

The Exonian

The oldest continuously running preparatory school newspaper in America

Phillips Exeter Academy
Exeter, New Hampshire



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Academy Celebrates Lunar New Year on Campus

By CARLY CANSECO, JILLIAN CHENG, and JADEYOO

Every year, many Eastern and Southeastern Asian communities gather to celebrate one of the biggest holidays — Lunar New Year. Usually, these events pertain to large family meals, the exchange of red envelopes, lion dancing, and more. Exeter recently hosted a Lunar New Year event in Elm Street Dining Hall, welcoming all students to enjoy a lion dance and cultural Asian foods. The dining hall was adorned with red lanterns and

stickers, and posters stuck to the walls describing different Asian traditions. Gone were the baked ziti, cheese pan pizza, and steamed broccoli, replaced with traditional foods from all parts of Asia. As more students flooded in from classes, more students packed by tables of treats, and the lines only grew.

Before coming to Exeter, international Exonians had many different ways of celebrating New Year's. "Back home we had fireworks. And we would also watch a TV show together specific to the New Year," lower Wayne Zeng recalled. New Year

celebrations in Shanghai.

"Usually, I would go back to my grandparents' house to celebrate," prep Oscar Zhu said. "We would meet with a lot of different relatives and have big dinners with the whole family. We would also put up a lot of decorations that symbolize good luck in the new year."

While not everyone at Exeter celebrates Lunar New Year, the holiday holds a special place in many students' memories. Senior Alaysha Zhang recalled, "When I lived in China,

LUNAR NEW YEAR, 2



Latest Wetherell Construction Update

By ERIN HAN, JANIBEK SUBKHANBERDIN, and ANDREW YANG

Wetherell has been under construction since the summer of 2023. Now, Wetherell is nearing a year of construction, and students are still curious about its progress. Recently collected responses from faculty and the student body have illustrated people's opinions on the construction. Students and teachers have reflected on the noise disturbances of Wetherell's construction and the effects it has on their daily life.

The project has been making steady progress toward its predicted day of completion in September.

Capital Project Manager Joana Rossi detailed the official construction schedule: "According to the current construction schedule, Merrill Hall will be complete this August. Langdell Hall and the new Dining Hall will be completed this September. The opening of the dining hall to the campus is being finalized so that the dining services team has adequate time to become familiar with the new building."

However, the project has not been clear of setbacks, which caused the overall delay in the schedule. The main setback—unforeseen soils. Rossi explained, "The overall schedule was delayed from unexpected unsuitable soils that were discovered under the old dining hall foundations, which required more soils to be removed during excavation to make a stable base for the new foundations." This discovery required the project to take additional steps of deliberation and planning.

She continued, further noting the uniqueness of the project. "Overall, this project is complicated due to constructing a new building between two existing older buildings. For

all projects, our project team expects some surprises and has processes in place to document and develop solutions quickly."

She continued, "[For instance] the discovery of unsuitable soils impacted the overall schedule and is a good example of issues that can impact a construction project. For this example, Harvey Construction and our design team worked diligently to come up with a solution and then execute but unfortunately, the additional work delayed the completion date."

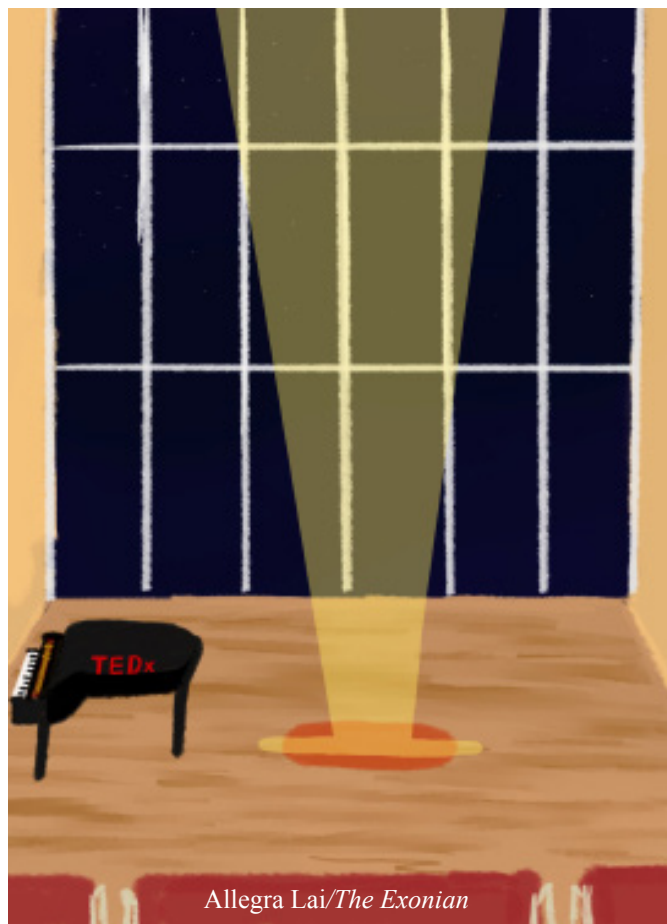
Rossi also depicted the image of the dining hall that would stand on campus in the fall of the next school year, sharing that she is "most excited about the [new] dining area, as it is a large volume of space with an impressive barrel-vaulted ceiling — approximately thirty feet above the dining tables and seats — along with many windows along the walls for natural light and views."

In addition, she mentioned that the new building would provide better experiences for the dining staff. "The dining services department is anxiously waiting for a new facility that will be a better fit for programmatic needs and vastly improve operational efficiencies."

For most teachers, the construction of Wetherell has had minimal impact on their classes. Instructor in Modern Languages Katherine Fair remarked, "The noise has caused minor disruption in my classes. I am on the fourth floor, and my classroom sometimes gets so warm that I have to open windows. Unfortunately, I frequently have to close them again so that everyone can be heard around the table."

Echoing this sentiment, Instructor in Modern Languages Richard Schieber explained that he too sometimes closes

CONSTRUCTION, 2



Allegra Lai/The Exonian



Academy Holds 6th Annual TEDx Event

By ALEX LIM and MARVIN SHIM

On Feb. 2, TEDx-PhillipsExeterAcademy held its 6th annual TEDx speaker event in the Bowld. This year, speeches centered on the theme "Genesis" and students spoke on topics that ranged from biometric data to identity. The event featured six speakers: upper Elaine Qiao, lower Akshara Sandilya, lower Leonardo Lombardi, upper Tania Luchack, lower Sloane Cooper, and lower Robin Dao. The organizational team consisted of twelve different members, with Assistant Director of Student Activities Kelly McGahie serving as co-organizer.

The TEDx organizational team was in charge of managing the event, but the members also served as judges for the application process and coaches for the nominated speakers. Upper, executive board director, and 2022 speaker Jaansi Patel said, "We pick the organizational team. They are the people helping with organizing content, coaching, graphics design, technology, and social media. Together, we picked the speakers, went through helping them to write their speech from start to finish, and coaching them during rehearsals. It's a big time commitment, but it's very fun as well." The team managed to create great chemistry that eventually catalyzed a successful event.

Luchack described the process as an applicant: "I remember nervously walking into the library, giving my little promo part of the speech, and then just hearing great feedback from the selection team. It was just quite an exciting decision because I remember it was the last day of the fall term when they announced who's going to speak, and I got the e-mail. It was a nice end to my first term at

Exeter."

On the other hand, Patel explained, "It's definitely very challenging when there are so many talented people applying, but it's also a great experience just to be able to see all the unique experiences and ideas that people bring. And people have done talks on topics that I never would have thought of before. So it's really nice to be able to give other students a voice to share ideas that they have or work that they've done."

Taking on the ethos of discovering "ideas worth spreading," TEDx presented several TED Talk-like speeches led by six selected Exeter students. Each speaker presented subjects that stretch from vastly different genres and notions, demonstrating their passion for their topic of interest, enlightening others of comprehensive ideas, and explaining the importance of genesis in society. The topics range from geopolitics to feminism to knitting, traversing a diverse world of concepts into six presentations.

"[February 2] was like a whirlwind of various events. I remember being very nervous the whole day and running from the dance company to prepare in my dorm. But I think the fact that we had rehearsals twice a week helps me to come already prepared," Luchack recalled. "It's kind of a stimulus to learn the speech and divide it into chunks in order to be prepared. It was challenging at times but at the end of the day, we were all ready because we put a lot of work in."

Dao reflected on his experience as a speaker presenting in front of a near full auditorium, saying, "I found the experience rejuvenating. I think it's a great opportunity to share such an experience with so many other people. Honestly I felt

TEDX EVENT, 2

News

» TEDx

Read about the six speakers that gave talks at the annual student-organized TEDx event, 1-2.

» LEARNING CENTER

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» EC COMPETITIONS

Read about how students placed in the recent FTC, DECA, and HMMT competitions, 3.

New Year Cont.

you had a lot of days off for Chinese New Year, and then you also got to go home and celebrate with your family and make your own food.”

Exeter attempted to achieve the same home-made food effect by serving handmade dumplings for the New Year celebrations. “Two weeks before the dinner, a group of parents came to campus and hand-made 6,000 dumplings for the dinner,” explained Asian Student Coordinator Kerrie Tinsley-Stribling. The dumpling-making event was also open to any students who wished to participate. “I think that it was really nice that this year they opened up the dumpling-making to the students, because I know in past years, it’s always been parent volunteers and teachers and whatnot,” Zhang said. “And I think that brought more of a home feel to Lunar New Year.”

However, some students expressed some constructive criticism of the event. “I was able to participate in the dumpling making, but [it] didn’t feel the same because it felt more like I was just completing the task of dumpling making than actually making dumplings with my family,” prep Angelina Wang said.

“I think maybe they could have asked the Asian affinity clubs who celebrate Lunar New Year and then used student input more,” prep Hanna Wei said. “It wasn’t personalized to most students.”

On the other hand, Tinsley-Stribling stated, “In order to appropriately and accurately incorporate Asian culture into the Lunar New Year celebration, it was important to recognize and respect the diverse customs and traditions observed in different parts of Asia.”

At Exeter, it is difficult for some to stay connected to their culture since they are so far away from home. For boarding students, home might be an hour away, or even a fourteen-hour flight. “Sometimes, for smaller traditions and events I feel left disconnected, but for Lunar New Year, it was better,” Wei said.

Tinsley discussed the importance of culture at Exeter. “I think celebrating culture is integral to any educational environment, but is especially important here at PEA where we have a microcosm of diversity in a predominantly white area.”

Zheng shared the efforts his friends made to celebrate the Lunar New Year, “In Chinese culture, we put up a huge red poster on the doors during Chinese New Year symbolizing good luck. My friend Logan made some in Chinese class, and he put it on his door as an effort to celebrate with us.” Faculty and students alike have contributed to the Lunar New Year festivities this past weekend.

In the student body, the Asian Advisory Board was also involved in the organization of the event, and they made sure the Elm Lunar New Year celebration was a step up from last year. “There’s a lot more intentionality that came with the way we orient our design of the space. The devil’s in the details, right?” Senior Nhan Phan, a member of the Asian Advisory Board, explained. “Something that we’ve always wanted to do was a dragon dancing performance where we would hire an external company to help us stage a performance.”

Another change from last year’s event was the

translation of food items on the menu. “If you notice on the food labels, we even include translations in the different languages of the countries that celebrate Lunar New Year: Korean and Chinese simplified and traditional Vietnamese, Korean, and Thai. Small details like that help to make this occasion that much more special and accessible to students here, especially international students or students that have heritage and roots within those cultures that are unable to be home celebrated this time of year,” Phan shared.

Many students had a positive experience at the event. “I liked the options of food that the dining hall served, as well as the various Asian desserts and drinks. They reminded me of home and snacks from the Asian grocery stores my parents used to buy when I was little – it was nostalgic,” said senior Catherine Wu.

She also shared her favorite part of the event. “The highlight of this year’s celebration for me was definitely the lion dance performance. It was so nice to see something from Chinese culture in the festival, and the performers were super energetic while interacting with the audience.”

There was a lot done in the process of setting up the event. Tinsley was aiming to set up the event “... to provide a platform for students to share their cultures with the entire community, fostering a sense of inclusion and understanding.” She received help with the logistical coordination of the event from the Asian Advisory Board, [her] colleagues at OMA and Student Activities, as well as from the Dining Hall staff and Facilities. She expressed that “the challenge every year is coordinating schedules because there are so many parts to putting on the dinner. Another challenge ... face[d] is finding ways to make the celebration at least somewhat distinctive from previous years.”

The organizers recognized and respected the diversity of Asian celebrations of the New Year. Tinsley-Stribling noted that “For instance, China celebrates the Lunar New Year as the Spring Festival, while in Korea it is known as Seollal, and in Vietnam, it is celebrated as Tet. By acknowledging these variations, [they] tr[ie]d to ensure that our Lunar New Year festivities are inclusive and authentic representations of Asian culture.”

“Moreover, reaching out to families who may want to share a taste of home with their students can be a great way to enhance the experience. [The] call for contributions resulted in an overwhelming response, with more than 200 pounds of snacks and treats from all over Asia being sent in. This generous selection of goodies was shared with the community, in hopes of fostering cultural understanding and appreciation during the festive season,” she said.

Overall, the Lunar New Year was a success. A lot of careful planning went into the execution and organization of the event, leading to an enjoyable and meaningful celebration that the Exeter community enjoyed. This event was very insightful on various elements of different Asian cultures, and it was inspirational to see all of them included in an event that brings such awareness, knowledge, and entertainment to our community.

TEDx Event Cont.

comfortable onstage,” he remarked.

Prep Jade Yoo, an assistant graphic design director, continued, “We spent a lot of time preparing and a lot of effort went into organizing the event, so it was thrilling to see it all come together. I think the whole community was generally excited to watch their friends and peers speak.”

“It’s really amazing in that it gives students a platform to speak about things that otherwise they might not have a chance to share with the community,” Patel said. “When I spoke in my prep year, it was a very formative experience for me even though I had experience with public speaking. Before that, I had never really spoken to this large of an audience to people of my age or my peers.”

Dao also described,

as per his own experience with TEDx, that the Bowld was “70-80 percent full” during his speech.

“I think the amount of conversations that my speech was able to start and the people who came up to me and found they were inspired by my speech was so interesting to see,” Patel explained. “As I was helping to plan the event now, I still got to see first-hand how people stayed after the event to continue talking with the speakers.”

Lower Avery Im, who attended the TEDx event, stated, “I found it really interesting. The speeches were able to incorporate so many different topics and sciences into our everyday lives using the theme of Genesis, and I learned so much about the differences that make us unique in a way. I saw

how through the hard work, communication, and community the team was able to generate a long lasting impact on everyone.”

“It just sparked conversations that otherwise never would have started if the speakers hadn’t shared their experiences. At least to me, I think it’s really important to be able to highlight those voices, encourage speakers to find their own voice, break out of their comfort zone, and be able to share something on such a big platform,” Patel observed.

Many of those who contributed to the event created a deeper connection with their fellow team members, and some found themselves also falling in love with the idea of TEDx itself. Patel has been a part of TEDx for three years of her Exeter career and

described her growing admiration and appreciation for the event. “It was a full circle moment for me to be able to look at other organizational team members applications and speakers applications, given the fact that I applied as a speaker in my prep year and then as an organizational team member as a lower,” she said.

Luchak said, “I think we bonded very well over the time since we met. We’ve seen each other on such a consistent basis, and all of our talks were really diverging into different directions, but at the same time they all grounded the message of humanity. And I think that’s something beautiful about the TEDx event, having that connection with the audience, regardless of what you’re talking about.”



Speakers Tania Luchak '25 and Akshara Sandilya '26 present their talks in the Bowld.

Photo Courtesy of @pea.stuact

Construction Cont.

his windows to manage background noise from the site. Earlier in the year when the weather was hot, Schieber would at times have to use air purifiers for his classroom, not being able to keep the windows open due to the noise from the construction.

Instructor in English Katie Brule detailed how construction has had a greater impact on her social life than her classes. Teaching in the basement, her classroom is sheltered from the noise and pollution. Brule also explains that for any classes she would take to Wetherell, she now finds it just as easy to take them to Grainger.

Outside of her work life, Brule reflected that, prior to the start of construction, she would often eat dinner with her friends at Wetherell, but now she finds that she does so less often. “I used to go to Wetherell to eat dinner with my friends every night, to avoid some of the Elm Street chaos, but Grainger doesn’t have the same sort of environment and energy.”

When observing the construction’s progress, Brule remarked, “It’s always amazing to me how the construction seems to have nothing happen at all and then suddenly everything happens real-

ly fast.” This seemingly instant, untrackable progress has prompted her to wonder when construction will be completed, finding that that is what takes up most of her mind when asked about its progress.

Some teachers take inspiration from the construction and feel that it elevates their classroom more than it disrupts. For example, Instructor in English Brooks Moriarty detailed, “If anything, the construction has been a boon for curiosity and provided a helpful backdrop to our work a few times.”

Moriarty continued, “On a few occasions I have pointed to work happening outside the window to make a point about a particular writing skill that we are working on in the 9th-grade classes.”

The construction has garnered mixed reviews among the student body. Although some students reflected that the loss of Wetherell largely impacted their dining habits, others commented that the construction didn’t leave a large negative impact on their lifestyle.

Lower Ronald Qiao, a resident of Abbot Hall, stated that, “The most direct impact of the construction was losing the convenience of having

a dining hall 30 seconds away from the dorm; it made me eat in dining halls less compared to Grill or DoorDash. Also, Grainger’s interiors are nowhere near as pretty as Wetherell.”

Qiao also commented on the noise disturbances of the construction. “The construction is sometimes noisy, and I often use earplugs or wear airpods on noise cancellation with rain sounds as a background.”

Kamilah Alabi, a resident of Wheelwright, talked about similar experiences as Qiao. Alabi mentioned, “Due to the temporary dining hall distance from Wheelwright and the time constraints that accompany it, I rarely ever eat breakfast after the renovation. I only have a comfortable breakfast on occasion in Grainger.”

Alabi also spoke to the decrease of activity on the north side of campus since the construction of Wetherell. “With the construction taking up so much room on the quad, many students are forced to change the locations of countless weekend activities, resulting in the north side being empty of students for most of the term’s weekends,” Alabi remarked.

In contrast, Prep Allen Klingel, a resident

of Abbot Hall, noted that construction noises affect him, but he doesn’t think that it has largely impacted his life. “It hasn’t impacted my life whatsoever, except for occasionally distracting me when I do homework during the afternoon, but I just wear earplugs when that happens,” Klingel said.

Prep Kenny Liu from Soule Hall shared a similar reaction. “The construction has mainly made some noise outside Soule, sometimes making it hard to study or concentrate, but it’s not a huge impact. I feel like the progress of the construction is going well. Sometimes I go to the library to study if it’s loud, but the construction has not disrupted life in any major way,” Liu said.

As the construction of Wetherell continues to progress on schedule, students and faculty have agreed that the impact on their lives has been manageable. Classes have suffered minimal disruption and the site’s noise, although at times jarring, has not created any urgent concerns. Most of the construction’s impact concerns Exeter’s social landscape, with both teachers and faculty detailing the problems caused by the temporary relocation of the dining hall to Grainger.

Students Reflect on the Academy's Nightly Learning Center

By ISABEL EVANS,
ALLEGRA LAI, and
ADELLE PITTS

The Learning Center is an important resource for students' learning that provides Exonians with extra help on their academics. Open from 7:00 - 9:15 p.m. on Monday through Thursday nights, students and teachers alike come to tutor students in multiple subjects including languages, writing, and STEM. The location of the Learning Center has changed over the years, previously taking place in various rooms in Phillips Hall. The Learning Center is currently hosted on the Class of 1945 Library's ground floor, with many still adjusting to this change.

Students have volunteered their time to be peer tutors, motivated by their own experiences at the Learning Center as lowerclassmen. "I had Ms. Moriarty as my English teacher during my winter term of my lower year. She is the wonderful director of The Learning Center, so it was through her that I decided to be a peer tutor and help my peers in writing, drawing from the tools and techniques I had gained from within the classroom," shared senior and Head Writing Proctor Parmis Mokhtari-Dizaji. "Being a Head Proctor in the Writing Center, I have taken what I learned from Ms. Moriarty's class and used it to help my fellow peers with their writing, creating a cycle of support and mentorship here at Exeter, following the

saying 'The best way to learn is to teach,'"

"I just wanted to help other students who might need help in a subject. In my prep year, I found the learning center very helpful, so I decided to be a peer tutor in my lower year," Upper Stella Song agreed.

Being a peer tutor offers students additional practice and a deeper understanding of a topic that comes with teaching it to others. Upper Laura Saldarriaga said, "I've been a peer tutor since my prep year, and at first, I started with Spanish. I thought that it would be a good way to practice it while also helping people learn it, and now, I also sometimes do Latin tutoring."

"When students don't have the opportunity to meet with their teacher or need even more support, the Learning Center is almost always able to provide that additional support, and having peers explain advanced concepts in more simple terminology can help students learn," Lower Avaninder Bhagayath added.

The process of becoming a peer tutor is fairly simple. This year, students had to fill out an application and specify the dates and times they are available, allowing for flexibility with students' busy schedules. Additionally, they were required to attend training and informational sessions hosted by current peer tutors. Mokhtari-Dizaji described it as "a very welcoming process, and the

Learning Center has been exceptionally flexible in accommodating peer proctors."

Both Peer Tutors and faculty agree that the Learning Center can provide help outside the classroom that is more curated specifically to the student. Wes LaFountain, a faculty at the Writing Center, said, "The one-on-one aspect allows students to concentrate on that part of the assignment that they feel the need to focus on, in an open-ended environment with a fixed time limit. It's an opportunity to brainstorm new ideas or edit existing ones, either based on in-class feedback or the student's own inclination. It's students taking the initiative to make, in most cases, good work better. The student has time to reflect, with feedback."

Prep Daniel Chen also appreciated the personalized help that the Writing Center provides. "I feel like the tutors at the Learning Center, and at the Writing Center especially, don't really help you write, but rather, they guide you," he said. "You tell them what you want to improve on and what the teacher is looking for, but it's still you doing the writing."

Song added, "I think it's helpful to offer a peer perspective because you're learning something from a student that has either taken the class before or is very proficient in the subject. Sometimes that can be more accessible than a teacher's perspective, and it's also fun to work

with other students on problems."

Students and teachers have varying perspectives on the new location. Upper Sofia Wang said, "I feel like the library is a bad location because it's so noisy and the tables are so small." On any given night, the small circular tables are crowded, especially around the math table(s).

Due to the range of skill levels at the math tables, there is often a long line of people waiting. The current process seems inefficient to some students. Prep Justine Chen stated, "It's just not efficient, especially when a lot of people want to get help for STEM and math. There are a lot of people who go later and need to wait a long time until others are finished."

However, other students and faculty have opposing opinions. Bhagayath said he "thinks the Learning Center is efficient and has all of the resources and structures in place for it to be a great addition to in-class lessons."

Some members of the community also think that the Learning Center's new location is better than the old one. LaFountain stated, "For me, any improvement has been the facility - I like the sort of 'neutral academic territory' that the library represents, as opposed to the classroom vibe, where students already spend a lot of organized time."

"It's a natural fit in many ways for the Learning Centers to be housed in the Library, and I've been grateful to Ms. Wood, Ms. Rohloff, and the rest of the library staff for being such gracious

hosts to us," agreed Instructor in English Genny Moriarty, the Director of the Learning Center. "I think they've been pleased at the number of students coming in to use the library even when the centers are closed. While we may still have some fine-tuning to do, particularly in terms of managing volume on busy nights and balancing the needs of students eager to collaborate with those in need of quiet study spaces, I'm really pleased at how well we've been able to partner with one another to extend learning outside the classroom,"

"There is always room for growth, and this is one area where I'd like to improve. There are nights in which the STEM Center gets very busy, for example, and I'm hoping to add more math tutors down the road so that we can adequately meet students' needs," continued Moriarty. "And because our wonderful Peer Tutors are volunteers with busy schedules of their own, we do occasionally feel short-staffed when scheduling conflicts create gaps in coverage. We are looking into ways of handling the waiting times and hope to see some improvements in that area soon! In the meantime, I'll keep encouraging younger students to use the center from 7-8 and older students to use it from 8 - 9:15 in order to avoid bottlenecks."

This new location gives students a break from the classrooms, but it seems to pose a problem in terms of efficiency and space, as stated by J. Chen and Wang.

Additionally, many people have expressed

opinions that more students should come to the Learning Center. Saldarriaga said, "With the languages, not a lot of people go because language takes a lot of time and it requires more memorization as opposed to other topics where you need somebody to look over your paper. But I think it's a helpful resource and having somebody explain it to you one-on-one, especially if you don't get a concept."

Chen agreed that visiting the Learning Center can have great benefits, and more students should consider showing up. "Each day there are eight spots in the Writing Center, and it's usually not even full. I feel like there are definitely more people who are missing out on the opportunity."

The Learning Center is not only a treasured space for extra academic support, but a space for Exonians to connect with faculty and other peers. "For students seeking help, it provides a supportive environment that encourages independent problem-solving. On the flip side, the peer tutoring system at the Learning Center helps students who offer support by enhancing their understanding. Developing the skill of applying one's knowledge while working collaboratively with others is valuable, and I believe the peer tutoring system and the Learning Center really help foster this skill," Mokhtari-Dizaji said. "I've built strong connections with the other proctors on duty with me, and the support we get from the Learning Center has been really helpful. It feels like we are all a big family!"



Harvard-MIT Mathematics Tournament

As a team, Oron Wang, Benny Wang, Albert Lu, Evan Fan, Alan Bu, Andrew Carratu, and Michael Lu [from left to right] placed 3rd in the Sweepstakes, 4th in the Guts, and 5th in the Team Rounds at the prestigious biannual competition, also exhibiting impressive results in the individual rounds. In the Overall Individual Awards, O. Wang placed 15th and Carratu 17th, in the Algebra and Number Theory Round, O. Wang placed 5th, Fan 21st, and Carratu 25th, in the Geometry Round, O. Wang placed 10th, and in the Combinatorics Round, Carratu placed 25th. [February 17, 2024]



FIRST Tech Challenge NH State

36 Exonians in three teams represented the Academy at the state NH-FTC robotics competition in Concord, NH. Team VERTEX, consisting of students Noah Twilley, Byran Huang, Avaninder Bhagayath, Owen Wood, Kenny Liu, Riya Tyagi, Alinne Romero-Torres, Deborah Ang, Brenda Romero-Torres, Teddy Duncker, Minghan Zou, Eli Pratt, Charles Potjer, Hanna Wei, and Evan Garcia, won both the Promote and Inspire Awards. They will proceed to the World Championships in April in Houston. [February 17, 2024]

Distributive Education Clubs of America NH State

Many Exonians traveled to Manchester, NH, to compete in various categories where they exemplified leadership and entrepreneurship skills in marketing, finance, hospitality and management. Among the many Exonian winners:

Steven Chen, Dhruv Nagarajan, Lucy Jung, and Elle Perry were named the Quizbowl Champions.

S. Chen and Nagarajan placed first in the Start-Up Business Plan Category.

Erin Chen placed first in the Hotel and Lodging Category.

Aubrey Silvestri placed first in the Principles of Hospitality Category.

[February 16, 2024]



Students Win Top Awards at Competitions

» SOTW

Read about the Senior of the Week for this issue, Alaysha Nianwen Zhang 5.

» SUBCONT SOCIETY

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» FIRESIDE CHAT

Read a witty dialogue between Instructors in Mathematics John Mosley and Tim Whittemore, 6.

Faculty of the Week: Kent A. McConnell

By SAM ALTMAN, JOSEPH KIM, LAUREN LEE, and MARVIN SHIM

A teacher? An artist? A woodworker? Perhaps all of them!

Dedicated and well respected is the chair of the History Department, Dr. Kent McConnell. A devoted teacher with a particular interest in 19th-century American history, K. McConnell is admired and respected by faculty and students alike. However, he is much more than only a passionate historian and a supportive instructor.

K. McConnell is admired by many of his students and advisees for his relaxed, steady nature. Lower and advisee Neal Veeranna explained, "He's willing to take shots at us, he is a really fun guy to be around. What makes him such a good teacher and advisor is that he had a nature to keep everything balanced. He can be funny, but he also has a seriousness that surfaces when he needs it."

"He is very passionate about what he does. He will always go the extra step to make sure something is done right and with quality," lower Thad McConnell, his son, said. "I admire his ability to balance a challenging work life, yet still come home and provide for his family. If he's had a bad day, he doesn't let those feelings carry over to the other spectrum."

Senior Colin Jung agreed. "You always gain something after a conversation with him. That's something you can't say about most people."

"He's a very sincere individual, and that's something to be valued. I think it's hard to come across people who are entirely genuine and passionate in the way he is. I was fearful of adulthood myself because I felt that most adults in my life didn't have the sort of curiosity for life he did," senior Ghena Kubba said. "But Mr. McConnell still had that spark, and I think that's really inspiring to see. He works hard because he genuinely cares about the things that he works for."

Instructor in History Bill Jordan recalled several fond memories of the Christmas parties K. McConnell holds every year to celebrate with the department. "He's a great colleague. He steps up and does the work. But even before he was chair, he would host the Christmas party of the year, and it was the best Christmas party we've ever had. Their home is so beautiful and the way they put it together is so warm. I, and I am sure everyone, always really enjoyed those."

K. McConnell is also praised by many for being open to the needs of his students.

"While I was writing my history paper, I got sick for multiple days," upper and advisee Will Murphy, and a former student, said. "Afterwards, I met with him in class, stayed a bit after class, and asked him about my predicament. He was very kind and very caring, open to giving me an extension. He was also welcome for me to meet with him multiple times outside of class if I needed any help getting organized or catching up."

Others agreed. "If he cares about something, he really cares about it. I appreciate his passion and just his commitment to work," Kubba said. "I respect that he treats students like human beings. I find that a lot of teachers can sometimes see you as a young person in a patronizing way. He may also feel the same way, but he never lets it infiltrate in the way he's talking to you or the way he sees you. He's actually listening to you fully and looking at you completely for who you are."

"He's a wonderful teacher," upper and advisee Joonyoung Heo said. "I can't quite describe it, but when you tell him about a problem, he gives you all the confidence you need that he can help you solve it. He understands his students and appreciates the things they say."

Unsurprisingly, this trend reflects his own time with his family. "He has been about as big of a life influence as they come," T. McConnell said. "If I do something wrong, rather than pointing out what was wrong with it and its negatives, he's more focused on teaching me in a meaningful way about what I can do so I don't make the same mistake again. He's invested in my life, doing the little things like asking how my day was every single day."

Those who have been inside K. McConnell's classroom know there's something special about it.

"He and I were chatting in my room, rather than his, the other day, and all of a sudden I looked around and said, 'Oh my gosh, I wish we were in his room. It's so much cozier up there,'" Jordan said. "It feels almost warm in his classroom, and it makes me feel like perhaps I should get a few lamps for mine."

Jordan continued, "You know, I just love sitting in his rocking chair and chatting for a while in his room. He has all sorts of stuff on his walls, even rock stars. He's really into Bruce Springsteen and Bob Dylan, and I think he even used to have some memorabilia from them on the walls. Overall, he's very multidimensional."

"It's probably the best classroom on campus, in my opinion," Heo said. "You look at the walls and the photographs — you have Lincoln and Sherman watching over you, Thaddeus Stevens above the projector, even a bust of Charles Sumner on his desk — and it just feels right. It's the perfect setting for history when you sit down at the table."

"And I'm almost certainly reading into it too much, but I like to think he made an intentional choice to have a whiteboard on one side and a blackboard on the other," Heo continued. "It's a juncture between the old and the new, a sort of devotion to traditional, tried-and-tested methods of history even as he adapts to the times."

Beyond his classroom, K. McConnell's classes are well respected and thoroughly enjoyed by many of his students, due largely to his ability to lead discussions at the table.

"He's pretty hands-off," Kubba reflected. "He definitely does let students share their own



Dr. McConnell stands in front of his favorite tree, the oak.

Courtesy of Joonyoung Heo

thoughts, but he's incredibly talented at teasing the more important ideas out. In Harkness, oftentimes we'll come to a point where we're a bit confused or we've come to a critical point of contention in the content, and a lot of teachers are very passive about it, but Dr. McConnell is far more direct, and I really appreciate that communication because it's key to our learning."

"He asks a lot of questions that are a lot like fast facts, a fill-in-the-blank sort of thing," Kubba continued. "He'll mention the Jamestown settlement, for example, and ask, 'Well, when was that?' Then we answer, and he'll go on to make his point. Essentially, he ensures that we're engaging with the material, and I think more teachers could do that."

Jung also discussed McConnell's Harkness methods. "A lot of instructors allow Harkness to become anarchy," he said. "Dr. McConnell makes sure that doesn't happen — he makes sure that we take something away from each class, almost as we would during a lecture. I think that's a very positive thing, that we always have a concrete thing to learn."

"He is the finest history instructor I've ever had, and it's not particularly close," Jung continued. "I would say that he understands his role very well as an instructor: neither to lecture, nor to sit back and do nothing. Instead, it's ultimately to conduct. And honestly, I feel that a lot of history teachers think that the epitome of Harkness is indeed to simply sit back and just let people take away whatever conclusions they'll take away

from whatever arbitrary readings are assigned. On the contrary, whenever Dr. McConnell assigns readings, they seem somewhat disconnected at first, but he always has an underlying point or message or lesson that he is trying to teach, and he always makes sure that lesson comes across. That's what makes his class special: he has a direction he knows is interesting and worthwhile, and he conducts the class as such."

Others felt the same way about K. McConnell's pedagogy. "There's something about the way that he conducts himself in class that's really quite unique," Heo said. "He knows exactly what to say, what information to present to string along a path of discovery for his students. He knows exactly when silences are productive, and when they're not. That's because he knows exactly what he wants his students to get out of the class, and he knows what he has to do to help them get there."

Heo continued, "Take the Salem Witch Trials, for example. The typical approach is fairly one-dimensional: the people went crazy, saw witches everywhere, and a lot of them were killed. It takes a great deal of control and experience to help the class see more than that, and at the same time not let the conversation devolve into confusion. There was self-interest, certainly, but there was also genuine fear; there was religious dogma, but also rationality. All this to say, it really is a complicated subject, and I've found there's no one better who can guide a class through each of

the nuances than him."

Jordan also commented on his teaching style. "I think that in his courses, he tends to look at history through a more philosophical lens," he said. "When he's teaching about a given topic, he always has kids reading about underlying philosophical issues. There are a lot of students who really just enjoy that. I think particularly bright students are attracted to him."

Heo also discussed McConnell's practices with regard to measuring and improving Harkness ability. "He has several 'tracking' sessions throughout the term where he sits at his desk and simply watches the discussion unfold. He tracks what everyone says, timestamps turning points, records important themes identified and missed, and so much more. Then, after it's over, he tells us what we did well and what we didn't — perhaps where the conversation derailed, where a certain idea was discarded too quickly, et cetera."

Even beyond his teaching, K. McConnell deeply influences the lives of his advisees, every Wednesday and in between. "As a department chair, Dr. McConnell is very busy but is always willing to talk to us," upper Drew Manderlink said. "If I'm struggling in a class he always prompts me to meet with the teacher and seems to genuinely care about my success."

For his advising group, the Wednesday meeting period is a safe haven from their often chaotic academic and athletic schedules. "During advisory, I feel comfortable talking about whatever is on my

mind," lower Neal Veeranna said. "He is a relaxed person, so talking to Dr. McConnell is very easy. He is not afraid to speak his mind and expects you to be straightforward when interacting with him."

Upper Andrew Voulgarelis highlighted the extent to which McConnell is receptive and responsive to the needs of his group. "Whatever we need from him, he is always there for us. If we show up to advisory all suffering from a heavy workload, he will let us use the time as an advisory work period. If we look stressed, he will often put on a movie, offer up some candy for us to play a fun game of poker with, or take us outside for a walk."

K. McConnell advocates for his advisees in all areas of life at Exeter. Upper William Murphy commented: "He was very helpful organizing absences with the deans when I would be missing a Saturday class for lacrosse. He was just always on my side, and was very kind and receptive to my situation."

Further, McConnell takes special care to celebrate his advisees. "Whenever one of us has a birthday, he will bake their favorite treat, either brownies or cake or cupcakes, and bring it to us during advisory as soon as he can," Murphy said.

But even his stellar role as department chair and advisor does not entirely define his life, with all the time he spends as a loving husband and father, and all his hobbies and pastimes.

"One thing is that I love doing is wood-working and fly fishing,

Senior of the Week: Alaysha Nianwen Zhang



Senior Alaysha Zhang smiles in front of the back steps of the Academy Building.

Courtesy of Bianka Laufer

By ERIN HAN, WILLIAM INOUE, and FORREST ZENG

It's a cold Friday evening, but a small cluster of students walks along the icy paths, bustling with laughter and conversation. They have been walking for nearly an hour, talking about academics, life, and clubs. These hour-long walks that snake from one end of the Exeter campus to another are not a rare occurrence — after all, in senior Alaysha Zhang's mind, walks are one of the most underappreciated methods of spending time with friends. Sporting a black puffer jacket, Zhang walks ahead with her arms linked with those of her friends, while the laughter and conversation flow freely.

Co-editor-in-chief of *Pendulum*, co-head of the Chinese Student Organization (CSO), and co-chair of the Student Council's Tech Committee, Zhang spent part of her childhood in China, before moving to Los Angeles, CA. She is a student listener in Amen Hall and a runner for the girls varsity track team. Previously, Zhang was a Life Editor for *The Exonian* and was also involved in the *Exie Blog*. She enjoys playing card games with her friends and graphic design.

Zhang first arrived at Exeter as a prep in September 2020, when the Academy was conducting classes entirely online. That made initially for a difficult transition.

"All our classes started off as Zoom classes," Zhang described. "For me, that was a pretty tough transition. When I first came here, and we were doing online classes in our dorms, I'd basically just stay inside most of the time and not go outside to do those prep activities that I should've been doing." She added, "But I think things have changed a lot since."

Over the years, Zhang has become involved in various clubs, including *Pendulum*, Exeter's liter-

ary art magazine. At the moment, she is an editor-in-chief for *Pendulum*.

Senior and fellow editor-in-chief Hope Gantt described how Zhang first became involved as a lower. "Alaysha and I met each other through mutual friends our lower year, and we've worked together in *Pendulum* ever since," Gantt said. "We plan meetings and design our annual publication together. She works hard to spread awareness about writing and art, especially because they're often overlooked subjects at Exeter."

Senior and co-editor-in-chief Lauren Kim commented on Zhang's dedication to the club. "Especially with *Pendulum*, she's been very dedicated. She's always the most proactive one in our meetings."

Friends commented on Zhang's passion towards writing as her art form. "She likes sharing her knowledge through the form of writing, whether it be literary writing, poetry or other forms of creative writing. She really knows how to share her voice through writing and expressing that on paper," close friend and senior Catherine Wu said.

Describing the experience of reading Zhang's senior meditation, she continued. "I remember reading her meditation, and it was this really well-written piece about what she thought love was, and the different forms of love and relationships in her life. I thought it was one of the best pieces of writing I had read before, and it was a great way to get to know things I didn't know about her before and get to know her on a deeper level."

Senior Eric Wu similarly remarked, "I know she is a passionate writer and appreciator of art. It's clear that she loves life and has a hopeful outlook."

Zhang's drive and kindness carry into her position as co-head of the Student Council Tech Committee. Upper and fellow committee co-head Eric Li said, "Alaysha is a

very accommodating person. There were moments when I couldn't fulfill a deadline and she would fill me in. She's very forgiving, she's very kind and she's a wonderful person to work with."

In the committee, Zhang manages graphic design for committee projects. "She designs the website's visuals and form," Li said. "I make her design come true as a program."

In addition, Zhang serves as a co-head of the Chinese Student Organization (CSO), where she works to foster an inclusive affinity space, and is also greatly involved with the planning processes of club-held events.

As a fellow co-head, E. Wu described her work, "Alaysha is a great communicator in CSO. She has been prolific with talking with advisors and bridging the gap between club members and leadership."

He posed an example where Zhang's collaboration and hard work were apparent, "For our Chinese New Year celebration, to walk in the room and see everything come together — in part because of Alaysha's incredible coordination — was extremely gratifying and meaningful."

Zhang is a student listener in Amen Hall and loves connecting with her friends in the dorm. C. Wu, a close friend and dormmate said, "We'd hang out and spend a lot of time in the dorms with each other. Sometimes we would sit in the hallways, in the common room, since we were living on the same floor."

Upper Freddie Chang highlighted a specific activity that Zhang enjoys in her dorm. "Alaysha and her friends play 'Bridge,' a kind of card game, a lot in their rooms," Chang said. "They do that every night, and it requires a lot of good teamwork skills."

In addition, her close friends lauded Zhang's second-hand nature to express her deep care and

support for her friends. C. Wu shared, "I really feel that she cares deeply about the people around her and wants the best for the people around her, and will do many things to make sure her friends know that she's supporting them." She continued, "Whether it's by going to their sports games, getting them food when she goes to town, buying them random things from Grill, or bringing crazy jokes to the dinner table whenever we're all together. In all these different ways, I feel like she [expresses how much she] really, really cares about the people around her."

In addition to routine walks or baking sessions in the Amen Hall kitchen, Zhang enjoys the time she spends with her friends in her day-to-day also. "Sometimes I follow my friends into the music building and they practice. I'm not a very good musician, but a lot of my friends are and I always think it's nice to have that in the background," she said.

Zhang has made a lasting mark on the Exeter community with her warm presence. Gantt described, "Alaysha brings a lot of joy to the Exeter community. You can hear her laugh from across the dining hall and she's always the first to smile and wave when you pass her on the path."

She continued, "I admire Alaysha's ability to see the best in people. Even if she doesn't know someone well, she always has something kind to say about them. She's pretty sentimental, but it means that she cares, a lot, and values the little things."

Close friend and senior Sadie Shang echoed, "She's caring, and she's really good at communicating. She just [has this ability] to make everybody around her feel comfortable."

Shang and others also recognized Zhang's spirit of perseverance. Senior and friend Harrison McGovern shared, "[Some-

thing] I admire about Alaysha is her perseverance, and how she never seems to give up."

McGovern mentioned the notoriously early meeting time for *Pendulum*, "There was a moment when I was about to go to *Pendulum*, but then I realized it would be at 10 a.m. on a Sunday, and no one would go to a club meeting at 10 a.m. on a Sunday."

Shang added, "She's there for every meeting so she wakes up at around nine every Sunday. That's impressive."

Close friends also shared that there never was a dull moment when spending time with Zhang. "She's really just an interesting person to be around with," shared Shang. "She's never boring."

E. Wu agreed, "We say that people could be high maintenance or low maintenance. I think she's the maintainer. She is always there for people, and always exudes a positive and fun energy that can really brighten up any room she is in." He added, "She always thinks of whimsical games and spontaneous ideas that are truly unique." He proceeded to offer some examples, "Nobody else has ever asked me to griddy all the way to Stillwell's or try to speak to each other with noise-canceling headphones on."

C. Wu also described Zhang, "I think she's very kind and soft, but also bubbly and cheerful — and also kind of a weird person. Weird in a good way though. She makes super weird jokes and will make weird faces or weird gestures, but it's all in a funny way. Whenever I talk to her, she never fails to do something or say something that makes me laugh and it just really adds a bit of joy or spark to my life every day, which I admire about her."

Zhang and her close friends agreed that over her four years at Exeter, she has grown in different ways from her prep self, into the person she is to-

day. "As a prep and lower, I was more on the shyer side," Zhang remarked. "Now, looking back, I've established so many more connections, and I sort of wish I did that earlier."

Zhang continued, reflecting on the diverse aspects of her growth at Exeter, "I think...[I've grown] in terms of being more confident in myself and my place here at Exeter...But besides that, I think there's another aspect of self confidence that [I have developed, regarding both my personality and relationships with friends.] I think that I'm a very emotional and sentimental person in general, more so than some of my friends who are more logical people, and I think that shows in many different ways. I used to always be scared that, if I shamed my friends that I cared about them a lot, they might not reciprocate."

She continued, "But I think that now, I've gotten to a place where I'm comfortable because I'm sure about my relationship with my friends, and our friendship is established enough to a point where that day-to-day reciprocation doesn't matter, and it's not a thing you keep track of." Zhang shared that she believes this aspect has touched the other angles of her growth. "I feel like I'm more comfortable in doing what I want to, and expressing myself how I want to, because I'm also confident in my relationship with [my close friends]. That's something that I'm pretty proud of."

C. Wu echoed, "She's very different than she was the way when I first met her in her lower year. I think she's grown to be more independent and mature, and definitely more determined."

She concluded, "Alaysha is someone who I look at and just wanna smile or laugh and be like, 'Oh my God, she's doing it again. She's being Alaysha again and she's just being herself — her usual funny self.'"

Fireside Chat

By ALEX LIM

Beards, math, and fatherhood: the only three things in common with Instructors in Mathematics Tim Whittemore and John Mosley. If you've ever been in one of their classes, you have most definitely heard of their acquaintanceship. Although the witty comments have caused two of campus's favorite math teachers to be known as an iconic duo, they claim that even considering it a relationship is a stretch and that an "acquaintanceship" is a much better description.

Quote Mosley, "Relationship is a strong word, I would say that I'm... acquainted with Whittemore."

Whittemore added, "Relationship seems to imply some respect of some sort. Which is... a stretch? We just happen to teach in the same department. Same building, even."

Through this interview, I was able to learn that Mosley and Whittemore used to be in neighboring classrooms on the third floor, before Mosley switched into a classroom in the basement.

"I'd say I prefer this classroom over my last," remarked Mosley, before the interview with Whittemore.

"Why is that?"

"Because it is the farthest away from Timmaus Whittemore."

Although it was clear that they may not want to spend time together, I wondered, "If forced to, what activity would they choose to do together?"

"Well it definitely wouldn't be by choice," said Whittemore, "Maybe...solitaire? Not sardines...sardines is the one where you look for people."

"I'm not so sure I would look for you," responded Mosley.

"Maybe the game the seniors play in the spring."

"The one with the water guns?"

"Yeah, but in the end they're just trying to avoid each other. So, that game, but just that last part. Day six of assassins."

What could cause two people to want to avoid each other so much? Is this person even significant in anyway to them? Well, To simply put it, Mosley would describe Whittemore in three

words, the "Other math teacher."

"Ditto," agreed Whittemore, before thinking of a more descriptive way of putting it, "We are both bearded, teach math, and have 1 to 3 sons, but that's all."

Both Mosley's and Whittemore's students have experienced some conflict within this acquaintanceship. For example, once, when Whittemore was subbing for Mosley, he told the class that Mosley was not there because he was attending a 24-hour pushup competition. When, in reality, Mosley was NOT indeed at a 24-hour pushup competition.

Another story containing false information is one that Whittemore enlightened me with. "Once, [Mosley] came into my classroom. It was fall term, so maybe it was 12T, which means they were new students and were fairly respectful. So, I still had the Whittemore machine going. And then, Mosley wrote, 'Whittemore's first name is Timmaus' on the board. After that, wasn't quite able to control the class, and have them work."

Laughing, Mosley responded, "That's not true, they definitely ignored what I was doing."

Quote Whittemore, "Most people do."

Prep Mohammad Hassan, within his first two terms at Exeter, has had both Whittemore and Mosley as his math teachers. "Mosley and Mr. Whittemore are frenemies who speak of each other as enemies, but in reality, when interacting with each other they act as best friends," he revealed. "I've seen them interact, and they constantly contradict each other and laugh at the same time, which is not the enemy behavior we have been led to believe from each of them. Mosley once entered our class with Whittemore, and warned us to be wary of him, and then returned to his classroom. I would describe them as frenemies who are definitely an iconic duo."

Two "well acquainted" bearded math teachers with sons, Mosley and Whittemore, are indeed an iconic duo on campus, however much they deny it. Their clever pranks and witty comments never fail to get the class laughing...or scratching their heads as to whether they

Club Spotlight: Exeter Subcontinent Society



By AMANI SHETTY and KAI GOWDA

Every Wednesday, from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m., a mix of students pour into EPAC Club Room A. The smell of savory samosas and the blasting vibrant Bollywood music fills the room while Exonians socialize together.

Subcontinent Society, or Subcont for short, is a club for South Asians to interact and engage in cultural activities with fellow peers.

"The word SubContinent refers to an area of South Asia that covers a variety of different countries. These countries are India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and Pakistan. The SubContinent Society here at Exeter is an affinity space for South Asians, while also serving as a cultural club to non-South Asians on campus. We host events, discussions and overall, just enjoyable meetings for members to stop by. We want to provide a space for people to be comfortable and be amongst others with similar backgrounds, cultures, and values," co-head Izyaan Burney said.

The coheads of Subcont include senior Advay Nomula, snioer Nupur Malhotra, senior Eamin Ahmed, upper Siri Bompelli, and lower Izyaan Burney, along with the club advisor, Instructor in Religion Hina Muneeruddin.

"I joined Subcont Society because I wanted to be in community with others culturally similar to me, and learn more about my culture," said Nomula.

"I joined Subcontinent Society because I wanted to be able to connect with people of similar backgrounds and cultures," Burney also expressed.

At Subcont, many students have connected through shared loves for food, culture, games, and music.

"I've formed personal relationships at Subcont, a lot of my friends were some of the first people I met at the club during my prep year," said Burney.

"I've formed a stronger connection with those who've been brought up like me and look like me, and have found that we are very similar in some ways and very different in others. It's definitely a form of grounding I have on this campus, which is something important and Exeter," echoed Nomula.

Upper Aveen Burney also explained how she has established "many relationships with people I would have never, I have also gotten to know a lot of entertaining lowerclassmen due to the club, and I consider them my younger siblings."

The community has remained very friendly, welcoming, and warm. "The community is pretty strong I'd say. The

active community is a little smaller, but people do show up to the big events, and they're very fun. Our meetings and events are always welcoming, and it's important to note that we're not an affinity space, but a cultural club, so anyone and everyone is welcome," said Nomula.

The atmosphere of Subcont meetings varies by each meeting, from more lively dancing, to chilling while watching Indian Matchmaking. Meetings include a variety of different events, whether it be cultural activities or just bonding within the community. Nomula said, "Sometimes there's an activity at a meeting, but a lot of times we might just talk or watch something. In the fall in spring we've had cricket and badminton meetings too. It's a really relaxed environment. There are also special food meetings and other events, probably something special like that happens once a month."

Being away from home and missing cultural cuisine is a struggle, so being a part of Subcontinent Society makes it possible to enjoy culture even from afar. Subcontinent Society hosts events where food is showcased to be enjoyed by everyone. Nomula said, "I really liked our pani puri stand at Relay for Life, it was fun to share the culture,

and just felt like the epitome of the Subcontinent."

Food brings people together, and as seen this year club attendance increases when food is offered. Burney said, "We just had our Maggi/ChatPatta ramen event a week and a half ago. My favorite event so far this year has been the Maggi/ChatPatta ramen event. We achieved the most club attendance in a while, hosting 40 students to some warm Maggi or ChatPatta ramen. It was great to connect with returning members, while also seeing new faces."

Subcontinent society tries to host a variety of events throughout the year. Coming up the rest of this year are a variety of fun events. Nomula said, "Our next event is going to be a chapati/roti making night, possibly followed by a dance/karaoke night, movie night, and more in the spring. We also just got a carom board that we could do some tournament stuff with in the future. We have a lot of ideas floating around."

With such a large community, it can be hard to have everyone included within meetings, to do so larger scale events hope to be offered. Burney said, "Hopefully by the end of this term, or the start of the next, we are hoping to host a SubCont dance."

FOTW Cont.

and I also build furniture for different projects," K. McConnell said. "I was also pretty good at basketball when I was your age."

He continued, "My wife and I have owned three historic homes that I've basically renovated down to like the studs. I've had homes up on hydraulic jacks: I can do the wiring, I can do all the siding, I can do all the plumbing. There's very little I could not tackle. I also play guitar and harmonica and used to do that in coffee shops in grad school. In general, I think I can be quite fun to be around, but I don't necessarily evoke that on campus because I tend to do that more around my peers, people my age."

Jordan has also observed K. McConnell's devotion to his work outside the classroom. "He's still active in his capacity as a researching historian, which is incredibly

difficult when you're also teaching here and raising a family. He must have a lot of amazing energy. He's also constantly renovating his homes, for example, I know he had a place up in Maine and he fixed it up. He's Mr. Handyman. He does wood-working and he's a very devoted father."

Jordan continued, "I don't know if others know this, but I was certainly surprised to find out that he plays the guitar. You know, he's got a guitar at his house and he looks so serious and scholarly. He's always got a tie and a suit on, so I can't quite picture him playing guitar, and it seems like it's not quite in keeping with the rest of the picture, but it's part of him nonetheless."

K. McConnell also regularly chats with students in his free time if they so choose. "You always gain something

after a conversation with him, and that's really quite rare," Jung reminisced. "I've talked to him outside of class somewhat often, about pragmatic matters like classes or college, topics entirely unrelated to academics like personal things and restaurant recommendations, and about intellectual debates: theology, philosophy, law, and much more."

Kubba agreed. "I work in his classroom all the time, and we always talk together about whatever we're thinking about. Sometimes it's a continuation of the discussion in class, sometimes it's about philosophy (I think we talked about Jackie Kennedy one time, too), and sometimes it's just random jokes."

Kubba continued, "We have very different views and disagree 99 percent of the time, but it's not about that. Honestly, I really enjoy having conversations with him, because not only do I want to hear what he has to say, but if I'm going to believe what

I believe, I want to be able to check off all the boxes, to engage in discussion with someone who disagrees with me. He really pushes me to do that, and I've grown so much as a result."

K. McConnell himself reflected on the time he spends outside of class with students. "It's not uncommon to have conversations with students well after the class is over, and that's what I love. It's remarkable, really, and it's very enjoyable and very rewarding. Those are the types of students that are thriving. On the flip side, I have worked with students, who, given my 27 years of teaching experience, I know need help."

"For example, a few years ago I had a student who was really insightful," he continued. "What she said in class was always on the mark, but her comments were infrequent. So, at one point in term, I asked her if we could just agree that she could talk about her notes with me, because she took voluminous

amounts of them in class. That's how I kind of recognized the brilliance of this mind sitting before me."

K. McConnell is also constantly involved with historical research and literary projects, particularly to do with the Civil War period.

"I guess I'm at the stage in my life where it comes a little bit easier now, which is why I enjoy writing and researching," he said. "So, I'm working on a large book and we'll have that published in probably a year or two."

In addition, Heo reflected on how K. McConnell has helped him with his own research projects. "I've developed several research projects and lengthy papers with his help. He's read drafts and given me ideas to restructure or reframe arguments, and he's given me a great deal of advice on conducting extensive research."

At the end of the day, K. McConnell is a highly respected member of the community. In his capacity as an

instructor, he brings to life the nuances and intricacies of history for his students. For his advisees, and really for everyone else, he is an invaluable source of advice and academic counsel. And, outside the classroom, from fly-fishing to the guitar, he is a man of many different interests.

"He's the best instructor I've had in seventeen years, for what it's worth," Heo said. "And I do mean it. He's a wonderful teacher and an adviser and an extraordinary human being."

"I used to find him quite intimidating, and I think many still do," Jung said. "But if you get to know him, he's truly a very personable, very caring person. My impression now is that he's very much an adept scholar. He knows and has studied an extraordinary amount, and he has a great passion for intellectual inquiry. But most of all, he is a consummate teacher with a great passion for making his students better thinkers and better people."

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» PFAS LEGISLATION

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Are We Reliving 2020?



Courtesy of Detroit Free Press

By JOSEPH KIM '26

In November 2020, the people of the United States chose between two presidential candidates: Joe Biden of the Democratic Party and Donald Trump of the Republican Party. Four years later, things look similar on the surface. The same two candidates are running and are most likely to be the nominees of their respective parties. At the same time, so many events have changed the political landscape since the last election cycle, and the situation for Biden and Trump is unrecognizably different.

Immediately following Biden's victory in the 2020 election, Donald Trump disputed the integrity of the election results. Within months, a mob of extremist Trump supporters stormed the Capitol building in a historic insurgency. This event marked the first time an internal insurrection captured a government building as important as the U.S. Capitol. With the multiple impeachment trials on Donald Trump and the eventual convictions, his slate has been muddled with dirt.

The United States' outlook on foreign affairs has also become much more partisan. The Biden administration made the controversial decision to end decades-long American involvement in Afghanistan. The Russian invasion of Ukraine completely altered the American attitude towards European affairs. Foreign policy opinion became increasingly polarized as many Republicans criticized American aid to Ukraine, while the majority of the Democratic Party fervently supported it. However, the war in the Gaza Strip led to more nuanced division between Americans, although President Biden attempted to limit the traditional policy of unconditional support for Israel. Of course, Biden and Trump's attitudes towards the U.S.-Mexican border could not be more different, with Trump advocating for intervention to sooth the current illegal immigration crisis while Biden voices for leniency on border control. Overall, the two major parties have become increasingly distanced in foreign policy. Other social policies have also further polarized the two parties. Events such as the COVID-19

pandemic, the murder of George Floyd, and the overturning of *Roe vs. Wade* have ever heightened social tension. With the rise of inflation, a banking crisis in Silicon Valley, and changes in economic policies, many people also became more divided on economic issues. A number of previously unpolitical topics, such as social media usage and even opinions on Disney movies, have become highly politicized in the last few years. So many issues, from foreign policy to social issues, have further separated Americans into binary political affiliations since 2020.

Although the American people have become increasingly politically polarized, they are also generally less supportive of both candidates. A large group of Republicans fear Trump's unpredictable and perhaps foolhardy nature or oppose Trump's radical foreign policy objectives. At the same time, a significant number of Democrats question Biden's cognitive capability, considering his age and numerous gaffes during his presidency. Although both candidates still dominate their parties and have eliminated any opposition threatening their leadership in the party, both Biden and Trump lack the total party support that they desperately need to secure a victory in the 2024 election. The relative unpopularity of both Trump and Biden, even within their own parties, is concerning for both candidates, and marks a major difference between this year's election and that of four years ago.

While we do see the same faces this year as in 2020, the political situation could not be more different. Donald Trump ended his presidency by supporting a violent insurrection in the Capitol, and Biden's old age and mental wellbeing took a hit in the last four years. The two candidates show widely opposing views on social, economic, immigration, and international relations issues. Although political polarization has increased, more Americans wish for a better, third option. For the better or the worse, this election has changed in numerous ways since the previous election. Regardless of who wins, the upcoming election will inalterably impact American society.

By FORREST ZENG '26

Intelligence has always been human. Through neurons and synapses, humans absorb problems, think about them, rearrange them, and spit those inputs out into solutions. In this way, humans are intelligent. They can quickly and efficiently transform something learned into something outputted—be it a plan, a thought, or a physical reaction.

Artificial intelligence endeavors to translate this process into a computer. Instead of axioms, AI uses wires. Instead of biological neurons, AI uses machine learning nodes. Instead of enzymes and chemicals, AI uses light-speed electrical charges. Artificial intelligence transforms an input into an output digitally. AI is humanity's attempt to transfer its intelligence onto a machine—and it does it very well. This is artificial intelligence.

Creativity, on the contrary, is different from intelligence. Creativity is the ability to create new things. It is the ability to make original, innovative, even unusual ideas, often in the form of art. But how exactly does creativity happen?

Notice that after you read a section of Shakespeare or look at enough Van Gogh paintings, you can magically imitate Shakespeare's style or Van Gogh's strokes, albeit roughly. And if you study, perform, and listen to enough Mozart, you might hear yourself subconsciously humming tunes that sound like Mozart. Or perhaps after listening to a few hours of Dr. Martin Luther King's great orations, you might find yourself speaking like Dr. King quite intuitively. What's happened here is, I propose, twofold: creative absorption, and creative rearrangement. In other words, by consuming art, you absorb "particles"—perhaps a very short musical phrase, or maybe a rhetorical rhythm, even a general mood—and then you rearrange them in a way that imitates the original creator. All of this happens subconsciously and intuitively, and it is what makes the human brain so magical.

However, with this logic, nothing really "new" is created. This model of creativity suggests that particles are just circulated among artists, being chopped and glued together in our minds. Really, these ideas are semi-novel ideas. Like a structural isomer in chemistry, particles might be arranged differently, but really, the particles are all the same.

So how in the world can art ever progress? How do people imagine new things? There must be some other source of artistic "particles" that explain why art evolves. Or else, art remains just a myriad of colors being ever distorted by time. I propose that the other source of inspiration that artists have is life itself. There is a granular complexity to life and nature. This complexity subconsciously inspires every artist, writer, musician, and thinker. How a painter feels one day influences what they create. How a pianist sits, perhaps the weather outside, or a conversation that has been lurking in their subconscious for some time, are all sources

Creativity After AI



A visual representation of AI art as generated by AI

Courtesy of hotpot.ai

for completely novel ideas. This source, external to any musical score or essay, is the source of all novel, revolutionary art.

Artificial intelligence, at the moment, attempts to create art by imitating human creations. When programmers create an artificial intelligence such as ChatGPT, they train it on a massive dataset of literature, collected from the internet. Essentially, AI copies other human creations. After being fed trillions of artistic particles, it can rearrange them in ways that haven't been seen before, it can paint things that haven't been painted before, and it can write things that haven't been written before. But is it truly new? No, artificial intelligence does not truly have unlimited creativity. It doesn't intelligence have any capability to make something more than just a semi-novel rearrangement of artistic particles. It can't impart the beauty of life into new, fresh artistic ideas. This means that artificial intelligence, or rather, artificial creativity, is only semi-novel.

The question with AI that many people ask is if it will eventually be smarter than humans. In other words, whether AI will be able to solve problems better than humans. This question, I believe, has already been answered, and it is a clear and resounding yes. A few decades ago, we believed that AI could never beat a chess master, nor would it ever be able to write essays and books, or imitate the human voice. But, as we have seen with ChatGPT, the chess program Deep Blue, and modern deepfake programs, to name a few, there is no doubt that Artificial Intelligence will soon parallel or even surpass the brain of Homo Sapiens in its speed and efficiency of solving problems.

I believe the question isn't whether AI will become more intelligent, but whether it will be more creative. To be clear, the real question is whether creativity can ever be artificial, whether truly breathtaking art can ever be fit in a processor, and whether world-changing novel creations could ever arise from transistors. A computer doesn't live to produce new

things. It lives only to imitate old ones.

So what does this mean for creativity as a whole? If the way we choose to be "creative" is by the processor, then there will be no novelty. There will be no next Mozart. There will be no Hegel's dialect. There will be no art. All that artificial intelligence can do is spit out recreations and rearrangements of the same old thing.

Imagine a world where people read books, listen to music, and look at images that are only produced by AI. There's no need for people to learn writing if they can manipulate an AI to imitate Mark Twain himself. There's no need for people to learn instruments if they can tell an AI to write Beethoven's Tenth Symphony. There's no need for people to learn how to paint or do graphic design if an AI can imitate Picasso to the smallest detail. Because for most users, novelty isn't necessary. All they need is something that works. For the first time, people will no longer need to be creative.

The advent of artificial creativity can be compared to the advent of writing. Before writing came about, people remembered stories through memory. The *Illiad*, a Greek epic of thousands of lines, was passed down purely through memory and speaking. When writing came about, there was no need to remember things anymore. Therefore, the human faculty of memory became weak, because it wasn't used.

Just like memory, human creativity will weaken due to artificial creativity. Writing was a substitute for memory. So memory was no longer needed. But unlike memory, artificial creativity isn't a substitute for true creativity. Only true creativity can spin the pedals of art, of writing, of history itself. And true creativity only comes from humanity, because only man can reflect the intricacy of life onto truly novel ideas.

This is a romantic idea. The idea that, amidst the chaotic progression of artificial creativity, humanity will stand as a concrete pillar of true creativity, appeals to us. However, this fact implies a horrible consequence: creativity will become an elitist skill,

reserved for a separate socio-economic class of artists.

Artificial intelligence needs to imitate human creations. That necessitates new human art, and therefore, human artists. Normally, these artists would come from all walks of life and all parts of society. Humans are inherently creative. That's why there is such a diversity of artistic styles and ideas across the world. However, in the future, when we don't need to be creative anymore, the diversity of artists will decrease. True artists will become sequestered into a minority that holds a valuable skill no other human has. This idea—the degeneracy and sequestering of creativity—is horrifying in itself. Art is all about diversity. With AI, there's no need for diversity.

This horrible possibility is exacerbated by the fact that this elitist class of "artists" are the ones producing the training data for everyday AI. In other words, everyday AI is imitating this elitist class of "artists." Therefore, the art that people retrieve from generative AIs will be the ideas and styles of these elite artists and only the ideas of these artists. As it is now, any person could still create novel and interesting ideas that would be impactful on the art scene as a whole. There is still the chance to be creative. With AI, the ideas of common art will be dictated by this single minority class of people. To have a single, minority class of people who control the progression of ideas, is to have a recipe for disaster. Even though this life is an absurdity now, if artificial intelligence as a means of producing "art" is allowed to continue pervading society, this may very well soon be a reality.

After a new technology is introduced into society, there is almost always someone who resists it. Historically, people have found ethical, philosophical, economic, and political reasons to oppose new technologies. And historically, these people have always been proven wrong.

Regardless of how arrogant I may seem, I truly believe that soon, artificial intelligence will present a massive existentialist danger to creativity.

PFAS Legislation

By CHRIS SERRAO and GHENA KUBBA '24

“There was once a town in the heart of America where all life seemed to live in harmony with its surroundings. The town lay in the midst of a checkerboard of prosperous farms, with fields of grain and hill-sides of orchards where, in spring, white clouds of bloom drifted above the green fields. Then a strange blight crept over the area and everything began to change. Some evil spell had settled on the community: mysterious maladies swept the flocks of chickens; the cattle and sheep sickened and died. Everywhere was a shadow of death”

- Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*

At the beginning of her book, Rachel Carson, a pioneer in the realm of environmental justice, details a picturesque scene of nature followed by an end-of-the-world scenario from pollution by poisonous chemicals. Published in 1962, Carson’s words bear an eerie resemblance to the state of our environment today. Here at Exeter, we’ve seen this sentiment echoed in our BIO470 course: Human Population and Resource Consumption. Specifically, we’ve delved into how many of the largest industries continue to cover up their environmental impact for the sake of profit.

Take, for instance, the industrial agricultural sector: in order to keep up with market demand, industrial farmers resort to exploitative means. Aside from the profuse usage of synthetic fertilizers, which damages natural ecosystems, industrial farmers contain their animals in cruel and unsanitary conditions. The commodification of our food products has led to greater pressure on industrial farmers to produce en masse — by any means necessary. One look into an industrial farm, and you’ll find sickly cows stocked in close proximity, fed a GMO-corn diet that causes their stomachs to balloon and suffocates them if we don’t slaughter them before then.

In our class, we learned about the issue of an insidious chemical — PFAS or Per and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances. They’re found in all kinds of products from non-stick pans to wa-

terproof clothing. These chemicals have seeped into our water sources and have infiltrated over 97% of people’s blood all around the world. It’s even in the burger meat from the cattle already placed in unsanitary conditions. As consumers, we bear the burdens of industrial negligence.

The first occurrence of PFAS chemicals was by Dupont, one of the largest chemical companies in the world. In 1951, Dupont began purchasing perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) for use in manufacturing Teflon, a synthetic polymer known for its non-sticking properties. Instead of properly disposing of it, Dupont dumped thousands of pounds of the chemical waste into the Ohio River and into pits which seeped into the ground and contaminated the drinking water of nearby communities.

At the same time, Dupont conducted research on PFAS and deduced that it caused organ damage in animals. In the 1970s, Dupont also discovered that there were high concentrations of toxic chemicals in the blood of their workers and did not notify their workers of this. Then, in the 1980s, Dupont confirmed that the chemical was affecting the health of their workers and found defects in the babies of their pregnant employees, and even after all this, Dupont did not make the information public. By the 1990s, Dupont knew that PFAS caused cancerous testicular, pancreatic, and liver tumors in lab animals. In 2006, they reached a 16.5 million dollar settlement with the Environmental Protection Agency for concealing information and knowledge about PFAS’ toxicity. The 16.5 million-dollar settlement represented less than 2% of the company’s profits that year. Dupont has been found liable for the health of thousands of plaintiffs.

At the heart of the issue is the mindset in which profiteering companies like Dupont, approach the natural world. Our climate breakdown is not the consequence of any one individual or group, but rather a product of a system in which companies can exploit the environment for capital gain. Furthermore, the all too familiar story of climate cover-ups by companies can be seen as a natural byproduct of the inter-

ests of a system that holds wealth over well-being.

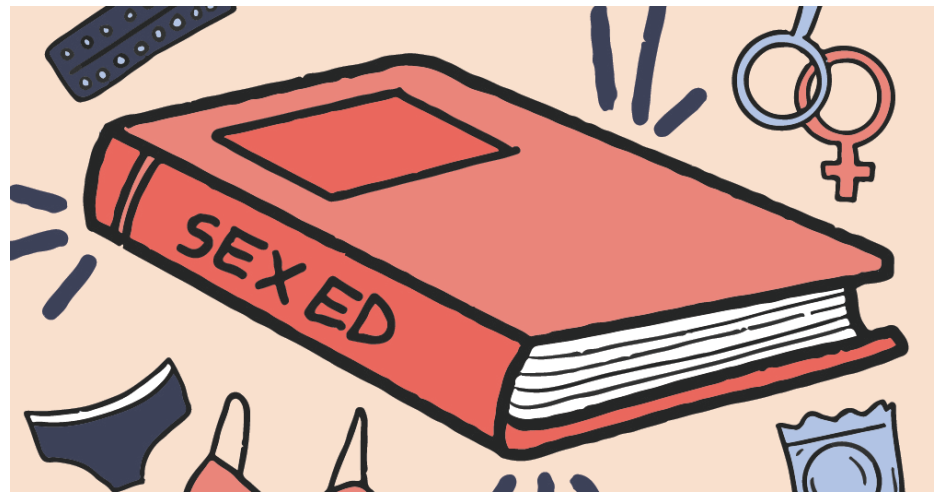
As a part of our course, we decided to head over to the New Hampshire State House to testify in support of House Bill 1089 related to statutes of limitation on PFAS cases:

A civil action arising out of any harm or injury caused by a person or entity found legally responsible for or an action for any damages resulting from PFAS exposure may be brought at any time after a plaintiff or the state discovers such harm, injury, or damages and the causal relationship of an act or omission to such harm, injury, or damages.

We spoke about the importance of passing this bill because of the ambiguity and lack of research surrounding the health effects and the subsequent manifestation of PFAS on people’s health. Removing the precedent of a 3-year statute of limitations allows victims of PFAS contamination to more rigorously understand the status of their health as it relates to PFAS contamination. Right after testifying our case, a man from D.C. came to testify in opposition to this bill. His lobbying serves to protect and reinforce the interests of the companies he represents, symbolic of a system overrun by the voices of large conglomerates overwhelming the valuable voices of the community.

While PFAS is simply one symptom of the cover-up of issues, we want to remind all of you of the importance of standing up for what is right and the communal good. We were hopeful after seeing that the NH legislators were moved by the testimony of 17-year-olds. Many representatives spoke out against the lobbyist, expressing their concern for the health and well-being of communities across New Hampshire. Although this is only the beginning of the passage of the bill, the prospects so far are bright. As much as we love to discuss the politics of the primaries, we need to remember to award a great deal of importance to our local politics, which oftentimes determine more about how we live and our daily lives.

What is the Line Between Education and Indoctrination in Sexual Education?



Courtesy of The Daily Nebraskan

By ANDREW BOOVA and NATHI LOMAX '26

As a school, Exeter has a duty to equip students with knowledge through which they can navigate life. The Health and Human Development courses teach students about making informed choices on and off campus around matters such as personal health, psychotropics, narcotics, and sex. The original purpose of Sexual Education specifically was to promote healthy relationships and prevent unplanned pregnancies and the spread of STIs. By providing necessary information to help students make informed decisions throughout their lives, Sex-Ed plays a crucial role in fostering the overall well-being of students. It is the duty of educators to provide age-appropriate content for students but not prescribe morality nor go overboard by providing content that is pornographic.

What are some issues that may arise from the lessons?

Exeter has a student population of roughly 1100 students, hailing from 37 different countries and 45 states. The natural outcome of these demographics are vastly different views about the morality and ethics of sex as well as conceptions of gender and other related topics. Many religions, including the majority of practicing Christians, Jews, and Muslims, believe sex outside of marriage is immoral. These common views don’t seem to have been accounted for when formulating the general curriculum of the Sex-Ed component of Exeter’s overall health curriculum. The instructors who craft the lessons seem to make multiple important moral assumptions that we believe they shouldn’t make in order to have an informed and useful health class without violating deeply held beliefs among significant parts of the Exeter student body.

Starting in prep year, we were educated on all kinds of contraception. Among others, we were shown condoms, IUDs, and Plan B. The instructors taught that these were all safe, healthy, and morally acceptable. A significant number of Christians consider them all to be sins. Especially with Plan B, it is reprehensible to gloss over it as a viable form of “birth control,” when many Christians consider it a form of murder. Safe and healthy, yes. But they are not considered morally acceptable by the entire Exeter student body.

All of these options imply a second moral assump-

tion: premarital sex is acceptable. When the two of us attended Christian middle schools, we were taught that abstinence is the most effective form of birth control and that sex shouldn’t be devalued as a means of obtaining pleasure. It is a gift from God to be able to procreate and raise children. The assumption that sex is acceptable as long as it’s done safely demonstrates no respect for religious students or their families at Exeter.

A few days ago, we were taught a new term: Ethical Non-Monogamy, a.k.a. ENM. Once again, this type of consensual, multi-partner sexual relationship is immoral behavior among most practicing Christians and Jews, and in more traditional cultures. Adding the word “ethical” to the front is a mere euphemism. If you call stealing “ethical theft,” it isn’t more ethical than just “theft.”

In our prep year, the first subject discussed was gender. Instructed that we could choose our gender, many students began doing so. No discussion was had, and we were told to accept everyone’s pronouns and self-expression. The existence of intersex people was used as a scientific justification of transgenderism, but it wasn’t accounted for that just one in 2500 people are phenotypically intersex, and are still a mix of the two sexes. Many religious students didn’t feel comfortable expressing their views, since disagreeing would get you unfairly labeled as various terms ending in -phobic. As one Jewish student said, “I personally felt uncomfortable voicing my opinions on abortion, gender, or any other social issue because of the political dynamic at Exeter.”

“Is sex too taboo?” we were asked. By phrasing the question in that way, there are two possible answers: “No, it isn’t too taboo,” or “Yes, it is too taboo.” There is no third option: “Maybe it isn’t taboo enough.” Openness about sex and the sexualization of so many parts of our everyday lives has likely gone too far in modern times. Does anyone think sex is too taboo after listening to the sexually explicit lyrics in much of modern music or watching sexually explicit content in most movies or the flood of sexually explicit material on social media? Sex is an act that shouldn’t be taken lightly. The morality of sex should be discussed within the family, within one’s faith tradition, and by those in a relationship, not by friends discussing different forms of birth control, as we were told to do. The biology of sex must be taught, but we shouldn’t normalize

sex by talking about it as frequently as one’s favorite sports team. Doing so devalues sex and promotes a damaging hook-up culture.

The Exeter sexual education curriculum too frequently disregards the different beliefs of students or is outright offensive to those who are more religious. We can’t please all 1,000 students, but an effort should be made to account for the wide array of beliefs, not only the typically atheistic views of the department.

What is the line between education and desensitization?

On the matters of intimacy and the education thereof, there must be a line which divides education and desensitization. The definitions of education and desensitization are very clear. According to Dictionary.com, education is the act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment, and generally of preparing oneself or others intellectually for mature life. Desensitization is to extinguish an emotional response (as of fear, anxiety, or guilt) to stimuli that formerly induced it. The line between education and desensitization is crossed when the materials and discussions are moved beyond factual and age-appropriate information regarding human biology and procreation. Unnecessary graphic and explicit content should be avoided as it undeniably and inappropriately desensitizes students. To normalize sexual behaviors outside of a relationship, is to desensitize students to the devaluation of sex.

How do we better approach sexual education?

With such a diverse student body, it is important to find the commonalities to form the basis of the sex-ed curriculum. Many of the issues mentioned circled back to Christians teachings. One useful set of guidelines, even for Exeter’s diverse community, is the Catholic Church’s recommendations on sexual education. In 1983, the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education wrote an entire guide on how sexual education must be taught. The central and relevant point here is that school was where biology was discussed, and home was where morals were discussed. At a bare minimum, Exeter sex-ed class should explicitly teach that there are different faith traditions and cultures that



The Crossword Corner

By **FREDDIE CHANG**
and **SHAWNA JIANG**

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70					71						72			

ACROSS

- 1 - I don't consider this a sport
- 5 - shoes with holes
- 10 - ___ to please
- 14 - one of the prettiest islands on Hawaii
- 15 - first name of artist who painted 'Blue Nudes'
- 16 - prefix of eight
- 17 - Abbr. on an envelope
- 18 - "Hit the hay!" "Tie the knot" "Break a leg!"
- 19 - debate competition this past week
- 20 - "She is polish" "No! _____"
- 23 - Another word for boyfriend
- 24 - granny
- 25 - Synthetic resin used in paint
- 28 - You're this in the summer
- 31 - beauty and the _____
- 35 - horse that looks like a carpet (plural)
- 37 - we are here
- 39 - untruth
- 40 - you may send these to

- your crush through the Exonian
- 44 - The Beatles' "___ Mine"
- 45 - female deer
- 46 - annoying loud bird
- 47 - Stuffey-sounding
- 50 - no
- 52 - "I don't give two _____"
- 53 - Descartes's conclusion
- 55 - Awards acronym
- 57 - any person's collection of interrelated behaviors
- 63 - Insect's feeler
- 64 - material that cowboys wear
- 65 - a common allergy
- 67 - In addition
- 68 - Pelvic bone
- 69 - Got taller
- 70 - Starring role
- 71 - Rhymes with no.56D
- 72 - Body of an organism

DOWN

- 1 - Good morning America
- 2 - Quaker ___

- 3 - a rare stringed instrument
- 4 - "I'm cool with that"
- 5 - Porcelain
- 6 - Friday's spirit week
- 7 - Taking care of business
- 8 - Trim, as a photo
- 9 - "_____ says..."
- 10 - I, in chemistry
- 11 - Super-duper
- 12 - Poison ivy symptom
- 13 - Goat noise
- 21 - Family car
- 22 - Chemist's workplace
- 25 - _____ and the chipmunks
- 26 - singular of no. 35A
- 27 - Vegetables high in beta carotene
- 29 - Sleep disorder
- 30 - Maiden name predecessor
- 32 - mine is "By the seaside"
- 33 - one of 25D's friends
- 34 - You'll have a lot of these next week
- 36 - Chlamydia, for one
- 38 - Nile reptile
- 41 - an atom or mole-

- cule with a net electrical charge
- 42 - Gal of "Wonder Woman"
- 43 - What violent movies might receive
- 48 - It is very likely that you might lose one of these out of the pair
- 49 - nickname for Mexican restaurant
- 51 - He, in chemistry
- 54 - We are _____ing the rules
- 56 - What a child might scream instead of "I want it!"
- 57 - What you are in winter
- 58 - "Frozen" queen
- 59 - With ancient greek root it means "torch"
- 60 - Lively, on a score: Abbr.
- 61 - Continental currency
- 62 - Popular academic preference
- 63 - Buddy
- 66 - Tex.-based carrier

Sex Ed Cont.

have differing views regarding the morality of birth control, abortion and sexual intercourse outside of marriage. Exeter should remain silent on the merit of any of these views, while also

teaching the biology of sex and sexual health. The modern Exeter classroom is for learning, not teaching sexual morality or worse, teaching that the the closely held beliefs of any stu-

dent are wrong. Because of the uniqueness of Exeter's teaching style, teachers are given far too much control over the health curriculum. A standard curriculum would be a good solution. The students would get the necessary biological knowledge, the parents would

feel comfortable, and the teachers would have a rigid guide to follow, possibly making their jobs easier. The most important change to be made is giving parents a choice for their children. Each parent should be sent a copy of the curriculum, and if they agree that

it suits their child's needs, they can sign off on it.

When we and fellow students entered Exeter, we had a shared belief that sex is a means to procreate. To reduce sex to simply the means by which we derive pleasure is immoral. Too often, sex is presented to

us directly and indirectly as fashionable and in vogue with no moral consideration necessary. This belittles sex to merely a trend and inadvertently promotes unsafe sex through casual hook-ups, exactly what sex-ed was created to eradicate.

Humor

» **SWIFT**

Read the Adele's analysis of Taylor Swift's packed schedule on Super Bowl Day, 10.

» **COMIC**

Read the comic strip created by senior Asena Gursel '24 about the Academy, 10.

» **CROSSWORD**

Finish this week's crossword by completing the 72 prompts. Will it stump you? 9.

Can Taylor Swift Make It Back?

By **ADELE MAMEDOVA '25**

In a universe where Taylor Swift's schedule is as packed as the lyrics in her bridge sections, this Super Bowl Sunday she's on track to execute a feat that could very well inspire her next chart-topping hit. Here's the lowdown: Taylor wraps up her concert in Tokyo at 10 p.m. JST on Feb. 10, 2024, giving her fans the performance of a lifetime before she's off faster than the subject of "We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together." With a swift (pun intended) 28-minute drive to the airport, she's airborne by 10:28 PM JST. The clock is ticking with a 12-hour and 25-minute flight ahead. Taylor's plane touches down in Las Vegas at 5:42 p.m. PST on Feb. 10, a solid 21 hours and 48 minutes before the Super Bowl kickoff. Subtract 11 minutes to get from the Las Vegas airport to Allegiant Stadium, and she's left with a whopping 21 hours and 37 minutes. That's enough time for Taylor to not only do her hair and makeup but possibly rename her upcoming album from "The Tortured Poets Department" into something less melodramatic and quasi-angsty.

So, will Taylor make it in time for the Super

Bowl on Feb. 11, 2024? At this rate, she's also got time to spare for autographs, a quick photoshoot, and maybe a surprise concert in the

parking lot. The real question is, will the Super Bowl viewership survive if she doesn't? Rumor has it, the NFL's already considering

contingency plans involving dramatic readings, and slam poetry-style of her lyrics to maintain ratings. As we send our collective prayers for an

on-time arrival, one thing is clear: the fate of the Super Bowl—and perhaps even the American economy—teeters on the wings of Taylor

Swift's private jet, leaving a carbon footprint so grand it might just outshine her discography.



Taylor Swift reacts in the stands during overtime.

Carlos Barria/Reuters



Ezra Shaw/GETTY



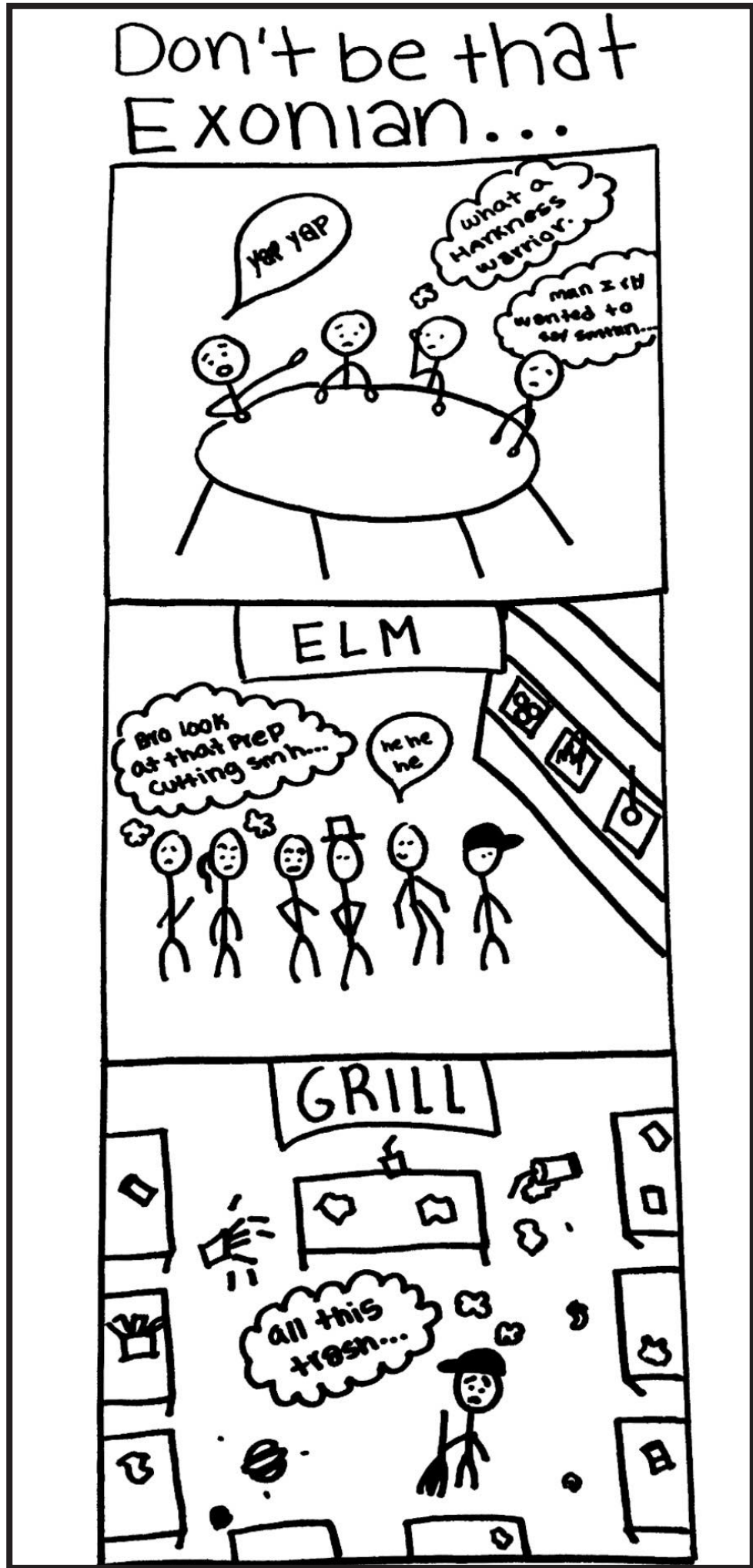
Carlos Barria/Reuters



Patrick T. Fallon/AFP VIA GETTY

Comic Strip!

By **ASENA GURSEL '24**



Sports

» **NHIAA**

Read about the Academy's great performances at the NHIAA were startlign. 1 11.

» **BIG RED RECORDS**

Read about student athletes accomplishments against other schools this past week, 11.

» **OFFSEASON CREW**

Read about how the girls and boys varsity crew teams are preparing for the spring season, 12..

Exeter Track and Field Competes at the NHIAA Meet

By **ISABEL EVANS** and **ERIN HAN**

As one of the final meets preceding their E/a game, the Track and Field team showed a strong performance at the NHIAA (New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association) meet held on Feb. 3.

Though the team had already attended several NHIAA meets, this meet stood out in its heightened significance and the motivation of players, setting it apart from past ones.

Team captain and senior Anna Kim explained, "We've been having NHIAA meets almost every week, but this one had entry standards, so not ev-

eryone competed. The energy in the building was pretty electric as the New Hampshire teams were trying to seek qualifying times for their state meet which is coming up." She continued, "I thought that our team competed well. Even if people weren't competing, they were also cheering and showing great team spirit." Some members of the team stayed from 10:30 a.m. to as late as 4 or 5 p.m. so that they could cheer on their teammates in addition to practice and training.

The team won the Boy's 4x800 relay; and Exonians secured wins in several individual events: Clara Kanb in the Girl's

600 meter, Jack Hutchins in the Boy's 1500 meter, Eli Cross in the Girl's 1500 meter, and Janelle Bobb in the Girl's Shot Put.

In addition, the meet provided an opportunity for team members to qualify — or even re-qualify — for the National High School Track and Field meets being held in early March.

"[It was the] last meet before Exeter-Andover which marks post-season or the championship meets, so for a lot of people, it was the last chance to qualify for nationals..." said prep Owen Cosgrove. He continued, "[There were] two or three other schools there,

like Austin Prep and Governor's, and it was a pretty big meet for only three or four schools in total. It took a long time to get through all the heats, but it was really an exciting atmosphere—we're just looking forward to Exeter Andover next week."

After wrapping up the NHIAA meet, the team is looking forward to new goals and upcoming meets. The fastest-approaching meet is the Exeter-Andover meet, which will take place on Valentine's Day. The team looks forward to going down to Massachusetts to have a great time competing against the school's rival. The E/a meet is the last meet for those not

going to Indoor Nationals, Harvard, or Boston University meets that take place after E/a. Prep Noa Wood, one of the several nationals-qualifiers on the team, noted, "The thing [on] everyone's minds right now is beating Andover. That's just what we're set on now."

The captains of the team are looking forward to the meet and seeing how the team will compete against Andover. Kim said, "We're obviously excited for E/a, and I'm looking forward to how we compete in that dual meet." Kim also remarked on her pride in the team and their efforts. "As a captain and teammate, it's been very re-

warding to see everyone's progress over the past few months, and I'm proud of how we've grown as a team both on and off the track."

As this next meet begins to mark the close of indoor track, the team looks forward to beat Andover and put in their best efforts. The team is confident in their progress and are going to work hard to bring home a victory in this next meet. Wood noted, "We will beat them. It's a given." While the team prepares and many members approach their last meet of the season, Exeter Track and Field is getting ready to put out their best and represent the Academy.

Big Red Season Records Since Feb. 14, 2024

BASKETBALL BOYS JV

Exeter High School: L 50-49
Cushing Academy: W 43-34

BASKETBALL BOYS V

Tilton School: W 45-38
Noble & Greenough School: W 69-53

BASKETBALL GIRLS JV

Austin Prep: W 31-30

BASKETBALL GIRLS V

Holderness School: L 45-41
Austin Prep: L 45-40
Eight Schools Tournament:
W 52-38 v. St. Paul's
L 57-38 Andover

HOCKEY BOYS V

Northfield Mount Hermon School: W 3-0
Portsmouth Abbey School: W 7-0
Deerfield Academy: L 3-1

HOCKEY GIRLS JV

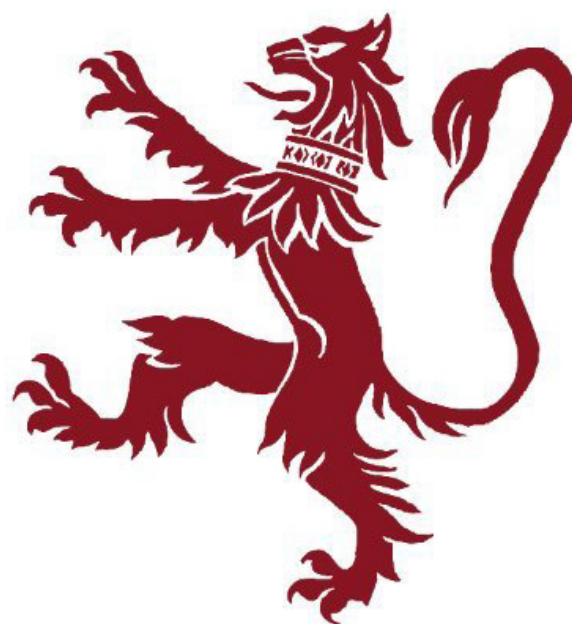
Governors Academy: W 5-4

HOCKEY GIRLS V

St. Paul's School: W 1-0
St. Paul's School: T 2-2
Berwick Academy: W 6-0

SQUASH BOYS JV

Middlesex School: W 7-0



SQUASH BOYS V

Middlesex School: W 6-1

SQUASH GIRLS JV

Middlesex School
Brooks School

SQUASH GIRLS V

Middlesex School: L 4-3

SWIMMING & DIVING BOYS JV

NA

SWIMMING & DIVING BOYS V

Easterns: 5th Place

SWIMMING & DIVING GIRLS JV

NA

SWIMMING & DIVING GIRLS V

Easterns: 3rd Place

WINTER TRACK BOYS & GIRLS JV/V

Andover: W 71-38
USATFNE Meet @Harvard

WRESTLING JV

SPS/PA/GA @Andover

WRESTLING V

New Englands @Choate: 14th Place

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Offseason Spotlight: Big Red Varsity Crew

By SAM ALTMAN
and MEGHAN TATE
ZEE

In the spring term, if you walk past the Exeter Boathouse, you'll often find rowers exercising, strategizing, and even flying down the water itself. But what, you wonder, do they do during the winter, since the river is frozen over, there are no regattas, and the sport is not in season? Turns out, even when the weather tries to stop them, the renowned Exeter crew teams do not stop training.

Senior Michael Goodall, the varsity boys crew captain, explained how rowers typically go about winter training. "Crew is technically not an official sport in the winter, but we use it informally for training. A lot of athletes want to make varsity, so they'll take their winter and opt for a choice format to go and train on their own. As the captain, I am responsible for making the training plan and making sure everyone has a good time. It's part of my job to ensure everyone is in great physical shape when it comes to preseason in Florida, as well as just to keep the ball rolling in the spring," he said.

Goodall continued, "Since we don't have access to the boathouse over winter, there are some PE classes that, late in the fall, move the ergs from the boathouse to the third floor of the gym. We like to call this area the erg bay. From there, we use different training modalities to train. We erg, which is basically indoor rowing, but we also do a bunch of lifting, cross training, running, biking in Ransom, and other things to keep us fit and add some variety in our training."

"Our practices are pretty intense physically, in order to maintain a high level of fitness," lower Nora Unger commented. "We stay in shape by using the erg machine, working out at the gym, running, basically anything to maintain that strength and endurance that you need to succeed in crew."

Lower Walt Stucke reflected on the importance of off-season

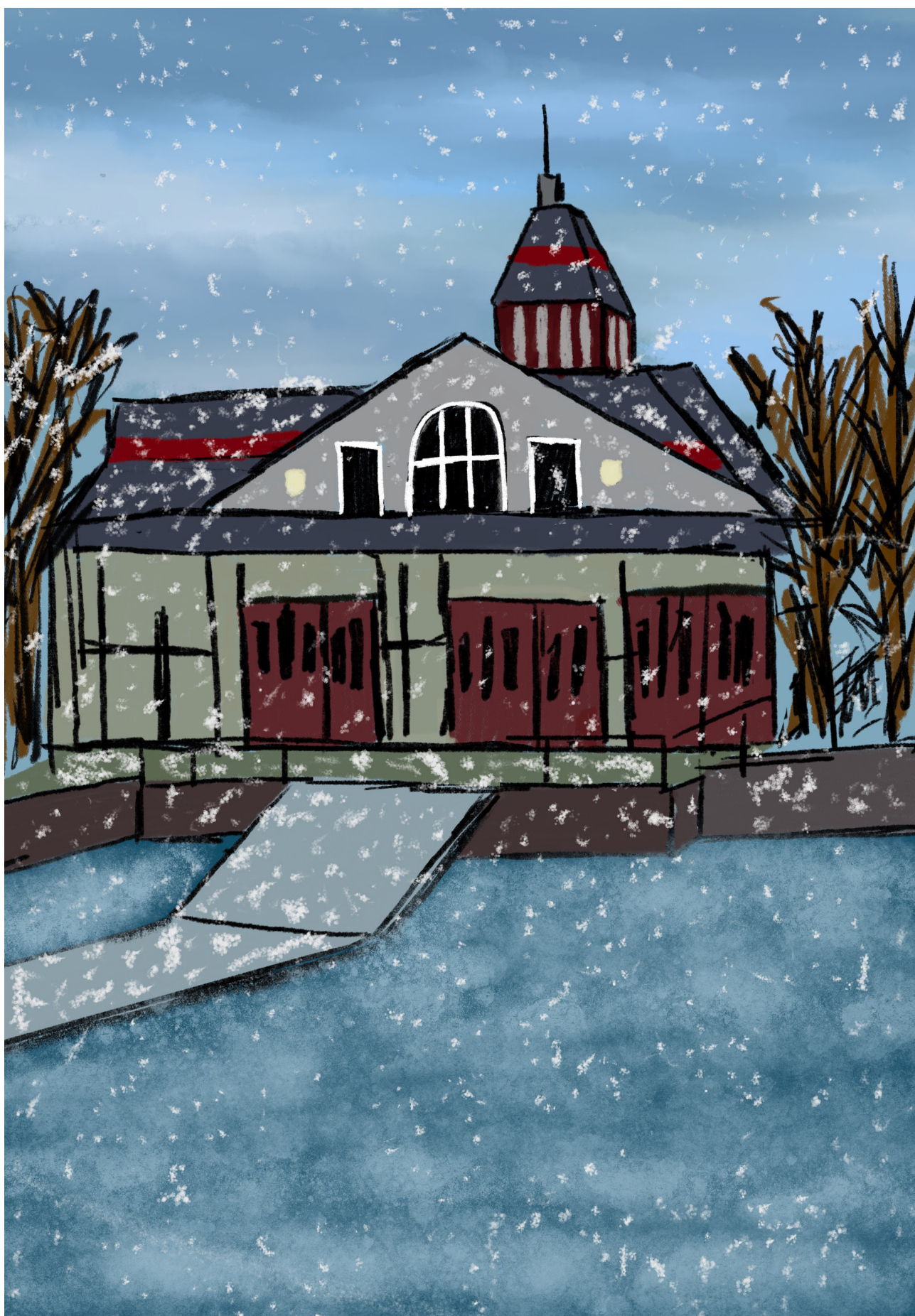
practice. "The winter term is an important time to get ready for the spring season, to form closer bonds in the crew community. My mom has a mantra that she repeats to me: 'You win races in winter training, you collect the medals in the spring.' As such, the team has always known the importance of everyone putting in some effort in the off-season," he commented.

Lower Amelia Post detailed the different possible training regimens in the offseason. "There is off-season training: you opt out of sports, and then during your choice format, go to the erg bay, which is above the basketball courts. You erg with the team and follow the workouts every week that are made by the captain and the coaches. There are team lifts, dynamics, and other different practices that go into it. It really is a structured program. I know everyone who goes into it benefits a lot from it if they stay committed. That being said, there's no required attendance, you don't have to show up. So in some sense, it's mostly self-initiative, but I think a lot of people want to be there because there's such a positive team culture."

"We have practice six days a week," upper Bea Prairie recalled. "From my very limited experience, fall term is long distance and spring term is shorter distance so a lot of the off-season training is going from endurance training to speed training."

Goodall also expressed his other duties in the winter term. "As I mentioned before, I make the training plan, which is a certain workout routine to get everyone in tip-top shape. But, I also design custom merch for the crew teams. I send out some emails trying to keep everyone motivated and make sure everyone is keeping the morale high, even if the training gets a little gritty."

Going into the spring term, hopes are high for upcoming regattas. "The crew team is going to DeLand, FL, for preseason during spring break



Allegra Lai/The Exonian

and we're all very excited to race and compete for the school in the spring term," prep Bella Tyson Montgomery remarked.

"I'm definitely looking forward to the spring," Post expressed. "There are a lot of really strong boats because everyone's been working so hard. I think this is going to be a really fast season for us. Also, we're excited to work with our new coach, Coach Cathy, since Ms. Morris isn't coaching anymore. Overall, I'm excited about the supportiveness of the team practices, and just practice in general. It's so much fun and I look forward to it every day.

I also can't wait for the racing, which is the best part, especially NEIRAs, which happen at the end of the spring."

Goodall added on to this. "In the spring, I think we have a lot of potential with our current class of rowers, though it is a competitive year this year. I know there's stiff competition in the NEIRA league (the New England Prep School Rowing Association). It's gonna be a tough season for sure, but we're going to try our best, and I think we have the potential to do well. I know it takes a lot of technical work on the water, but I think we have the structure to accomplish

our goals," he said.

"Another thing we're doing this year is working more with the girls' team to try to foster a more positive team culture," Goodall continued. "We're also trying to be more mindful of injury prevention by not over-training or doing anything that could injure anyone; if you do the same thing over and over while having a bad habit, then that could just get amplified."

If you know anyone in crew, you'll know that they work immensely hard year-round to keep in shape and to be ready for the next season. Post reflected on the challenges that she's been

through in crew. "It's a big commitment, especially if you are part of the first couple of boats. We have to commit to training, commit to being a team member, and commit to showing up. But in the end, it's all worth it, because we all benefit as a team. It's not easy, but it gives everyone something to work towards."

So, the next time you see someone you know involved in the crew teams, consider recognizing their hard work, because as we head into the spring term, they've been training hard, and they're ready to bring Exeter the athletic glory it knows all too well.

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

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