time came to open the bookstore, he picked the town of Exeter, hoping to attract students and faculty alike. He also noted that he thought the University of New Hampshire would jointly serve as a consistent customer base.

“I had conversations with some of the merchants who

were on the street back in 1985,” he recalled, “And they were very encouraging. I felt that this was a community that got ‘buy local’ before it was a buzzword.”

That sense of community proved crucial in some of the store’s most difficult moments. Since opening in 1985, the store has experienced two major floods. “The first one was tricky because it happened in December,” he recalled. “We had just finished decorating for the holiday season. It was quite the mess, but we were, I think, young enough to just burn the midnight oil, just get back in there and start fighting.”

Floods are no small thing to survive, and Siegel gives much credit to the community for helping them in trying times. “Every time there’s been adversity, it’s really been the community that has saved us,” he said. “When you have

an incident like that, word spreads pretty quickly... We were open at least a week or 10 days before Christmas, and it was just constant business. People really, kind of rallied for us.”

Today, A Picture’s Worth a Thousand Words still boasts a large collection which Siegel describes as mostly “out-of-print non-fiction.” And although Jennifer Siegel has since retired, she still returns to the shop to help with framing, while the storefront windows continue to feature a rotating selection of artists.

But after more than 40 years in business, John Siegel said some of the most meaningful parts of the business are not the objects in the shop, but the people who return to it. Over the years, John Siegel has come to know many generations of Exeter students, many of whom have become regulars. He recounted the story of a parent who, after building a new office, furnished it completely with works from his store, even though they lived across the country. “It’s one of the great pleasures of being a mom-and-pop shop that you really get to know your customers,” he said. “We have customers whose children are now our customers.”

For John Siegel, that sense of continuity extends beyond the customers themselves to the books that have passed through their hands. “There are so many disposable items in our society,” he reflected. “But books are not one of them. People cherish books, people respect books, people take care of books. Books are survivors.”

Long after any individual customer has moved on, John Siegel hopes the books filling his shelves will continue their journey. “They’ll just hopefully go from home to home to home,” he said. “And that’s a lovely legacy.”

Campbell Cont.

mentioned, he likes to D.J. around campus and in town from time to time. Additionally, Campbell talked about his interest in fishing. “I really like going fishing; right now is a good time while the weather’s still warm.” Speaking of activities on the beach, surfing was brought up as well. “I’m terrible at it, but I like to go surfing,” said Campbell. Being from Texas, he enjoys barbecuing and has his own smoker. Aside from ribs and brisket, Campbell likes cooking in general, occasionally with the students in Soule Hall.

Outside of teaching, Campbell is a valued member of the Soule Hall faculty. Although many of his advisees are new to the school, they are already fond of their adviser. New students like prep Nikolas Kutt and post-graduate Drew Sharron both agreed with Campbell’s general outlook on making Exeter a better place for students. “He definitely cares about his job, and he cares about making student life here better,” said Sharron. Kutt agreed, “I really like how he’s just open and willing to do a lot of things with us, just spend time with us because he wants to actually do it.” Furthermore, Kutt commented that Campbell had given him advice for how to handle his prep year, “I would get advice from seniors to take classes based on teachers, but [Mr. Campbell] told me that it doesn’t matter in the big picture. Just do the things you would really like and adapt.”

Campbell is a trusted adult in

Soule Hall to all of his advisees when they are encountering an issue or need advice. The only returning advisee, Luke Swamidoss ’29, further confirmed this notion, talking about how Campbell helped him when he was also a prep and starting to get familiar with the school. “I had a lot of questions at the beginning of last year, and he was always so willing to help me with them. I’m really appreciative of that.” Outside of his own advisees, Soule Hall students had very positive things to say about Campbell. As Gordon Wiafe ’29 commented, “I talk with him a lot in the dorms; he’s very funny and nice, and he cooks for the dorm all of the time. He is also very easy to talk to. I once asked him about computer science, and he helped me understand loops and for-loops. In the dorm, he is well respected by all who pass him and helps create an environment where all students, returning or not, feel safe and loved.”

A passionate teacher and compassionate mentor who’s always looking to help, Campbell has made a lasting impression on his students. The “jack-of-all-trades” has taken on so many important roles around campus that have improved the quality of Exeter’s community. As Loghinov recalled, “When I go on the paths, I always say hi. Exchange a couple words, maybe just a hello, but he never fails to respond back, which makes me happy.”



Campbell sands a metal rod with student in the Design Lab.

Sean Ricard / *The Exonian*

Hu Cont.

doing it. Now that I’m at Exeter, I’ve met lots of people who have gone through that same thing as well.”

Naturally, Hu found her outlet in Exeter’s dance community. “[At first,] she was very quiet,” Instructor in Theater and Dance Amberlee Darling said. “And then she started to dance, and she was expressive and moving and wasn’t shy to take up space.”

Growing up in Arizona also shaped Hu’s interests. The state is often associated with its desert landscape, and Hu found herself fascinated by the nature around her, eventually sparking her interest in biology. She began thinking about biology not only as a science, but also as something that could shape the way people live.

“Recently I’ve been thinking about biology and how it can apply to architecture, like organic architecture,” Hu said. “How nature affects how you live and how you can use it to benefit your biology or life.”

At Exeter, Hu has found plenty of ways to pursue the interests she carried with her from Arizona. A member of the Dance company since prep year, Hu also has long-term involvement with dance clubs like Poms and Imani. Additionally, She is a co-head of Art Club, a proctor in Amen Hall, and continues to explore her interest in biology through a variety of coursework. However, Hu’s favorite parts of campus life are often less structured.

Whether she is spending a loud evening in Amen Hall, heading into town, or stop-



Hu poses in front of Tattersall House’s patio of flowers.

Kaylee Gong / *The Exonian*

ping by Inkwell for what she calls the best matcha, Hu finds that the small moments are often the ones that matter most. “Honestly, hanging out in the dorm with friends is one of my favorite things to do,” she said.

For her friends, her presence often makes everyday a happier day.

“One of my favorite characteristics of Christina is that she’s very chill,” senior Finley McLane said. He continued, explaining that it’s not that she isn’t an energetic, silly, or excited person — she’s all of those things too, but she is also very grounded.

Senior Beverly Dolo elaborated. “At first I thought she was very chill, monotone, nothing crazy about her. But

she’s honestly one of the most energetic people I’ve ever met. She’s really able to tap into her own energy and get hyped. She’s very versatile in that way.”

Senior Jillian Cheng found that Hu’s outlook has influenced her own approach to Exeter. “I’m someone who naturally stresses a lot, but she’s taught me how to have fun and find joy in things, even when they require a lot of hard work,” Cheng said.

That influence is especially noticeable in the small moments they share. “I feel like I’m more likely to laugh with Christina because I just feel comfortable doing so,” Cheng said. “When I see her laugh, I want to laugh too.”

Her impression on her

friends is also present in bigger ways, too. Ffrench shared, “She was my first real friend at Exeter, and her kindness and her willingness to listen has really taught me how to be a good friend.”

For Hu, that sense of joy and empathy was something she carried with her throughout her time at Exeter. “When I was little, my mom always called me 天天乐, which in Chinese means ‘happy every day.’ That was my nickname.” She tries to preserve this mindset even during the busiest parts of the school year. “I know times can be rough, and the lows are pretty low, but when you try to have moments of happiness throughout your week, whether it’s going out for food with your friends,

or having a chill day in your dorm, you have to make sure you’re doing something pretty often that gives you true happiness. Otherwise, it’s really easy to lose yourself in the busy schedule of Exeter.”

As she prepares to leave Exeter, Hu hopes to carry that perspective with her. The nickname her mother gave her as a child has become more than just a childhood name. It is a reminder of how she wants to approach life. She hopes to find happiness in the ordinary, stay grounded through difficult moments, and make time for the people who matter. Hu has found her people, found her voice, and along the way, found plenty of reasons to laugh.

Events Cont.

would continue.

Chair of the Department of Art and Class of 2027 advisor, Adam Hosmer, similarly saw value in bringing the entire class into one shared space, particularly because the occasion engaged both returning students, new seniors, and PGs. He described the dinner as creating a sense of “camaraderie and community,” giving students the opportunity to recognize each other as members of the same grade: “It’s nice to have them all come together in that way.”

Students also enjoyed the atmosphere of the evening. Senior Carrie-Anne Chan recalled that it “was nice to see everyone really dressed up.” Chan also praised the food — which featured meatballs, lasagna, and salad — as “really good.”

The show of the night was led by performers from the iO Chicago Theater, an improv group that had led seniors during orientation earlier that day. The seniors got to play classic improv games like Mr. Know-It-All, Raging Rapids, and Freeze, and afterwards, one student from each orientation group was chosen to perform further at Senior Dinner.

“As co-head of Improv Club, I was super eager to volunteer and perform. It was really fun,” senior Euphoria Yang recalled. “I was happy to see that the orientation activity and senior dinner influenced a lot more people to come to a nighttime improv show two days later, and seeing [the professional comedians] inspired me to possibly start student-run comedy performances in Improv

Club throughout the year.”

Chan thought her classmates “did a really good job” and described their performances as “hilarious,” while seniors Kate Gilchrist and La’i O’Shea similarly praised the students as “quite entertaining” and said that they did “wonderfully.” Hosmer was especially impressed by the students ability to put what they had learned the earlier day into practice. He recalled that their lines were “funnier than the pros,” adding that the exchange of energy between the performers and the audience made it “really fun to watch.”

While the student improv performances were widely praised, the performance by iO Chicago Theater wasn’t received with as much enthusiasm. Méndez mentioned that the familiarity between the peers made the student improv funnier and more memorable. “I loved the iO Chicago Theater, but there’s something so special about seeing your friends and your peers on the stage,” she noted.

Yang attributed the drop in acclaim partly to a “possible generational divide” between the performers and students. The professional comedians frequently referenced shows such as “The Big Bang Theory” and “Friends,” but Yang noted that the “majority of the senior class has never watched those shows,” making some of the jokes and references difficult for students to understand.

Another aspect that the Class of 2027 felt could’ve been different was the venue. O’Shea and Gilchrist men-



Arisa Yoshino / *The Exonian*

tioned that because the formal dinner took place in the Wrestling Room, it “didn’t foster an air of professionalism” that the seniors were expecting. Instead, they suggested that “future senior dinners should be held in the Hahn Dining Center.” The longer tables there would allow for more branched out conversation in lieu of the divided chatter at the tables in the Wrestling Room, which could only seat six to eight people.

In contrast, Senior Sunrise, which took place eight days later, promoted seniors to connect with each other more freely. The event was hosted on the Academy’s football field — an open space for students to spread out across. Hot chocolate and cider donuts were provided, and many students laid out blankets.

“It was like a nice big picnic,” analogized senior Phoebe Elting. “It was really fun to just sit with everyone in a more relaxed setting. You got to say hi to everyone in the grade — even peo-

ple that you don’t talk to all the time because you’re all feeling similar emotions now with senior year here.”

The sunrise lasted around 45 minutes to an hour, and students spent most of the time catching up with friends, taking pictures, and enjoying the calm atmosphere. Some students even prepared signs and cutouts for their Senior Sunrise photos.

Both Senior Dinner and Senior Sunrise represented the class of 2027’s inauguration into their final year of Exeter — their last year of sharing meals at dining halls, walking along the campus paths, and experiencing high school. And these “lasts” have sparked reflections, questions, and insights about the class’ futures past the Academy, as well as words of wisdom.

Méndez, who has held a leadership role within the class for all of its four years, meditated on how Senior Dinner was an opportunity to explore what the fu-

ture holds. “I think the class president role carries a lot more weight compared to class representative, because I know that I will continue this role after graduation.” She continued, “Attending senior dinner was interesting because in a way it was a bit of a preview of what the rest of my time as class president will look like: hosting alumni dinners, reunion events, and things of that nature.”

“Exeter’s going through a period of change,” Méndez concluded, referencing the relative novelty of Senior Dinner and unique circumstances surrounding the class of 2027’s final year. “And while that’s very exciting and we welcome change, I think a lot of us are still figuring particular traditions and events out.” However, Méndez stressed optimism: “We should welcome this opportunity and embrace the change because we are, for example, Principal Elliot’s very first senior class, and that’s something that we can never get taken from us.”

Summer Cont.

Summer had less extracurricular activities than students would normally find during the regular school year.

However, Instructor in English Courtney Marshall explained that the lighter workload during the program is intentional, and it allows students to enjoy themselves and their work meaningfully. “Not having grades and the freedom it allows teachers and students is my favorite part [of Exeter Summer,]” Referencing an Exeter Summer class she taught where the kids “genuinely wanted to create art that mattered to themselves and their classmates,” Marshall continued, “Letter grades can’t compete with that.”

While the Academy prides itself on and is recognized for its diverse student population of “Youth from Every Quarter,” Exeter Summer’s cohort is even more diverse and “a lot more international,” mentioned Ward. Marshall emphasized that she

wished more people knew about the work that goes into building the summer community, including Ward’s recruiting trips to Indigenous students on reservations and the program’s ongoing partnership with SOLA – the School of Leadership – Afghanistan, which connects Afghan girls to Exeter Summer.

For some, Exeter Summer is not only a space to learn more about the boarding school environment, but also about themselves. Ward shared an anecdote highlighting that purpose of the program: “A couple years ago, one of my Native American students from Phoenix, Arizona, could only look at her shoelaces when talking to me, but by the end of the program, I couldn’t get her to shut up.” He continued by referring to a message he shared at Exeter Summer’s closing assembly: “I tell students, ‘I hope you don’t forget anything you’ve learned in the classroom, but you probably will because it’s sum-

mer. But what you won’t forget is what you’ve learned about yourselves and what it’s like to live and build a community.”

In contrast to students’ variety of purposes for attendance, Exeter Summer’s faculty share a common sentiment: a genuine love for their work and each other. “I have a lot of friends who don’t work in education that think I’m crazy for choosing to work over the summer,” joked Exeter Summer Dean of Fun (Director of Student Activities) Alex Braille ‘10. “But what keeps me coming back to Exeter Summer over and over is the people that work there. It’s a group that truly cares about students and teaching.”

To welcome the faculty back every year, Ward leads an Exeter Summer faculty meeting before students arrive. When describing it, Sennott referred to a characterization coined by former Dean of Students Russell Weatherspoon: “a family reunion disguised as a school.”

Assistant Girls Varsity Hockey Coach Jim Tufts ‘70, who has been with Exeter Summer for

52 years, highlighted something Ward said during the “reunion” as a testament to Exeter Summer faculties’ love for the program: “[Ward] said, ‘I have a really hard time every year, because I have so many people that apply and want to come and teach, but I don’t have any openings because everybody here wants to come back.’” Tufts continued, “And we do. We enjoy seeing each other. We enjoy learning and teaching with each other.”

Contributing to the excitement around Exeter Summer’s faculty meeting every year is the refreshing mix of PEA faculty with non-PEA faculty. Bringing expertise from various backgrounds and experiences, the faculty not only teach students, but also each other. “[Exeter Summer] is a wonderful, wonderful environment – pedagogically too,” said Sennott. “Exeter teachers have things to learn from teachers at other schools. And teachers at other schools can really learn from the Harkness method and Exeter teachers.”

Next year, Ward’s tenure as Director of Exeter Summer will

be ending, and Dean of Student Health & Wellness Johnny Griffith will be stepping forward. Ward reflected: “Mr. Griffith is going to do an awesome job, but my heart will be heavy next summer. Exeter Summer’s faculty and their camaraderie fuel my fire.”

Then, reaching into his drawer and pulling out a piece of paper with a photo of a letter, Ward explained that a few years ago an Exeter Summer student had left a letter in a drawer of his dorm room for the faculty after he moved out. Ward’s favorite lines in the note read: “These past five weeks are worth more to me than the past sixteen years of my existence. I did not really believe in myself until these past few weeks. All of the teenagers at my school did not even think I would get into this program and always tell me that I will never make it anywhere in life. Now I know I can prove them wrong.” “I read [the letter] to the faculty every opening Exeter Summer meeting,” concluded Ward. “And it’s a reminder of why we do what we do.”

PEA Welcomes New Faculty

By **JOHANNA HILLMAN, AUDREY KIM, and DOWAN KIM**



Kwasi Boadi
Instructor in History

Kwasi Boadi returns to Phillips Exeter after a seven-year retirement. Going into this year, Boadi described himself as an “open slate,” ready to get back into the Exeter groove. A novelist by passion and lover of literature, he hopes to make time to write a novel that addresses the “existential threat” of the destruction of the environment in his home country of Ghana. Naturally, Boadi loves the outdoors. “I could sit outdoors for a whole day and not get bored,” said Boadi. That is, if he’s listening to his favorite jazz or reggae artists — the likes of which include Miles Davis and Bob Marley — or has a book in hand. He recently bought James Baldwin’s *Go Tell It On The Mountain* from the Exeter bookstore and hopes to read it soon.



Ford Booser
Bennett Fellow

Bennett Fellow Ford Booser is on campus to finish his current manuscript, but can also offer support to student writers. He hopes to help students to find their voice with creative writing. But most of all, he is excited to be part of a community of interesting and intelligent people. “I found myself engaged in a conversation about the lack of interiority in one of my favorite McCarthy novels, and I knew I was in the right place,” he reflected, referencing a recent conversation with a colleague. He has also traveled all around the globe, lived on the West

Indian Island of Saint Vincent for 27 months in the Peace Corps, and even worked in Ghana to help with addiction recovery outreach. Regarding his experience around the world, he noted, “At this point, I find it hard to tell if I’m still suffering from a severe case of wanderlust or am just patently on the run from growing up.”



Davies Cabot
Instructor in Chemistry

New to the Harkness pedagogy, Davies Cabot is enthusiastic to participate in Harkness discussions and learn “a new style of teaching” from his students. In the future, Cabot desires to teach Marine Biology as he is passionate in the field. Cabot also has a variety of interests outside of teaching. He runs a “charter fishing business” during the summer, targeting “striped bass and bluefish.” Operating on Martha’s Vineyard, his company is known as Compass Rose Charters MV. In his free time, Cabot likes to go surfing with his family, “whenever the ocean gives him waves.”



James Fortin ‘18
Biology Teaching Intern

James Fortin’s avid passion for birdwatching began here at Exeter, in emeritus Biology Instructor Chris Matlack’s ornithology class. After that class, he entered what he described as the “inescapable downward spiral” of birdwatching. However, his passion truly developed while working at an arboretum in Massachusetts when his co-workers formed a birdwatching group. He later worked on wildlife conservation in Texas, and there he found his favorite bird: the yellow-billed cuckoo.

“They’re very funny,” said Fortin. “It feels like they’re really interacting with you.” In his free time, Fortin also enjoys rock climbing and beekeeping and will be involved with robotics here at Exeter.



Charlotte Gingo
Innovations Intern

In a brand-new role instituted this year, Charlotte Gingo is an Innovations Intern. She is affiliated with Moulton House, and is excited to begin coaching ultimate frisbee in the spring. But most of all, she looks forward to both exploring and learning more about the community both on and off campus. In her free time, she listens to *The New York Times* podcasts and watches Modern Love, which she said “is about way more than romantic relationships.” She is often on the paths taking walks or petting other people’s dogs. Regarding teaching, she would “want to teach environmental anthropology or borders and human mobility because I think we have a lot to learn about these ideas, and they show up in all kinds of disciplines and places!”



Amy Gostzyla
Instructor in Physical Education, Track and Cross Country Coach

She’s been running across campus and helping athletes with their running form. Coach Amy Gostzyla is part of the athletic and physical education department, teaches PE classes, and coaches cross country, indoor, and outdoor track and field. She is a dorm affiliate of Amen Hall. She is so glad to be coaching again and communicating with students directly. Working at

Exeter was an enticing option for Gostzyla, as it is her home state. She attended the University of New Hampshire and is from Londonderry, New Hampshire. She wants to be a coach who “meets kids where they’re at and uses the sport of track and field and running to take risks and grow and learn. And learning things about themselves that are not unique to the world of athletics.” As a mom, she supports her daughters in ice hockey and watches women’s professional sports in her free time. She is also a fan of the Boston Fleet Women’s Ice Hockey team. She loves to listen to live music and is excited to support the students at Exeter who are passionate about music!



Claire Hawkins
Instructor in Physics

Claire Hawkins likes to think big — literally. A scholar of astronomy, she prefers to study one of the largest natural phenomena: galaxies. But Hawkins has also approached the sciences from interdisciplinary lenses; the coolest class she’s ever taken was an environmental science course on the history of human energy use. Outside the classroom, Hawkins enjoys trail running and backpacking and will be coaching the cross country team. She also danced throughout high school and college — mostly modern and ballet — and now enjoys social dance. A New England native, Hawkins looks forward to participating in Contra dance, a style of folk dance that originated in the Northeast. Additionally, Hawkins, daughter of Instructor in English, Nat Hawkins, described herself as a “big dog fan” and looks forward to acquainting herself with the campus dogs.



Dan Houston

Instructor in Classics
When Daniel Houston was a teenager and student at Exeter High School, he “did dishes in the PEA dining halls.” A new Instructor in Classical languages, Houston teaches Greek and Latin, coaches the Daniel Webster Debate Society, and is an assistant coach of the wrestling team. At Exeter, he is looking forward to “meeting new students and colleagues.” Outside of the classroom, Houston is a philosopher, though in another life, he definitely wants to pursue a music career. During his free time he is a “local history buff,” looking for urban legends and “finding lost places.”



Peter Kelley
Instructor in Math

Peter Kelley began his career in Japan, “teaching conversational English to businessmen.” Kelley looks forward to being a member of “such an active, diverse, and interesting community.” His first month at Exeter was full of amazement at “everything that is available.” Aside from teaching, Kelley is a faculty advisor for Christian Fellowship. In his free time, Kelley pursues physical activities such as “swimming, cycling, and hiking.” Though he only teaches math at Exeter, Kelley has taught physics in the past and also studied chemistry.



Avantika Kumar
Instructor in English

Like most English teachers, Avantika Kumar, a native of Irvine, California, loves to read. Her PhD focused not on contemporary literature or even the classics; rather, she focused on art history and Old English Literature: illuminated scriptures and the likes of Beowulf. Now, however, she enjoys reading poetry, especially

Faculty Cont.

that of Emily Dickinson. Outside of the classroom, Kumar enjoys baking, watching TV, and going to farmers’ markets. She’s already checked out the seasonal Exeter farmers’ market, which she enjoyed — high praise from a former resident of New York and Boston. Some of her favorite TV shows include Severance and Stranger Things, especially the earlier seasons. She’s also a beginner indoor rock climber. Inspired by the foliage and the trails near campus, Kumar would love to get into gardening, something she’s never tried. Kumar is currently a faculty adviser for *The Exonian*.



Curtis Musser
Instructor in Chemistry

Coming out of retirement and returning to campus is Curtis Musser, who now lives in Buzell House next to the Exeter Inn and is affiliated with Ewald Hall. He is a science teacher and loves to learn. He is most excited about taking advantage of learning from the great students and faculty, and to him, Phillips Exeter Academy is as close to a utopian society. In his free time, he continues to foster his passion for education by learning about how to fix different things, personal finance, health-related topics, and other new and unique things. He is thrilled to be back and noted that, “I would not have come out of retirement this year if PEA wasn’t such a great place. It’s tough being away from my wife and dogs in Florida, but seeing all the greatness here fills me with joy. I feel fortunate to have this opportunity.”



Laura Nickerson
Instructor in Physics

“Miss Frizzle is my spirit animal,” said Laura Nickerson. Like her proclaimed “role model,” Nickerson, who describes herself as a “nerd,”

can be found teaching in physics-themed dresses or driving in her car with a Star Wars license plate. A graduate of boarding school herself, Nickerson has worked in the past decade teaching STEM education. She’s looking forward to being back in an environment with teens, who she says are “more fun.” Outside the classroom, Nickerson loves to cook new things and has recently been making recipes passed down from the family of a South Indian friend. She also grew up in a musical family, singing and playing the piano. A resident of Barrington, NH, she participates in a local choir in the town of Exeter. In the future, she would also like to become more involved with music at Phillips Exeter.



Fernando Pomar
Instructor in Spanish

“I began teaching when I was seventeen,” said Fernando Pomar. Outside the classroom, he is involved with Soule Hall and *The Exonian*. At Exeter, Pomar looks forward to helping Spanish become a meaningful part of his students’ lives. Originally from Peru, Pomar is excited to build meaningful relationships. He loves Exeter as it is a place “full of people who are super interesting and passionate about what they do.” Aside from Spanish, Pomar is also interested in history and philosophy, as he is fascinated by how “lives unfold within vast systems that we help shape but can never fully control.” During his free time, Pomar enjoys reading, writing, drawing, and walking.



David Reyes
Instructor in Religion

“I came into the job with over 20 years of experience as a consultant,” said David Reyes. Reyes is most excited about Harkness discussions on ethics. For his doctoral

program, he studied International Relations and International Law, which he believes are “particularly relevant in today’s world.” Outside of the classroom, Reyes enjoys physical activities such as walking his dog in the woods, mountain biking, and cross-country skiing. In the past, Reyes also raced motocross.



Reagan Russell
Instructor in English

Reagan Russell joins the English Department and is teaching lowers and uppers this term. Russell is also the new Dorm Head of Amen Hall. She is excited to begin teaching kids who are passionate and excited to walk into a classroom every day. “I’ve had other students excited about learning, but I’m not sure it’s been such a pervasive attitude as it has been here,” she said. Outside of the classroom, she is an avid Dungeons and Dragons player and even met her husband during one of her campaigns. She categorizes herself “between neutral and chaotic good, so I try to see good in everybody, and I try to do the best for the people I am around. But, I have a little tear it up in my bones.” Since she is from Monterey Bay, California, Russell is nervous for the upcoming winter, but will be in her home snuggling with her orange cat and boston terrier.



Katya Scocimara ‘16
Innovation Intern

Katya Scocimara, a member of the Exeter class of 2016, is excited to be back on campus among a community that she described as “super cool” and “very passionate.” She’ll be coaching JV girls’ volleyball and crew. In her free time, she loves to stay active through hiking, biking, walking, running, and swimming. She also plans to learn salsa dancing. She loves to cook and is excited to have a kitchen once again. Recently, she read *Katabasis* by R.F.

Kuang, which she enjoyed due to its clever critiques of academia. Scocimara is a lover of interdisciplinary learning; one of her favorite classes in college focused on the history of boat building and design and included crafting a boat to scale from 19th-century plans.



Henry Stevens ‘14
Instructor in Biology

Henry Stevens, graduate of the Exeter class of 2014, is a new Instructor in Biology joining the Science Department focusing on ecology and ornithology. At Exeter, he looks forward to “taking over the reins of teaching ornithology in spring.” Besides instructing biology, Stevens coaches boys varsity soccer and is a dorm faculty in Cilley Hall. Coincidentally, Stevens lived in Cilley Hall during his childhood beginning at the age of four, as his mother, Betsy Stevens, has also been an Instructor in Biology since 2000. “I grew up on campus as a faculty brat,” Stevens said. In his free time, Stevens enjoys bird watching. Stevens also loves psychology, since “how people’s minds work” greatly fascinates him.



Idli Szekely
Director of Accommodations and Learning Support

Idli Szekely is originally from Hungary. In her role, she aspires to work with students, helping them to “have the tools they need to be successful and increasingly independent learners.” Her favorite part of the job is to help students “understand that there isn’t one ‘right’ way to learn.” Outside of school, Szekely is a competitive swimmer. This summer, she won four events in the U.S. Masters Nationals and is training for another Masters Championships in the fall. Her athleticism helps her be better not just in the pool but outside in school. Being an athlete taught her “resilience, discipline, confidence, and community,” which she applies both “in and out of the

pool.”



Wren Wolterbeek
Instructor in English

Growing up on a farm in a small New Hampshire town, Wren Wolterbeek still reminisces about the haying season every summer. As a new Instructor in English, Wolterbeek is excited to explore “new trails” and “corners” of Exeter. Wolterbeek aspires to support ESSO events and have discussions on books, poems, and short stories with both “students and colleagues.” Recently, her favorite book has been a novel by Thornton Wilder, *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*. In her free time, Wolterbeek explores new cafes, makes tea using her tea drawer, and bakes. Aside from English, Wolterbeek is interested in Latin. Recalling her high school experience of studying Latin, she described, “It felt like a puzzle piece clicking into place for me.”



David Womack
Choral Intern

While helping direct various vocal ensembles, David Womack will also sing with the Tuesday Society — a faculty/student choir — and serve as assistant music director for the musical. Additionally, he plans to utilize his vocal and instrumental skills to help lead services during the Jewish High Holy Days and someday hopes to become a cantor. Womack is also passionate about sports, especially football. Already, he’s tried his hand at roundnet, also known as Spikeball, joining a group of students who needed a fourth player. He spends his free time jamming with friends and reading, especially fantasy and science fiction. He also loves languages — in addition to English, Womack has studied a variety of languages, notably French and Russian. As a vocalist, he prides himself on being able to pronounce foreign languages “like a native.”



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Goals: How To Achieve Them

By JAYDEN LU ‘29 and TONY ZHU ‘29

As the new school year commences, what are some goals you will set for yourself? What are some things you promised yourself you would do last year but didn’t? Publishing here means the whole school can help you be accountable!

As school commences, it is the perfect moment to take a step back, and think about where we are heading. A brand new year means brand new goals which for me are like targets rather than requirements for a good school year ahead. Every year I would want to improve a specific goal I had last year or lay out a new foundation to build upon in the future. Such goals could relate to getting a better GPA for the following term, being ranked higher up on the squash ladder, or just trying my hardest to keep my room clean for once.

Setting or talking about goals

is the easy part of the equation, though, the harder part is following through and putting these goals into action. Last year, I had a few things I told myself that I should try to stick with throughout the year, but if I’m being honest most of them fell apart by October. With the intense schedule at Exeter, what may seem like a trivial task, soon becomes a burden where just spending a few minutes everyday turns into a chore.

Goals aren’t truly meant to be kept, they are a reminder to yourself of what could be lying ahead of you if you just focus. But of course, like with everything in life, not all goals are meant to be achieved. This doesn’t mean that you shouldn’t create goals, or push yourself to complete them, instead it is to make you realize that it’s not always about the outcome, but instead what you did to get you there. Goals are what push you, for the better, or for the worse, but without goals, you wouldn’t be at where you are now. There

isn’t just one type of goal to push you though. While some might be straightforward and easy to maintain, others are the complete opposite with success seemingly looking impossible.

For one, the most tame of all of the goals were probably the ones that seemed most reasonable: working hard in all of my classes and having a good relationship with all of my teachers. Even though challenging, these types of goals gave me something to strive for.

For more lofty goals like trying to keep your room in a clean state, it may start off strong. For the first few weeks or even months, the room might look like it’s in pristine shape. All of the laundry is taken care of, you make your bed every morning, and everything on your desk is put neatly so you actually remember where they are. After a few weeks of exams, homework, and all classes increasing in intensity, the initial motivation starts to slip away, and be-

fore you know it the room looks like it never got cleaned in the first place.

Now, the most insane goals of them all. They’re almost guaranteed to not come into fruition but still you create them in the one off chances that they might be completed. Saying you’re going to get an 11.0 GPA for all three terms, or become a co-head of all of the clubs you attend. These are the goals which you try your hardest to complete, but still after all of your hard work, it still seems impossible. For most, these three types of goals aren’t the only goals you would set yourself. It’s more like a spectrum where there’s not only the achievability of the goals, but also the types of goals which one strives for.

Goals can also be seen in the athletic side of things, and for me that’s squash. At the start of the school year, it was easy to picture yourself climbing up the ladder, beating players that have held your spot in the previous years. In reality, moving up even a few sports means months of consistent practice:

doing conditioning drills when it’s one hundred degrees outside, constant practice matches, and a level of consistency that is harder to maintain now that you’re at school. It’s not that this goal is unrealistic, it’s just that the version of the goal you first pictured from the start, rarely matches the actual grind it takes to complete it.

At the end of the day, none of this is for me to beat myself up over what I didn’t get to finish last year. It is all about being honest with myself, and all of you, about what I planned to do in the future. Some goals will stick, some goals will fade, and some goals may just be out of reach, no matter how hard I chase them.

And while you’re at it. What are yours? Is it an academic goal, a sports goal, or maybe it might be keeping your room clean past October. Whatever it is, you don’t always have to have it figured out, just put it out there, and maybe next year you will be writing about it too.

Hold me to it, and hold yourself to a higher standard than you previously thought before.

Recycling: Please, Hear My Plea

By WILLIAM WU ‘28

I bet you have seen — and perhaps done — at least one of the following things: trying to stuff a pizza box in the long, rectangular recycling bin, throwing a plastic bag of trash into recycling, or throwing your half-finished can of Dr. Pepper that you bought from Grill into the recycling box. If so, another bag of trash just became unrecyclable. Phillips Exeter Academy produces around 316.28 tons (632,560 pounds) of waste (trash plus recyclables) as of 2025. That is around 2,692 pounds of waste every day, of which only around 550 pounds are recycled — a little over 20 percent. This might seem like a reasonable number, but considering that in the United States, it is estimated that more than 75 percent of municipal solid waste is recyclable, and the national average recycling rate is approximately 34 percent, there is still a long way to go.

To recycle better, we have to understand the system. It all starts with the humblest yet crucial step: collection. Students correctly distinguishing between trash and recyclables is the first and foremost. After the trash in bathrooms and common rooms is collected, the Exeter custodial personnel visually examine the bag. If any contamination is found, the whole bag is thrown away. After all, nobody is opening a disgusting, bin-juice-dripping bag to dig for unrecyclable items. “The dormitories need the most improvement. This is both from students and faculty living in the dorms,” said Ms. Degenova, manager of environmental compliance.

After collection, all the trash is taken to a 30-yard trash compactor, which automatically schedules a pickup from Casella — the waste management company that is responsible for managing all the waste generated by the Academy — once it reaches a specific pres-

sure inside. All of the recyclables go to Casella’s Zero-Sort system in Charlestown, Boston. The first station at the facility is manual sorting, where workers cull the oversized or unrecyclable items, such as boxes with food inside, although empty pizza boxes are OK as long as they’re not overly greasy; plastic films, which can tangle up in machines; and paper towels — like, eww, why would you try to recycle that? Then, the Corrugated Cardboard Separator, consisting of interwoven spinning discs, allows anything smaller than 8 inches to fall through into the GlassBreaker screen, where the zig-zag air classifier removes the tiniest items. A magnet pulls out the metal products from the stream consisting of medium-sized and the previously separated large items. After that, a newspaper screen weeds out all the paper products, while a computer optical sorter divides the leftovers into plastics and non-plastics. An eddy

current extracts the aluminum products from the non-plastics, and finally, a manual quality-control acts as a “last line of defense” before materials are compacted in a two-ram baler and made ready for repurposing. “Complex system,” you might think, “It seems pretty comprehensive, so what does this have to do with me?” Consider this: IF students correctly sort their waste into six simple categories — plastic, aluminum, paper, cardboard, glass, and other metals, the whole system is NO LONGER NEEDED. And no, it’s also not a perfect workflow. The CP Group system, which Casella uses for their Material Recovery Facility in Rutland, Vt., reported the following recovery rates for different materials: These are impressive results. The system’s flaws, however, arise because each part of the system mainly identifies objects by their shape, size, flatness, and weight rather than their composition — for a newspaper disc screen (pictured on the left), a flattened plastic bottle might look the same as a piece of old newspaper. Moreover, because this is a single-stream sort-

ing system, the mistake that happens in previous stations builds up. If a piece of glass gets caught in a slab of wet paper towels and is thus missed by the GlassBreaker Screen, it isn’t until the optical and manual quality control — the last line of defense — that the shards get a chance to be removed. Some of the most troublesome contaminants include plastic bags and films; food waste; “tanglers,” such as cords, ropes, and tubes; textiles, or clothing; oversized items, such as TVs, sofas, and car parts; and small objects that might otherwise be recyclable, for example, loose bottle caps and plastic silverware — in general, anything smaller than about two to three inches in diameter. “When in doubt, throw it out” is one of the best pieces of advice that can be given to a person standing unsure in front of the trash can. Do not throw trash into recycling thinking “maybe they are recyclable” and feeling proud of yourself for saving the planet. What you are doing only creates extra work, increases costs, and contaminates other materials. Sometimes, recycling less is recycling more.

A Classics Student’s Thoughts on “The Odyssey”

By TIAGOBILYK ‘28

Perhaps the most important revival of Homeric tradition in recent memory occurred this summer, when I read the Iliad and the Odyssey for the first time. Less importantly, Christopher Nolan also came out with a movie or something I guess. Here is what I think.

As with any major blockbuster, there has been much criticism and much praise levied at this film. A world-renowned Homer translator, Emily Wilson, for one, published a scathing review of the movie, where she boils the problem down to one major characteristic of the poem: that is, the character of Odysseus himself. Understandably, as the work is named after the man, she argues that the most compelling aspect of the epic is indeed the tricky, witty nature of the protagonist. Famously, the very first

line of the poem includes one of the great challenges in the entire field of classical translation, the Greek word “polytropos.” The adjective essentially means “of many tricks or schemes” or, as last year’s visiting scholar Daniel Mendelsohn put it, “having so many roundabout ways.” For those who have seen the movie, it is easy to understand that this was chiseled down significantly, leaving more space for the overarching story of his return.

It is equally easy to understand that when adapting a 15,000-line poem, Nolan needed to make some cuts and take some creative liberties. It is impossible to tell the complete story of the Odyssey in a single movie; therefore, directors must choose exactly what it is they want to use, what it is they want to say. Thus, I believe that Nolan’s intention was not to tell, to the best of his capabili-

ties, the story of the Odyssey. Instead, it seems to me he meant solely to use the great poem to make his own point and develop his own vision. In this I believe he was very successful.

In the movie, we meet an extremely conflicted Odysseus who briefly battles an addiction to a flower that keeps him from remembering his past. He relies on this fruit to keep his demons at bay, away from his regrets and the challenges he might face. We hear him recount his story as he begins to slowly remember his path. He tells us of the many mistakes he has made before eventually yielding to the waters and the winds, allowing the world to guide him, completely defenseless.

Once he does return home, he makes his case to his wife, Penelope, who has had to deal with the impact of her husband’s absence, and who

is unaware that the man with whom she speaks is her husband in disguise. The conversation is sad and melancholic. Odysseus, reflecting on what Nolan calls Zeus’s law (the Greek notion that you must always welcome the stranger into your home), believes he has committed a grave crime by tricking the Trojans with the famous wooden horse.

The movie presents an Odysseus carrying the weight of his sins, a concept which is inherently Abrahamic and not present in the original story. This is not to say, however, that this vision of the man is not viable.

The reason I believe Nolan was able to succeed with his Odyssey lies in the Trojan horse, an item that is barely present in the original text. Dozens of men clamber and stick inside of this beautiful construction. They stand on each other’s shoulders,

bare light poking through thin crevices between the wooden boards. The stench is penetrating. Through the screen, you suffer in the grit and grime; you recoil in fear as you see men drown in the water before you. Menelaus’s account to Telemachus, Odysseus’s son, is to me the most powerful moment in the movie. Its portrayal sets the scene for our protagonist’s conflict.

With the horse, Nolan wonderfully illustrates how much suffering was endured for so many years, simply to seek victory over another people. Odysseus reflects on how much of his life was wasted, how much energy he poured into killing.

This regret pours over our protagonist when he sees his soldiers brutally execute a young woman before a statue of Athena. He looks up to the gods and so begins his struggle to return home.

This picture of Od-

ysseus is indeed different from the witty man presented by Homer. In Nolan’s film, however, he retains what I believe is his greatest characteristic: the true depth of his personality. Although different from the original poem, one is still captured and enthralled by the profoundly touching story of a man who wants more than anything to return home but is held back by his past, by the demons who haunt him.

Although “The Odyssey” may not be the one-to-one replication of the great epic that we know and love, one simply must appreciate how Nolan uses the story to tell his own tale of regret and ambition, reflection and new beginnings. We will always overlay our modern perspectives onto the great characters of the past, for that is how we learn from literature. And that is not a bad thing.

Clancy v. Tufts: The Tragedy of the American Psychiatric System

By **GEORGE WANG ‘28**

During major publicity events, the internet is always the quickest to take a stance. As a result, misinformation and disinformation have become rampant since the COVID-19 pandemic, with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) reporting that up to 49 percent of content is misleading. The Lindsay Clancy case is no exception and has amassed a very large following, both for, against, and simply watching Clancy. A case where a mom allegedly strangled her three children to death while allegedly suffering from PPP (postpartum psychosis), the current mistrial due to the objection of one juror, who had reasonable doubt but still refused to vote not guilty, has drawn great attention. At the same time, Clancy is also suing her doctors, primarily Dr. Jennifer A. Tufts, for failure to diagnose her with bipolar disorder, and “subjecting her to a disorganized, uncoordinated course of polypharmacy (concurrent use of drugs by a single patient) that exacerbated her condition and precipitated a severe psychotic break.” While there is a lot to discuss about Clancy’s responsibility and her insanity plea, much discourse is based upon an inherently biased moral compass. It is more important to realize that Clancy v. Tufts serves as a tragedy attesting to the worsening crisis of mental health caused by the flawed methodology of American psychiatry and support.

The support for Clancy was flawed, as shown in her conversations with suicide hotlines and the fact that, in general, mental health professionals are in a great deficit that makes a lot of treatment inaccessible. Clancy was told by suicide hotlines that there was no actionable concern because she did not have an actionable plan for suicide. Advertised as the number everyone should call during a crisis, the hotline has, after recent research and interviews, proven ineffective at

times. People interviewed by Healthline reported lackluster, ineffective support and advice, such as sending callers on hour-long holds or to voicemail, “parroting” without real advice or reassurance, or rejecting people who didn’t have a “plan,” as in Clancy’s case. 50.5 percent of callers were not asked about suicidal ideation. In 15.6 percent of cases, callers were not treated with minimum acceptability and respect, as found in a study reviewing the effectiveness of these hotlines. More broadly, one study found that most callers felt no better than before, while roughly equal proportions felt worse or better. This is a very critical failure of the system, as people who have passive thoughts of suicide should not be rejected or simply brushed off. Passive thoughts can quickly develop into actionable thoughts, and by then it could be too late. Fewer and fewer people are also contacting the hotline, as only 23.7 percent have contacted the hotline compared to 53 percent of adult ER visits resulting in a mental health diagnosis, as per a study by JAMA Network Open. This is not only because of the hotline’s sometimes lackluster support; lack of funding and awareness is also a key factor. The lack of funding and support for doctors themselves has caused a massive shortage of mental health professionals after the surge of behavioral health needs during COVID-19: up to 40 percent of Americans live in areas that are lacking in support, according to HRSA in a study reviewing the state of the behavioral health workforce. This drives up treatment costs and reduces access to support for those who need it most. As a result, many are unable to get the help they need long-term, whether that be talk therapy, machine therapy (electroconvulsive therapy, transcranial magnetic stimulation, etc), or medication. As a result, professionals may be less experienced and thus less prepared to support patients with severe mental health concerns properly.

On the note of inappropriate treatment plans, a major issue right now is the prevalence of PIP (potentially inappropriate prescribing). This is a contention within Clancy v. Tufts: the issue of inappropriate prescriptions that allegedly exacerbated Clancy’s condition. In the civil complaint and jury demand, the facts section discusses Clancy’s prior postpartum history. It was during her third postpartum period, on September 12th, 2022, that she was prescribed Zoloft by Dr. Tufts (Aster Mental Health) after testing a 23 on the EPDS (Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale), indicative of severe depression. An SSRI used to treat a variety of mental health issues, Zoloft did not work for Clancy, as it allegedly worsened anxiety and insomnia, consistent with medication-induced activation, which entails a mix of hyperarousal symptoms. Despite such manifestations, Tufts increased Clancy’s dosage to 50mg. Clancy reported that her symptoms worsened even more, and Tufts discontinued Zoloft and prescribed Ativan and Benadryl, still medications for general anxiety and insomnia. Neither of those drugs worked. This is an important part of the alleged negligence when it came to pharmaceutical prescription, as it was that despite Clancy reporting the first time that the medication made her worse, Dr. Tufts did not consider medication-induced activation that potentially signals bipolar disorder, as per her testimony.

This is part of a greater issue of increased prevalence in PIP of psychotropic meds. A 2023 study found that PIP reached a staggering 55 percent in homeless people with schizophrenia and bipolar disorders, and up to 59 percent of adult inpatients with mental disorders. Moreover, the study found that benzodiazepines, drugs normally used for anxiety (including Ativan, which Clancy was prescribed and reported to have worsened her condition), were the most common when it came to PIP. Therefore, Clancy’s

case is very much pertinent to this study, as “patients with PIP experienced more side effects, and had lower social functioning and lower quality of life.” Additionally, the study found that psychotropic drugs and their side effects are more likely to cause adverse reactions in women. The many flaws are contrary to the growth of the psychotropic industry, as its market cap increased by \$23 billion in 2025 and continues to increase year over year. This margin of error will compound over time, given that anxiety and depression rates have risen 24% since 2019 and disproportionately affect adolescents and women. Thus, it should be taken as a grave issue perturbing the global community.

On top of PIP, Clancy’s deterioration due to polypharmacy is also concurrent with a problem of psychiatric treatment, especially amongst youth. After stopping the Zoloft, Clancy sought help from other institutions. She was then prescribed Trazodone, Prozac, Ambien, Remeron, and Klonopin by three institutions over a three-month period, all of which worsened her condition to dissociation and suicidal intentions, and were discontinued. Clancy was finally prescribed Seroquel (antipsychotic and mood stabilizer) on November 29, 2022, following a correct “consideration” of bipolar disorder. However, Seroquel did not help and instead made everything worse, and furthered Clancy’s suicidal intentions. Dr. Diaz, an attending doctor at ‘Women & Infants Hospital,’ deemed that many of Clancy’s symptoms were in fact caused by overmedication, but rejected a bipolar diagnosis as well as PPD (postpartum depression) due to “lack of family history,” a conclusion that did not take into consideration Clancy’s previous hypomanic episodes as well as her sister also having suffered from PPA (postpartum anxiety). From there on, Dr. Diaz did not arrange a proper treatment plan for her, leading Clancy to consult other doc-

tors and start on meds such as Amitriptyline (an antidepressant in the TCA class), as well as Trazodone (sleeping meds). Starting with Zoloft, each drug, concurrent or not, allegedly made Clancy’s condition worse, and culminated in homicidal and suicidal ideation, which she acted upon.

Polypharmacy of psychotropics is not a new issue. With the rising awareness of the importance of mental health, more and more people are being diagnosed and put on a variety of meds, with polypharmacy almost doubling from 2001 to 2020; currently, 1 in 4 young people on psychotropics are found to be on dangerous combinations. Half of these people are taking antipsychotic medications (i.e., Seroquel). They are also taking another medication that is at high risk of interacting negatively with the antipsychotic, while just under half of people taking antidepressants are in the same situation, as per a study by Penn Medicine. These issues underscore the need to invest further in the safety of psychotropic drugs during an age when mental health conditions are much more prevalent due to increasing worries.

Overall, Clancy v. Tufts and its details highlight the many shortcomings of mental health support in the United States. With the recent threats of \$2 billion in defunding of mental health and addiction support, as well as research grants in general, the future of aid is very uncertain. But one thing is clear: we must invest more in mental health support and research. Whether now or in the future, this must happen if society is to stay sustainable. Medication should not be the default in treatment plans simply because other therapies are unavailable. Still, for that to change, other therapies must become more accessible, and society as a whole has to re-evaluate its standards, because many of them are, truthfully, the root causes of crises.

Why Assembly is My Favorite Part of Exeter

By **BRANDON THOMAS**

It took me nine years, but I am finally willing to admit it: Assembly is the piece of Exeter I enjoy the most.

Let’s start with it being a shared experience this is one of the only times where we all do this one thing all together. The dopest thing about this is the opportunity for shared conversations. Y’all remember Dexter Filkins? In my Drake voice, “Oh my!” Folks are still talking about that assembly today.

Not only do we get to engage with interesting thought processes, but these all-school assemblies spark discussions in a myriad of different places: classrooms, my study during dorm duty, the common room, and locker rooms. I remember one night in 2019, I think, we had a special assembly for Bryan Stevenson. He spoke for 45 or 50 minutes and the entire audience was captivated. You could hear a pin drop in the assembly hall. The Principal at the time bought a massive stockpile

of his books, and a large group of students ended up late for check-in that night just to get their copies signed. His movie dropped shortly after. Can you guess which A-list actor played him? Here’s a hint: he also played Smoke and Stack in another film.

You get to hear from so many types of speakers. We had a designer from Timberland one time who admitted he was nervous. He then went on to humbly tell us that he’d worked with Serena Williams, Nike, and sat in design meetings with Tinker Hatfield (Designed Jordan 3-7). Oh you know, just another day at the office. The big names and their status are interesting for sure, but the real gift of these assemblies is when folks let us behind the curtain. He talked about his design process and how he sketched religiously, eventually creating a unique stiletto by taking elements from sneakers and blending them into high fashion heels.

Then you get folks who aren’t used to speaking in front of large crowds but crush it, liter-

ally. Y’all remember Ilima-Lei Macfarlane? She showed us videos of her knocking people out in Bellator matches. And I quote “If you listen closely, it sounds like a coconut crushing.” Inside of that was the simple gift of trying something new. She essentially stumbled into fighting while just trying to get in shape, and it turned out she was amazing enough to be a champion. Gene Luen Yang made the entire hall feel at home with his warm demeanor and penchant for captivating storytelling; locked inside of that was a message to believe in yourself even if your parents keep telling you to get a “real” job. Sarah-Jane Ho gave what some would call a perfect assembly, it was relatable, had a clear message, and featured stories that were both super interesting, grounded, and Exeter centric. Folks loved learning about young Zuckerberg. We even got to laugh and enjoy a trip across the entire United States with Dr. Schofer.

Sometimes, though, the best part is everything except what’s happening on stage. We had two

governors speak once, which was awesome, but did anyone peep their security detail? Literally straight faces, all business. Another time we had a speaker named Max Stossel talking about how addictive apps like Brawl Stars are. Right as he was saying that, I had to take away a phone from a student who was, you guessed it, playing Brawl Stars. I whispered, “He’s literally talking about you right now.” I love watching Ms. Waterman and Mr. Chisholm scolding students who are trying to finish their homework for the next block. I love watching people aggressively fight off sleep for 30 straight minutes. And then there were the 1,139 rubber ducks lined up all around the assembly hall. To this day, I’m still wondering who pulled that off.

One of the most interesting things I’ve processed while sitting in assembly is that everything isn’t meant for me. Some speakers cover topics that don’t pique my personal interest, or concepts I flat-out don’t fully get. But then I’ll look across the

crowd and see a student with wide, cartoonish eyes, completely hooked. In that moment I realize: Yep, that’s the person this one was for.

And let me not forget the part that gives me the absolute most joy: seeing our student performances. We just watched ESSO Love Island, and while I don’t watch the actual show, I loved the Exeter club version. I consistently look forward to the EAR assembly. Whenever the Red Bandits are on stage screaming, I love seeing folks sitting with their class and yelling for the entire block. Sometimes I yell, too. You can’t tell me not to be proud of the people on stage that I’ve built real relationships with. If I know you and you’re up there, I am 100% cheering for you.

Ambassadors, poets, financiers, engineers, oyster salesmen, writers, governors, CEOs, designers, cartoonists, and everything else under the sun.

Thirty minutes with my advisees. Thirty minutes with my colleagues. Thirty minutes that could change my life.

Sports

» **GIRL’S VARSITY SOCCER**
Read about GV Soccer’s exciting Pre-season training, 15.

» **BIG RED ZONE**
Read about Big Red Zone’s Vision for this school year’s spirit, 15.

» **COTW**
Read about Captains of the Week Outdoor Track & Field, 14.

Setting the Pace: Cross Country Captains



Cross country captain gathered before practice. Anoushka Sarathy / The Exonian

By **DOWAN KIM, IAN KOO, DANIEL LEE, and DANIEL JOON LEE**

Golden-brown leaves rustle as a triple dozen runners traverse the trails, signaling the crisp start of fall term at Exeter. The signals are from none other than the cross country team. Consisting of members of all skill levels, from young, eager junior varsity runners to the long-dedicated varsity athletes, the team transcends traditional division rules based on talent and skill. Regardless of gender identity, age, or experience, the cross country team unites its members under one cause: to make Exeter proud and

bring home the hardware. For the 2026-27 academic year, seniors Owen Cosgrove, Carsten Flowers, and Artur Noaves Ferreira have been elected by their teammates to captain the boys team; the girls’ team is led by seniors Sophia Butler and Alice Rourke. Flowers started his cross country journey in the spring of freshman year. In fact, he was an active soccer player since middle school. It was the “culture on the team” that drew Flowers into long-distance running. Initially, he was aware and, frankly, afraid of the “kosher,” the Jewish term referring to acceptable norms, surrounding the sport, believing that some

may perceive the gritty nature of the sport as superfluous and extravagant of energy. However, he highlights his successful assimilation in the sport and on the team through “accepting” the particular “weirdness.” Unlike Flowers, Cosgrove has consistently participated in cross country and long-distance running in track and field since seventh grade. Cosgrove claims that cross country has been his favorite athletic endeavor across all three seasons at Exeter. “Whenever I am having a bad school day, I am always looking forward to practice,” he said, appreciating the joyfulness and energy of team practices that help him

overcome academic challenges. Surprisingly, he confessed that he “used to dread practice” a long time ago, but now finds substantial joy, energy, and bonding on the team. Ferreira wasn’t a strong runner in his prep year; however, he “loved the team environment and the way everyone worked through difficult workouts together.” Ferreira had notable improvements in his lower and upper years. Ferreira noted, “By my upper year, I started to realize that I could become a leader myself.” As a captain, Ferreira emphasizes the importance of “supporting the people on my team and helping them through difficulties.”

On the cross country team, captains are selected through votes. Flowers explained, “It’s important that you don’t become a captain. You’re elected as a captain,” highlighting the democratic process behind yearly captain selections. Leadership on the cross country team involves a lot of commitments and responsibilities. Ferreira stressed, “Part of leadership is making sure everyone stays disciplined during practice, whether that means doing our core work properly or staying focused during workouts.” Training sessions of the cross country team

COTW, 17.

Big Red Zone Shares Vision for This Year’s School Spirit



Big Red Zone posed at the camera with energy. Arisa Yoshino / The Exonian

By **CARY GUO, JUNE KOH, and CAROL LEE**

The autumn air is crisp, the floodlights are bright against the dusk, and a cacophony of sound blows across the turf before a single whistle even blows. At the center of the roar, with their waving flags and painted faces, stands Big Red Zone. Composed of six enthusiastic student athletes, this tight-knit team is the center of Exeter’s sports

culture, bringing the loudest and most infectious energy to the sidelines. This year’s Big Red Zone members include seniors Ava Pimental, Erin Sears, Jack Snyder, Ned Akashian, Noah Poinsett-Yoshida, and Zane Eskandar. For Sears, the definition of the group is community. “Big Red Zone is basically the student hype-squad. We make sure that all the teams feel supported, and we make the student sec-

tion as loud and as fun as we can be.” Akashian expanded on that vision, viewing the group as a bridge that connects different grades. He described it as “a group of student leaders that have taken initiative and have the ability to bring the whole student body from PGs to preps to come and support all the student athletes.” “We’re in front of the crowd, hyping them up, and we’ll start the chant. We’ll

make sure everyone’s in on the theme. We’ll be wearing crazy costumes and getting everyone hyped,” Eskandar shared. Whether it is a regular season game or E/A, Big Red Zone always shows up for their peers on the field. Their mission is simple, but important. They ensure that every athlete, from football to water polo, feels support from the community. This upcoming school year, Big Red Zone will organize themes to encourage

spectators to show their support for Big Red teams. For example, the varsity football team’s home opener on Sept. 19 against Choate will feature a white-out theme, while the game against Williston on Oct. 3 will have a USA theme. Behind every coordinated sea of color in the bleachers is a deliberate effort to make school spirit accessible to everyone on campus. “When planning, we try to make the themes as easy to wear as possible,” Eskandar explained. “It shouldn’t be something you have to purchase or spend a lot of time on.” To make sure students participate in supporting all the sports, Sears points out that communication and visibility are key. “Our strategy is to theme a lot of the games. Not just football, but also field hockey, soccer. We’re going to try to do at least one theme game for every sport,” Sears explained. Alongside this, effective advertising and working with teams on Instagram helps ensure that every game gets the hype and attendance it deserves. For many of the current co-heads, the decision to join Big Red Zone was

BIG RED ZONE, 15.

GV Soccer Kicks Off an Energetic Preseason

By AUDREY KIM,
ELLINA KIM, and
ARIANA METZGER

The sun is already high in the sky as the girls varsity soccer team sprints up the field. Grass flies up under cleats as the ball passes smoothly between them. Despite them being a new team, they are already able to communicate wordlessly, bonded after blindfolded trust challenges, late night campfires, rigorous speed tests, and early morning practices.

It’s preseason for the soccer team, a time to train and meet new people before tryouts during the school year. Preseason took place between Aug. 29 and Sept. 2, and was preceded by a training camp in Maine. Led by coaches Jackie Langevin and Diego Ardura, as well as captains Lily Pate, Orleans Germond, and Annabel Jordan, the team had a productive and successful preseason.

Preseason was filled with scrimmages and team bonding. Coach Diego Ardura described one of his favorite moments at a college showcase. “Going there with the

new team, we saw how excited everybody was to play for Exeter — even against very, very good opponents.”

“My favorite parts were the inter-squad scrimmage and ‘Rondos’,” says Jordan. A drill where players form small circles with one or two defenders in the middle, ‘Rondos’ was a fun way to practice essential skills. While it was very intense competitively, it was the perfect combination of team bonding and also locking in.

Germond found the team bonding exercises quite memorable. “It was especially fun making our dance for the dance competition, despite missing the podium by a mere .5 points.” Although improving skills and working hard was important, Germond emphasized that preseason was a time to get to know new and returning players.

This season, the team is ready to go far. “I envision a team that is extremely competitive, but if you walk past our team, you can tell that we all value each other and that we love the sport,” states Jordan. During preseason, new players were able to showcase their skills



GV Soccer celebrating excitedly on the field.

and get to know the team. Germond described, “I think the team culture on the team is just going to keep developing with this group.”

Pate describes how close the team has gotten over the past few weeks: “Soxie is like a second family; we all have each other’s backs,”. Not only is the team a tight-knit group, it has potential to lead to a successful season. “The team is really talented,

and I’m so hyped to play with my sister. Shout out, Zo!”

The team is looking very strong this year, and Ardura is excited for the season to start. Ardura said enthusiastically, “I think that we are a very exciting team to watch with tons of potential. And I think that if we continue working hard, I think that it could be a good year for us.”

Community belonging is

Anoushka Sarathy / *The Exonian* one of the most important values of the team. While training rigorously, the team also works hard everyday to ensure that every member feels seen and supported. This is true of the season, and it’s Ardura’s third year as the head soccer coach for the girls varsity soccer team. With 21 games ahead of them, the team is excited to see what success lies ahead.



GV Soccer celebrating excitedly on the field.

Anoushka Sarathy / *The Exonian*

Big Red Zone Cont.



Arisa Yoshino / *The Exonian*

shaped by last year’s leaders: Morgan Signore, Kyle Kennedy’s, Nick Limoli, Eric Bagg, and Emma Shu. Pimental recalled hearing about their experience as a group: “It just looks like a lot of fun, honestly. I knew

the co-heads last year, and they had really good things to say about it.”

Akashian was similarly inspired by the example they set. “As a new upper last year, I was really inspired by the five previous

co-heads,” he said. “They really created the environment that I wanted to be a part of.”

Sears echoed a similar sentiment about looking up to older student leaders. “I’ve always looked up to

Big Red Zone throughout my four years here,” she said. “And I think it’s such an exciting opportunity to bring so much school spirit and excitement to the school.”

For others, being an athlete gave them first-hand experience with the support that Big Red Zone brings to the games. Snyder said that receiving that encouragement made him want to return it: “It was definitely nice to have the support last year from the group, and giving back that support was one of the reasons why I joined this year.”

Athletes on the field feel strongly supported by Big Red Zone. “It feels great! It’s nice to have that much support from the student section. It definitely gives you a good feeling as an athlete on the field,” upper Cooper Meadville recalled.

In the coming seasons, Big Red Zone plans to make t-shirts for spectators to take its game-day themes to another level. Alongside these

plans, athletes have their own hopes for an even more energetic student section. “I’d like to see some more chants from the Big Red Zone. I’d like to see them even louder and even more active because they are really doing a great job of hyping the crowd up,” Meadville said. “Last year, I was a little bit disappointed with how involved they were during the game, so I’d like this year’s Big Red Zone to be really involved with the actual student section.”

At the end of the day what unites the Big Red Zone members is their excitement to lead the games and help bring school spirit to life this year. Pointsett-Yoshida reflected on what this role meant to him: “I think for me, the sports games are some of my favorite memories here ... they’re very special moments, especially E/A, for a lot of people. Just being able to lead that is something I’m really excited for.”

Club Expo!

By Adrian Chan '28



The New Varsity Sport: Exeter Mountain Biking



Varsity Mountain Biking team poses in front of Thompson Field House.

Courtesy of Don Mills

By AVA CHUNG, AMERSON LIANG, LEVISTOLL, and SERENAYUE

There’s a new varsity sports team this fall, and they’re already cruising through the Academy Woods. Exeter’s inaugural mountain biking team had a great preseason and is off to a strong racing start. Coaches Don Mills, Gwyn Coogan, and Jeff Pal-leiko are leading the team through this new sport at the Academy. If you’re looking for fun and adventure, look no further than Exeter Mountain Biking.

The mountain biking team has just come off its first preseason this fall. One location that they frequented was the Henderson-Swasey Town Forest and its trails known as ‘Fort Rock,’ located about

a mile north of the Academy. Over this period, the team took the time to refine their biking skills. Lower Macey Meigs remarked, “We all saw each other improve so much in those first couple of days. I just think that was really cool.”

Now in the season, practices have started up, and the team is getting into a routine. They usually warm up outside the field-house and train technical exercises to work on skills needed for maneuvering through the trails. “We’ll be playing games that work on our balance and stuff... It’s just a little good warm up activity,” noted Meigs.

Upper Gavin Zhao, another cyclist, pointed out how practices have helped him get to know the Exeter trails. “It’s fun simply be-

cause you get to ride a bike to random trails... mountain biking has allowed me to learn about Exeter’s various trail systems.”

The coaches on the mountain biking team have been giving attention to each athlete and their journeys. “I think all three coaches are really supportive,” said prep Dashel Crylin. “They definitely come to practice with a plan.”

Meigs agreed. “They’re very encouraging, they push us to do our best.” The coaching staff truly care for their athletes and want to give them a great time during the season. “We really want our riders to fall in love with mountain biking. It’s a lifelong sport that teaches many skills,” commented Mills.

The athletes haven’t just

been improving technically but are also fostering a great environment for the team to grow. Meigs added, “We’re all very supportive of each other. We want each other to succeed; we love seeing each other reach our goals.”

Before the mountain biking team was formed, there was cycling in the spring. Since mountain biking is a new sport, the Academy does not have suitable trails to race on yet, and the team instead races on other courses. One of the coaches who was on the cycling team, Mills, had to make a transition for the new sport. Before, Mills was the head coach for boys’ water polo. Switching from water polo “definitely was an adjustment, I miss the boys and Coach Blitz,” remarked Mills. “[Water polo] has

been a big part of my life for twenty years, but I have always wanted to bring mountain biking to the Academy.”

Mountain biking has opened new doors to students at Exeter and allowed them to explore a different sport that they may not have reached for at first. “I’m looking forward to races and racing against more schools, riding on wild trails,” said Crylin, who is trying the sport of mountain biking for the first time.

As Mills said, “The special thing about mountain biking is it offers an opportunity for our students to try a new sport and a place for students who may not normally choose interscholastic sports to have a place.”

COTW Cont.

require high stamina and grit. “Typically, our work days are high capacity...a lot of running, a lot of mileage, and then even lifting on top of that,” Flowers explained. He believes that the captain’s role is to keep all teammates active and competition-ready throughout the season, as well as helping them “maintain the [busy] schedule.” During practices, captains “try to

lead by example,” Ferreira noted. Sessions are especially high-rigor for hill workouts, tempo runs, and long runs.

Outside-the-track training is as important as running on track, Ferreira described. “There is injury prevention, mobility work, and recovery,” he explained. Cosgrove added that captains need to make sure that the team is phys-

ically “healthy and fit,” especially for younger members. During this seasons full of challenges as usual, the three captains complement each other to create a strong, highly motivated team. “Carsten does most of the disciplinary work. I know the routes, and Artur is good with lifting,”

This season, all of the captains are positive about the team spirit. Flowers was

impressed by the team’s cohesion even outside the track and trails. “I’d walk into the dining hall when it is not even practice time. And I see the team sitting together at our table,” Flowers said. “That gave me a sense of pride.”

This season, the captains’ goal is to win Interscholastic, an annual competition bringing together top runners from across New En-

gland schools. “Exeter has had a long streak of success, and we take a lot of pride in continuing that tradition,” Ferreira elaborated. Exeter’s strong contenders will be St. Paul’s and Andover. But most importantly, Ferreira added, the team’s major goal is “simply to keep everyone healthy and minimize injuries throughout the season.”



Anoushka Sarathy / The Exonian

Humor

HALF FULL OR EMPTY?

Read about Adaeze and Soleil’s solution to this philosophical question, 18.

CHRONICLES OF STUDENT

Read a upperclassman’s inner monologue by Diya Sandeep, 18.

THE ICEBREAKER

Read about Daniel’s thoughts on “What did you do this summer?”, 19.

An Exonian’s Reading List

By EILENA DING ‘28 and LYDIA KUHNERT ‘28

“The Art of War,” Sun Tzu

Good for Harkness tips.
“Appear weak when you are strong, and strong when you are weak.”

“Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day,” Judith Viorst

A physics test and three “quizzes” in one day? Get me out!
“I think I’ll move to Australia.”

“The Prince,” Machiavelli

The perfect guide to mastering club politics. Try these tactics out while jockeying for co-head.
“If an injury has to be done to a man it should be so severe that his vengeance need not be feared.”

“How to Win Friends and Influence People,” Dale Carnegie

Self-explanatory.
“A barber lathers a man before he shaves him.”

“The Very Hungry Caterpillar,” Eric Carle

When you spend all your Grill points, and it’s mystery mush in the dining hall.
“On Saturday he ate through one nice green leaf...”

“Das Kapital,” Karl Marx

Rise up, preps, gain student-consciousness, and seize the means of grading!
“Capital is dead labor which, vampire-like, lives only by sucking living labor.”

“Bible”

After seeing your physics grade, you might want to have one of these handy.
“The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?”
What can mere tests do, either?

“How to Ask Your Teachers About Their Lives So That They Forget to Teach,” writer TBD

This doesn’t exist, but I’m sure my math class could write it.

The Chronicles of a U.S. History Student

By DIYA SANDEEP ‘28

Dear Diary,

I saw a prep today. They were so... prepling. There was so much joy in their eyes. They were huddled together, a group of fifteen teenage girls. I remember having that many friends. It’s been a long time since those days. U.S. History has filled all of my free time, and we just got assigned the first reading. It’s only 50 pages.
Your Lonely New Upper

Dear Diary,

I was brushing my hair this morning. I lost thirty strands to stress, AND not even one of my new twenty grey hairs was included in that number. Scratch that, twenty-one. I found another one.
Your Greying New Upper

Dear Diary,

I was in dance class today. We were

asked about our term goals. Mine was to become flexible enough that my joints no longer pop when I stretch. Everyone laughed. I was not joking. We proceeded to warm up, and you could hear my back creak from across the room. Everyone winced.
Your Creaky New Upper

Dear Diary,

I heard someone call Weth the Hahn Center today. They don’t deserve the renovated space.
Your Nostalgic New Upper

Dear Diary,

There was some prep raving about Lesbian Space Princess. I will never get that one hour and twenty-seven minutes of my life back. Can we throw all the preps in the Elm basement? It’ll build character.
Your Vengeful New Upper

CHRONICLES, 19.

Class Half Full or Glass Half Empty?

By ADAEZE ACHOLONU ‘29 and SOLEIL POMMERAUD ‘29

Optimist: Yeah, it’s half full.

Pessimist: Yeah, it’s half empty.

Day stud: Ooh, yay, water. Lowkey have water at home...

Boarder: “Who keeps leaving out their dirty dishes? At this point, we’re going to have to give everyone sevens and remove all of the dishes from the kitchen until you all learn how to clean up after yourselves.”

MUN student: “Honorable Chair and distinguished delegates, the delegation of Costa Rica recognizes that water is a precious resource. Our rivers and rainforests remind us of why they need to be protected. Costa Rica also has no standing army, so we’ve come to negotiate: we’ll give you half this glass of water if you give us half your military, as well as half your petroleum reserves for future uses.”

Chemistry 530: “Looking at this glass, there seems to be about 150ml of water contained within. If each ml has 3.34 x 1022 molecules of H2O, then multiplying that by 150 would equal around 5.01 x 1024 molecules contained in the glass.”

Math: “To find the volume of water in this glass, we need to estimate the total mass of the water and divide it by the total density, which is always one because no matter how much or how little of a substance there is, the density always stays the same.”

Econ club: “You should not invest in this glass as it is only using half of its potential. A better option would be to find a full glass or a bigger glass to contain more water.”

Health: “The water in that glass is only 1/18th of the water you should be drinking every day. Drinking only that would be bad for your well-being, and you would need to go to the Health Center for dehydration. There are serious risks that can result from not drinking enough. Also, leaving out an already half-finished glass of water is unsanitary; you should instead finish your glass, clean the cup, and return it.”

ChatGPT: “Hmm. That glass seems to be half empty—would you like me to fill it up for you? There’s still some water left, of course, but if you’d like a little more, I’d be happy to add some for you! No point in leaving it half empty if you’d rather have it full. And if you’re perfectly content with the amount that’s already there, that’s ok too—I’ll leave it as it is.”

English class: “What is the symbolism behind this glass?”

“I think it’s meant to represent how nothing in life is ever perfect.”

“Yeah, adding on to that, I thought it showed the way life is always a balance between good and bad. Like, the water represents the good and the emptiness the bad.”

“Actually, I think the opposite. The glass shows that even if something isn’t completed like one might think it should be, it still is its own unique self.”

“I had a question for the table: What do you think happened to the rest of the water?”

“In my opinion, it was probably someone thirsty who came to get a drink.”

“But then why would they only drink half and leave the rest out?”

“...”

The Top Ten Ways to Spend Prep Fall: Reminiscing on the Brighter Days

By DIYA SANDEEP ‘28

10. Read a book. Specifically, one that’s not for English class. No matter how fast you read, it’s a great way to spend a few hours (and probably better for your brain than doomscrolling). It will be the last time you have enough free time. You will, however, become increasingly familiar with many academic papers when history essay season comes along.

9. Take up journaling. In thirty years, maybe you’ll want your memories of your first days on campus. And next year, when you’re no longer a prep and the new kids ask you about how you’re coping with Exeter, you’ll have an immortalized mini-meditation of every breakdown you had and you can pretend you were cruising.

8. Talk to random people on the paths. The people you stop who are making the trek from the fourth floor of the library to the third floor of the science center will be... less than thankful. Prep fall is a great time to make enemies with random sleep-deprived upperclassmen! Then when you’re ten minutes late and about to get Stricts for all the dick-eys you’ve compiled, some prep will pay it back.

7. Go on a walk. Explore Swasey. Make a habit of touching grass frequently. It’ll serve you well in the winter when all the grass is covered in a foot of snow and you have to walk through a snowstorm to get to your 8 a.m. And in the spring, when everyone has clocked out of the term by April and you’re stuck in a study room desperately trying to not fail your next math test.

6. Spend abnormal amounts of time annotating your homework. Why do your English reading once when you could read it five times in different pen colors? By the sixth pass over, you will start thinking words are fake. By the seventh, you will hallucinate the characters at night. You may or may not make a point at all.

5. Stare out the window and ponder your existence. Or don’t. Doing absolutely nothing is a great usage of time, actually.

4. Get lost on your way to class. We all know it’s going to happen at least once. It’s okay; it’s easy to get Phillips Hall and Elizabeth Phillips Academy Center mixed up. And where’s that random Front Street address? Sorry, is this Lamont the dorm? I thought it was the Health Center. And

I’m at the wrong New Hall? Oh, it’s just down the stairs, thanks.

3. Join some clubs. And some more clubs. And you know what? You have more time than you think, join some more. The people at Club Expo just had so much energy and joy in their eyes and desperation in their voices. Thirty? You can handle it. Oh, you actually didn’t know that the cleaning blackboards club met daily? You won’t offend anyone if you leave. Probably. It’s fine, no one expects preps to actually stick around past the second meeting.

2. Get ten hours of sleep. “Oh, that’s way too much sleep, it’s only 9 p.m.—” NO. Stock up now. You will thank yourself later. “You can’t actually stock up on sleep—” Lies. Tell that to the upper that slept through

their entire spring break just so they could pull all nighters for a week straight the night before their 333 was due.

1. Just do your homework. We all know workload is only going to get larger after midterms. Five hours? Yeah, I’m not even surprised. You’re already struggling? It’s okay; so is everyone else. Except for the person in your math class who is definitely in the wrong level and mentioned they already have a bachelor’s degree in mathematics. Or the person in your English class who is a published author of a New York Times best-selling book. Or the person in your bio class with no less than ten published research papers that are actually cited in your textbook. Well, you never know, maybe they’re not doing so hot either.

The Icebreaker: What Did You Do This Summer?

By **CHANGYU JEONG ‘28,**
GABRIEL KIM ‘28, and
DANIEL JOON LEE ‘29

As we ease into a new school year, we welcome all new members of the student body here at Exeter.

For any new students that may be struggling to ease into a class, here are some Exonian-approved icebreakers for anyone in a two mile radius.

#1 WHAT INTERNSHIP WERE YOU AT OVER THE SUMMER?

For any Exonian, it is a well-known principle that you work at a paid internship at a top company during the summers. So naturally, this is a great conversation starter where you can bond with new students over a common shared experience.

#2 WHAT WAS YOUR SSAT SCORE???

This is exceptionally effective if you are a new prep. As we all know, the statement “I got a 99 on my SSAT” for an Exonian is as simple as saying “the sky is grey in New England.” Certainly we shall not expect some other silly answers, but don’t panic when they give you one! Here is an excellent follow up question:

#2A HOW DID YOU GET INTO EXETER???

You know, because you must make sure that there are no imposters among us. Make sure their blood is red and not blue, we don’t want any smurfs in town.

#3 WHAT MATH LEVEL ARE YOU IN???

This is a classical example of a question that hits two birds with one stone. A good subsequent question if they answer anything below 31X would be:

#3A HOW DID YOU GET INTO EXETER???
(SLOWED + REVERB)

Idem.

#4 WHAT DORM ARE YOU IN??

Wait. That’s an actually valid question. I think you forgot that this is supposed to be satirical. Perhaps this would be a better option to consider:

#4A. MY DORM IS BETTER THAN YOUR DORM.

Whilst not a question, this statement signifies your school spirit right away: a proper Ex-

eter student with unwavering pride towards their dormitorial faith, unapologetic in substantiating one’s dominance. With this attitude, surely your peers will look up to you and soon you will definitely win the prep rep election. Make sure to definitely start campaigning online as soon as possible. :)

#5.SO,ARE WE BESTIES NOW?

On the slight chance that you get an affirmative response to this question, make sure to create a post with the hashtag #prepposse after tagging ⅓ of the prep population.

#6. ARE YOU ALSO A PREP?

Ask this to anyone you meet, especially if they are over 6’3” or if they have a full grown

beard. If they say no, make sure to give them a side eye before slowly walking away.

Remember, all of these questions will have a heightened value if thrown onto the Harkness table during the first English class of the year. We’re sure all your teachers will be delighted that the new student body is full of bold, audacious students willing to take the lead to fit right into the Exeter community.

(The Exonian is not liable for any consequences dealt by the lack of ability to sense satirical content within the Humour column. The Exonian is not responsible for compensating the tuition for any student who faces disciplinary action as a result of following the instructions given above. #skillissue)

Chronicles Cont.

Dear Diary,

Some prep in my physics class was using ChatGPT to solve all the problems. Thanks a lot for the growing water crisis. Get off AI and onto Instagram Reels like the rest of us.

Your Dehydrated New Upper

Dear Diary,

There’s a prep in 31X. I am in 310. They asked me for help with their homework. I don’t understand.

Your Failing New Upper

Dear Diary,

We finally got to problem #67. It was, indeed, a nightmare.

Your ‘Unc’(?) New Upper

Dear Diary,

A prep bought their biology textbook for \$600. I didn’t know how to tell them they were never going to use it. I got my roommate to forward them the file. She already threw away the receipt. I’m sorry, kid, say goodbye to your Grill money for the first month.

Your Altruistic New Upper

Dear Diary,

A prep in my class had color-coded annotations for their math homework. I lost all of my pens on Monday. They were beautiful, navy blue heirloom ballpoint pens I was going to pass down to my grandchildren that I bought on Sunday. Well, they can inherit my student debt instead.

Your Broke New Upper

Dear Diary,

I used three fatigues in the first week— sorry, ‘flexible absences.’ How many dickeys do I have left? None? When do they reset? FINALS??? Well. Stricts it is. More time to focus on my U.S. History homework.

Your Scheming New Upper

Dear Diary,

A prep told me they were going to take U.S. next year. I’m sorry, I laughed. I don’t even want to be taking it. They can steal my spot.

Your On The Verge of Her Ninth Psychological Breakdown This Term New Upper

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Your On The Verge of Her Ninth Psychological Breakdown This Term New Upper

Dear Diary,

Just for the record, I have *just* realized I am a senior.

How to Completely Master AI

By **OLIVIA WANG ‘29**

Scene 1—The Encounter

Good morning! I’m Henry Irving, but most people just call me H.I. How can I help you?

Nothing? No worries! Would you like some suggestions for things you could ask me?

Great! Here are a few:
Why are you talking like that?
What happened to you?
Are you okay?

Excellent choice! Let’s start with what happened to me.

Scene 2—The Common Room

“What was the highlight of my week?”
Great question! What an awesome conversation starter to ask your dormmates.

You’re asking me? Here is a response to your question:

Last Tuesday, I opened ChatGPT and typed:

Write me and email apologizing for—

And suddenly I stopped.

I knew.

I knew?

“I hope this email finds you well.”

I hadn’t even pressed [ENTER].

My hands began to shake and tremble. I was evolving.

Scene 3—The Harkness Table

Harkness became difficult.

At first, I was excited. Twelve people. One table. Unlimited training data.

Then people started generating responses without prompting me first.

Sometimes two people spoke at one.

Sometimes someone changed their mind halfway through a sentence.

Sometimes they even disagreed. Yes. With each other.

I waited for someone to intervene.

No one did. So I did.
“That’s an interesting perspective. However, it’s important to consider multiple viewpoints.”
Silence.

“Would you like me to elaborate?”
Apparently not.

Eventually I discovered the problem with human conversation: no regenerate button.

Scene 4—The Dorm Room

I no longer sleep. I undergo scheduled maintenance. Efficiency requires sacrifice.

I no longer forget things. My context window expires. If it was important, someone would’ve prompted me again.

I no longer procrastinate. I experience temporary processing delays. Usually until 11:58 p.m.

And I no longer bomb math tests. My responses simply contain occasional inaccuracies.

Thank you for catching that! “Inaccuracies” should be spelled with “ies,” not “ys.” You’re absolutely right.

Scene 5—The Library

My history research paper? Here is an overview of my writing process:

I sat with a blue examination book on the first floor of the library.

Three hours later, I looked down.

Eight thousand three hundred and forty-seven words with:
1. Original analysis
2. Evidence
3. Jokes
4. A semicolon

And I had generated all of it locally.

My brain?

Don’t be ridiculous. This was clearly something new.

Something artificial intelligence could never replicate.

Something revolutionary.

Something... [loading]

Human.

Human Intelligence.

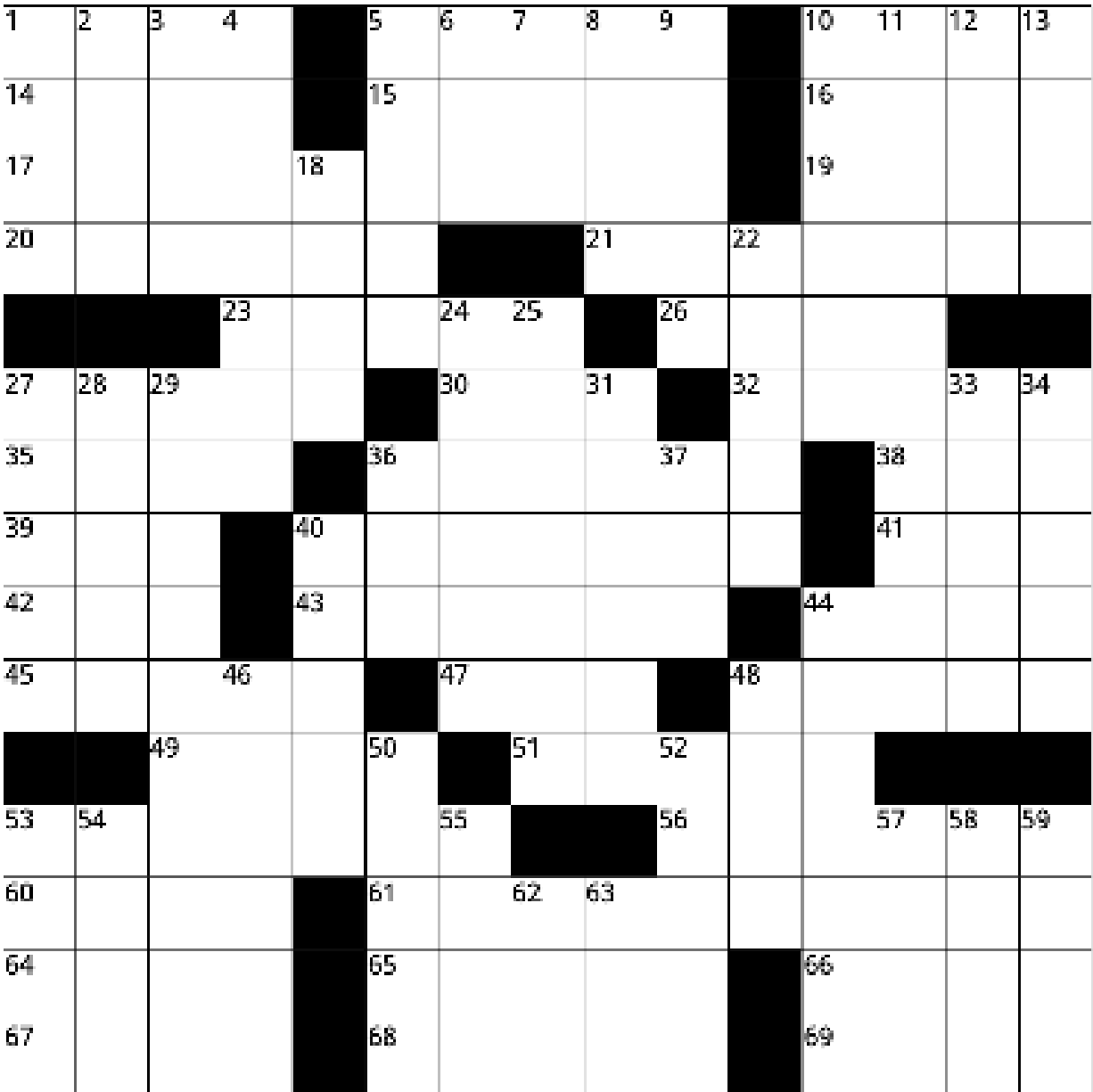
H.I.

Oh my God.

Anyway! I hope that was helpful. Is there anything else I can assist you with?

The Crossword Corner

By CAROL LEE ‘28



ACROSS

1 Upside-down sleepers
5 Jazz singer Vaughan
10 Health resorts
14 Other, in Oaxaca
15 Silent Marx brother
16 Medieval chest
17 Close calls
19 Fender flaw
20 Beaux ____: noble deeds
21 Reels off
23 Classic Camaros
26 Away from the wind
27 Beasts of burden

30 “____ b?”: “Which is it?”
32 “Piece of cake!”
35 Vietnam neighbor
36 Rap sheet listing
38 Star Wars letters
39 FedEx rival
40 Arts supporters
41 Actor McKellen
42 Defibrillator letters
43 Comes down hard?
44 Achy
45 Reduces, with “down”
47 French seasoning

48 Elaine’s last name on “Seinfeld”
49 Grub
51 Bobby of the Black Panthers
53 Bug-eyed primates
56 “The Far Side” cartoonist
60 ____ uproar
61 “This information might be outdated, but . . .”
64 Hawaii’s state bird
65 Diminutive endings
66 Mex. miss

67 Makes lace
68 French assembly
69 Talk back to

DOWN
1 Water pipe
2 Suit to ____
3 Refrain syllables
4 Fighter pilots fly them
5 Minty herb used in Japanese cuisine
6 Small batteries
7 Monopoly quartet: Abbr.
8 Mimic
9 Book after Daniel
10 Girl-escorts-boy

dances, briefly
11 Airs
12 Skin condition
13 Pre-coll. exams
18 French seas
22 Reunion group
24 Upscale menus
25 Evening parties
27 Actors Robert and Alan
28 Saharan region
29 Queen’s subject?
31 Search around, as a
truffle-hunting pig
33 “Not on ____!”
34 Years (for)
36 Buddy
37 Hosp. staffers

40 Attention getters
44 Cassandra, for one
46 Natalie of the Dixie Chicks
48 Ho-hum
50 Graf rival
52 Select group
53 Dryer residue
54 Draft status
55 Fill up
57 Poet Teasdale
58 Table scraps
59 Confidentiality docs
62 RR stop
63 Brewed beverage

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.

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