

ASSEMBLY

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Academy Holds Assembly with Governor Sununu and Governor Lamont



By **TEDDY CAPOZZI, ERIN HAN, LILY RAMPE, and ROXANE PARK**

At 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 19, students and

faculty alike filed into the Assembly Hall holding an excited silence. Security in crisp suits and photographers on standby flanked the stage, as

Principal William Rawson ‘71 introduced New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu and Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont ‘72. The open dialogue

was moderated by co-heads of the Democrat and Republican clubs. Casting a wide range of questions, moderators and audience members probed the

governors on current issues ranging from opioids and immigration to public school curriculums and the upcoming presidential election.

This night represents a culmination of extensive planning between student leaders and Rawson. “The idea was first proposed

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Governors Ned Lamont (Connecticut) and Chris Sununu (New Hampshire) speaking at assembly.

Austin Desisto / The Exonian

Campus Copes with September Heat Wave

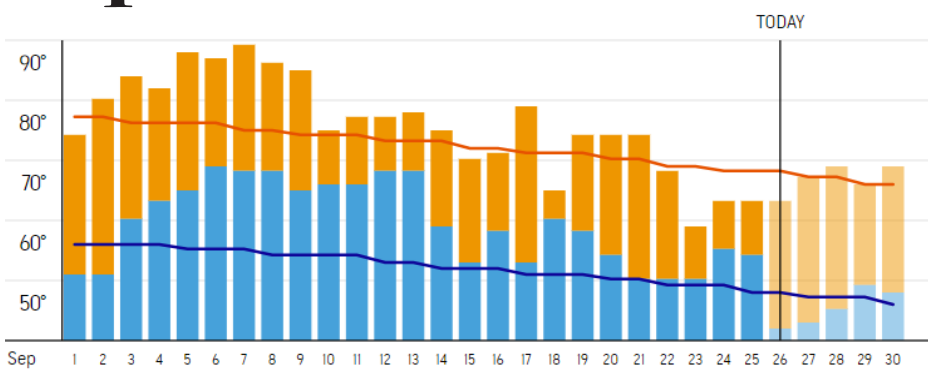


Image courtesy of accuweather.com

By **ERIN HAN, MAYA SHAH, HUGO SHINN, KEVIN THANT, and JADE YOO**

During the first week of classes, temperatures reached highs of 93 degrees Fahrenheit and humidity was extreme as well. Students were crammed into a steaming Assembly Hall for multiple meetings, and with no air conditioning to cool the building, many resorted to fanning themselves with paper programs or wiping sweat on their clothes. Numerous students stated that the temperatures made for an uncomfortable experience.

“I remember the discomfort everybody was feeling with the intense heat and lack of AC,” prep Artur Ferreira said. “Everybody was doing anything possible to cool down, and we were just waiting for the end of the meeting.”

“I am used to New York getting hot, but the humidity here was terrible,” prep Shiloh French said.

Many students were unsatisfied with how the administration handled the extreme heat and had suggestions on how the Academy could prevent future reoccurrences. “[There should be] more fans in the Assembly Hall,” lower Anne Wang said. “I think [the administration] could put fans in the Academy Building because some classrooms don’t have it.”

French echoed Wang’s suggestions. “I feel that a better alternative is to have ceiling fans [installed] or more [actual] fans around the students. This would be less distracting than the [makeshift] paper fans.”

Outside of the Assembly Hall and academic buildings,

students reflected on the heat’s influence on residential spaces. Upper and Dunbar Hall resident Maya Clowes described a moment from the first week of classes: “I remember on the hottest day of that week I couldn’t fall asleep because it was so hot. I remember waking up the next morning in a hot fog. I was so disoriented that I was even late to class.”

In response to the heat, the administration changed the schedule for the first two days of classes. Sports tryouts, opening assembly, and breakfast started earlier in the morning, when temperatures were slightly lower, and advisory scavenger hunts were canceled. Simultaneously, students and faculty have taken various steps to cope with the heat. “[I’ve] been wearing lots of summer clothes,” French said.

Lower Tamar Moskovich said she purchased mini fans at the school bookstore and attached them to her bag as an accessible device to help her deal with the temperatures.

Other students have been making changes to their dorm rooms and daily habits as well. For instance, lower Clare McCann said, “My roommate and I put a fan in our room [and always make sure] to keep the window shades closed. We also got a fridge in our room, and we keep a lot of cool drinks in there.”

“Sometimes we’ll just take the bottles out at night and just [put them] on our necks [to cool off],” McCann added.

Other students, like Clowes, found taking multiple showers a day was a helpful strategy.

Wang said she and her roommate “originally had one fan in [their] room but

had to get two more right after [they] moved in” due to the heat. To maximize the use of his fans, Ferreira also shared a useful strategy he took up: “I open[ed] the window and put a fan in front of it. This allowed the cooler air at night to flow into the room. I also kept another fan on throughout the entire day.”

Faculty also shared their methods to cope with the heat. “The classrooms were pretty toasty. We deployed some extra fans, which helped a little, but we found the most effective remedy was to not think about it,” Mathew Hartnett, Chair of the Department of Classical Languages, said.

These are the ways that the Exeter community has dealt with the heat thus far, but none are permanent solutions to complications created by temperatures in the hotter months of the year.

Johnny Griffith, Dean of Student Health and Wellness, acknowledged the issue and stated that the Academy made its best efforts to make the community comfortable. “The school did what it could,” he said. “We have old buildings that aren’t air-conditioned, and the heat and climate change have impacted us.”

When asked whether renovations will soon come to the Assembly Hall, Dean Griffith said, “The school plans to add air conditioning for that space. It’s a very expensive project and is long in planning.”

The unseasonably warm weather during the first week of classes reflects the untraditional weather patterns plaguing the East Coast amidst growing climate change. As Mr. Hartnett said, “It [really] is hard to know what is typical anymore.”

A Conversation with Governor Ned Lamont ‘72

By **TEDDY CAPOZZI and LILY RAMPE**

Q: Coming back here, what do you reflect on most? What did you enjoy most?

A: The Exonian. I worked my tail off that first year, but it was really exhausting.

CONVERSATION, 3

Academy Implements Orah as New Out-of-Town System

By **JUNO COWANS, ETHAN DING and LUCY JUNG**

Over the summer, the Academy’s administration announced a change to Exeter’s out-of-town (OOT) system, transferring the process from paper forms into an online app: Orah.

“The use of Orah is only a portion of a larger scale change in the student information system,” Dean of Students Russell Weatherspoon informed The Exonian. “The system which we are bringing online is called Blackbaud. It’s used by a lot of schools and it is supposed to streamline many operations.”

“In the next several years, this system will come online, so to speak, and become part of the new way we manage student information,” Weatherspoon continued.

On Aug. 17, Administrative Manager Lee Rollick sent an email to all students and parents, explaining the replacement of OOT slips with a new digital process through app-based software. Many students returned to school with mixed opinions regarding the online system, especially the revised off-campus radius. Previously, students were allowed to

venture anywhere within a ten-mile radius of J. Smith Hall without alerting the administration. However, with Orah, students must manually submit day passes online whenever crossing a two-mile off-campus radius.

On Aug. 25, the Dean of Students office sent an email with more information and details about Orah and the accompanying changes to multiple OOT regulations. In the email, Weatherspoon clarified that the reason for the smaller radius was to ensure student safety in case of emergencies, making it easier to search for anyone missing.

“Although it took some getting used to at first, I have to say that I think it definitely streamlines the process compared to how it was in the past.”

While comparing this online software to previous OOT policies, faculty and students voiced concerns regarding the new Orah software’s rumored location-tracking capabilities. Privacy was a cause for consideration at the announcement of Orah’s implementation; however, administrators

have since clarified that the app has no such abilities.



Logo courtesy of Orah

Internet protocol (IP) information is shared when students submit their passes, much like when students submit other Academy forms on formsite.com or use Academy internet. “[When you submit a pass], it will tell you if you are getting both the student and the parent’s approval from the same IP address,” Weatherspoon said. “When we know that a parent is domiciled in the next city, state, country, [and Orah] says to us, this [approval is] coming from the same IP address, [we know we] should check that out.”

While a singular IP address does include approximate location

ORAH, 2

News

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Assembly Cont.

by Governor Lamont and we were delighted when Governor Sununu enthusiastically agreed to participate," Rawson shared. "I met with the student leaders to go over the format, but they then came up with the questions."

Democratic Club co-head and upper Beverly Oleka described the preparations on the student side of the event, including a meeting between the co-heads of both partisan clubs. "That Sunday, we came together for an hour to two hours," she said. "We worked on the questions, figured out the order, who was gonna say what, edited it, and then sent it out to the advisors to review and then we sent it out to the Governor's secretaries to review." Referring to the contents of the questions, Oleka added, "I was really interested in making sure that we're being very transparent

issues that are important to this timeframe."

"I'd absolutely enjoy more assemblies like this. It's great to see people who are on the front lines of issues we care about and who can offer unique perspectives into politics."

Republican Club co-head and upper CJ Smith felt that this discussion between the governors filled a political discussion void on campus. "A lot of assembly speakers have kind of echoed similar ideas or talked about similar topics and we really wanted to get a discussion going between a conservative and liberal." Smith's words speak to the general loathe students feel towards assembly. Having discourse could prove to increase student



Democratic and Republican club co-heads leading the Q&A at the assembly.

Austin Desisto / The Exonian

state differs from serving in Congress. Observing the governors' mutual respect despite clear policy differences on several issues... Hearing Governor Sununu talk about empathy and being curious about why others might think differently. Simply

respect to specific issues but also with respect to how we explore issues together in our Harkness classrooms."

Student reactions revealed that witnessing this conversation was both informative and engaging. "I thought it was really interesting and kind of

am glad they did," lower Ezra Segal added. "In my opinion, Sununu was more prominent in the assembly - many of his answers were genuinely unique and stuff you wouldn't hear from many Republican politicians."

the leaders themselves."

Although students may have to wait for another similar assembly, those keen on politics may have more opportunities within Exeter. With election season pulsing closer, students can expect to see candidates coming through the town of Exeter. For example, Republican presidential candidate Nikki Haley visited last February, and Democratic candidate Marianne Williamson will be coming to Water Street Bookstore on Oct. 2.

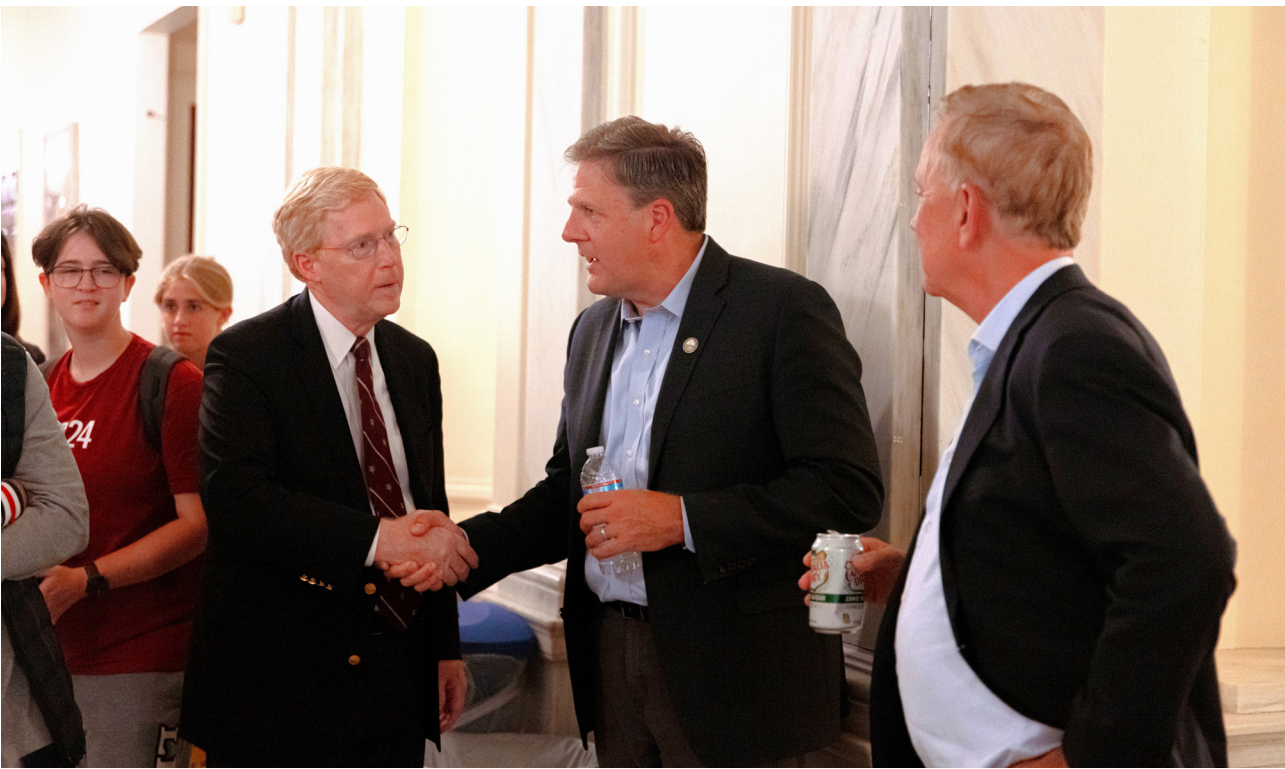
After the event, dozens of students gathered around the two governors, eager to introduce themselves, ask their own questions and possibly capture an Instagram-worthy selfie. "Clearly the students would have liked to have had more time with the governors," Rawson said, "which tells me interest was high and the assembly a success."

"I am really proud of what we've accomplished and how the assembly turned out to be," Oleka acknowledged. "I don't know about the entire student body, but in both our respective clubs we all have other activities and events that we're planning to host. As for now, for the big student body, we haven't been notified of [anything] yet."

"I think there were a lot of things in that room that people were waiting for them to address, I am glad they did."

Currently, the administration has no plans for a similar assembly, but positive student reactions haven't gone unnoticed. "I thought the format with two speakers from different perspectives offering unscribed remarks worked quite well and was engaging to the audience," Rawson said. "We could do this on other subjects besides politics. I felt there was a lot of energy and interest in the room."

Segal agreed. "I'd absolutely enjoy more assemblies like this. It's great to see people who are on the front lines of issues we care about and who can offer unique perspectives into politics that we can only get by hearing directly from



Principal Rawson greeting Governor Chris Sununu and Governor Ned Lamont.

Austin Desisto / The Exonian

in our questions...The topics of the questions can sometimes come across as very strong, but I think it's really important to not shy away from those types of questions, especially when it involves really pressing

engagement and excitement for future assemblies.

Rawson agreed that students had much to learn from attending the assembly. "Starting with understanding how serving as chief executive of a

observing closely two Governors in action."

In addition, Rawson mentioned his hope that students will carry lessons from the event beyond the realm of politics. "I hope the assembly gave all students a lot to think about, with

entertaining at some points," lower Lexie Sebastian said.

"I thought some of the questions were passive-aggressive, but in a good way. I think there were a lot of things in that room that people were waiting for them to address, I

Orah Cont.

and device information at the time of collection, the Academy does not use IPs to track geolocation, only to prevent potential app misuse. "We depend on the students to honestly report where they are going," receptionist and Out-of-Town Specialist Amy Murphy said.

"I can't imagine an app being able to [track your location] without you agreeing. That could cause a lot of legal issues for the Academy," Weatherspoon added. "If it could do that, we would not be interested."

Hoyt Hall faculty member Lauren Josef stated that the administration walked through the app during faculty week and assured all faculty that Orah would not be used as a tracking app. "We can't track where the students are. [The administration] said we want students to know that there's no way we can track students on this. The school is just trying to streamline the process because out-of-towns in the paper form are laborious and complicated," Josef said.

Price agreed. "I've

talked to the deans and actually looked at the technology that they really don't have any way of knowing where you are. It's still all reliant on trust, just like the old system was. I've heard the rumors going around, but they're just not true."

Scott Domingos, dorm head of Webster Hall, clarified the intentions of the app. "The intent is for student safety," Domingos explained. "It's not surveillance; we're not watching students moving about their day and keeping track of their [location]. We're just concerned about student safety."

"Orah was mostly motivated by efficiency and then improved student safety at the end of the day. And if you don't know [a student's] whereabouts, it'll help us pinpoint that more accurately," Domingos said.

Some students noted that Orah's expedited process benefits students who frequently travel off-campus for extracurricular commitments. For lowers Martin Yau and Tristan Price, who travel weekly to Boston, the change in the

OOT process is particularly significant.

"I think that this new system is very efficient and convenient because of the fact that it is online," Yau said. "You don't need to take the time to find a slip, fill it out, and then walk over to the Dean's Office to submit it. You could be submitting it while you're walking or in your dorm."

"Although it took some getting used to at first, I have to say that I think it definitely streamlines the process compared to how it was in the past," Price said. "The fact that there aren't as many steps and that you can complete everything at once in the app or on the website really speeds everything up. I don't need to get my advisor or dorm faculty's signature anymore, which could have been hard to obtain before."

"I do think it's nice that you don't have to get signatures in person now. It could get really stressful sometimes when you need to go around asking for signatures," senior Hope Gantt said.

Upper Laura Saldarriaga shared similar sentiments and described how Orah made the out-of-town process more convenient compared to its paperwork-heavy predecessor. "There's a lot

less paperwork, a lot less walking to J. Smith from my dorm. It's handy, I can check everything online, and I get notifications when my parents or the administrators approve certain things," Saldarriaga said.

"I like how they now have the template system so that you can apply for something recurring very easily. Say you're a part of a group that goes out of town at the same time every week. You can just easily submit the same pass instead of going through the whole process again," senior Ryan Manley said.

Although the new system comes with many conveniences, there are elements of the old system that many students miss.

"I do miss the carbon copies of the old slips since those people in the dorm can see where everyone else is going," Price said. "With this new system, however, you lose out on that. If you want to know if a friend is going out of town, you'll have to ask them."

"One thing that I miss is how you used to have to talk to the people you wanted to sign your slip, whether it be your dorm faculty or advisor. I think now that you don't need that signature anymore,

you lose that social interaction," Manley said.

Upon being asked whether they preferred Orah over the traditional paper-based OOTs, senior Colin Jung shared his preference for the previous system. "I thought the previous system was just fine. I think it's sort of a waste of Academy resources to set up this fancy system when the old one didn't have any problems with it. Also, the permissions are really wacky, and there are a lot of malfunctions," Jung said.

With more use, Orah may be adapted and changed. "Since our use of the program began last month, we continue to look at how it operates and whether we need to make changes to the way [it works]," Weatherspoon said.

Students also voiced concern regarding the reduced off-campus radius. Upper Eli Pratt added, "I'm not a fan of the new two-mile radius. It's just really annoying because you have to fill out so many more forms now."

"I get that a lot of people are upset over how the radius was shrunk, but I do think that it's not all that bad. Submitting the pass just so the school knows the general direction

of where you went, just in case anything happens, is comforting to an extent," senior Gamze Toksoz said.

When weighing the novel features Orah offers, and the app's foreshadowing of further AI integration into Academy policies, students and faculty generally agreed with the app's efficiency in improving the OOT system.

"Overall, I understand the concerns that people might have about the inconvenience of switching to a new system. I know that some people are annoyed or are worried about the security, but I think that's to be expected when switching to a new system," Yau said.

"The app is a tool to improve the OOT system, and the school is just trying to keep us safe and make things easier for us. People are totally justified to have questions and concerns, but I know that the people in charge are willing to listen to student feedback and improve the system. At the end of the day, they're just trying to make things safer and easier for all of us," Yau concluded.

A Conversation with Governor Lamont Cont.



Governor Ned Lamont being interviewed by two Exonians in the Latin study.

Hillary Yoon / *The Exonian*

And then I got involved in *The Exonian* and I loved it. I stuck with journalism until I did this new gig. It's really relevant to what I'm doing now because in journalism you have to like people, you hear their stories and you have to learn how to tell a story. In the political world, that's what you have to do as well.

Q: Although Connecticut has done very well monetarily under your governance, there is still a large inequality discrepancy. What are you doing to combat that? Recently, you raised the minimum wage, but is there anything else that you plan on doing?

A: When I graduated from college, there were too many people looking for too few jobs, and today we have a lot of jobs we can't fill. So when talking about opportunity inequality, the one thing I can do is give everybody that opportunity. So we're providing free job training and a guaranteed job at the end of that training. Then you can continue going to community college or college in the evenings if you want to. We just cut taxes from the middle class and working families, like you said. When I came into office, the minimum wage was \$10.10. Now it's \$15.69. So that's an extra 200-250 bucks a week for a working mom or dad that could really use that.

Q: Being from Rhode Island, we have a large housing shortage. So I wanted to ask you what the situation is in Connecticut. Obviously mortgage rates are really high, and people are locked in to low rates from COVID. What has been the process of dealing with that?

A: It's probably our biggest need. Not everybody wanted to be in Connecticut for a while, and all the cool kids were down there on the lower West side. But we've had about 70,000 or 80,000 young families move into Connecticut over the last three or four years, and they keep coming. But we have no housing to your bigger point, the same as Rhode Island. So what we're doing is doubling down in terms of the support that we as a state can give. So it's affordable housing, but it's also workforce

housing. Every business that wants to come to Connecticut says 'We'll give you a place for our workers to live.' So our cities used to be 30% bigger than the larger days. So there's a lot of opportunity to grow them back.

Q: How has COVID played a role in that? Connecticut did a really good job with moving through COVID and COVID relief, but what was that process like? What's the priority and how is that moving forward?

A: I think we kept most things open...We had a lot of people come and visit the state and a lot of them stayed. Obviously it changed in lifestyle. I don't think the idea of the nine to five, five days back at the office is going to continue. We're half and half [back to work in-person], which mitigates some of the traffic. But it also means that it's easier to maintain that lifestyle. Also, I think for Connecticut, we got our schools open. Those are all pluses in terms of helping us get through a tough time.

Q: Moving back a little bit, you were in the private sector prior to this. What was that transition like?

A: Back in the day, cable television was pretty cool. Now it's more of a dull utility, I get it, but back then it was good. Every couple months it would be ESPN and MTV and CNN and new programs. So I worked for one of the great pioneers in the cable industry: a guy named Chuck Dolan who developed (Home Box Office). But I always wanted to be my own boss, so I started my own company, and we went to universities like Penn State and wired them up. We were the operator forum: it was half educational and half entertainment.

Q: Why did you make the transition from the private sector into politics and eventually to be the governor?

A: I did cable for 25 years. I probably was getting a little distracted. I had always been involved in my home community, like the board of Selectmen and I was a local guy

and that's probably what I would've been doing today had it not been for George W. Bush's invasion of Iraq. I thought that was a miserable idea. [Chuck] Dolan had sent me to the Middle East a couple of times to help design systems. So I had some familiarity with what was going on there. I tried to get somebody to challenge a guy named Joe Lieberman who was Connecticut's senator, but he was very hawkish in the war and nobody else would do it. So all of a sudden I found myself the last guy standing.

Q: There's a lot of really concentrated wealth in Connecticut coming from New York and particularly Wall Street. Is that something that you ever worry about that you think will lead to instability?

A: I don't think so in this sense: if you make sure that it's a state where people have a chance, make sure they know that it's a state of opportunity, and make sure that parents know their kids have the opportunity to have a better life than they did. It's not always that way, but it is that way right now. So, we have a lot of rich guys in Greenwich, no question about it, but having that gap is less impactful than stagnation. What I hate is people feeling they don't have that chance. I'd like to think in Connecticut, people feel like they have that chance.

Q: In the current political environment in the United States, it's incredibly polarized. I've seen you pass some bipartisan bills. Do you think that's important and moving forward, how do you see that working?

A: We're a little more purple in Connecticut and I'm a business guy, which Republicans like. But I'm also progressive on things like minimum wage and paid family medical leave. So I'm able to thread that. So our budget passed 35 to one, which was pretty good and a bipartisan basis. And this is what I want to do with Governor Sununu. It's a little poisonous down there in Washington. They don't seem to like each other. They want to shut down the government and impeach the president. But governors are, I think, a

little island of sanity. Chris is Republican, I'm a Democrat, but you'll find that 80% of things we agree upon because we're building roads and bridges and trying to make our schools better. And some of these things just aren't as partisan as they are in Washington.

Q: How have your goals shifted over your time? When you realized that you would have several more years, where did your mind go?

A: Well, when I took office, the House was on fire. We had to put out the fire. You had multi-billion dollar deficits and people leaving the state businesses grumpy and GE had just left. And so that first few years was just about stabilizing the ship. Now we're in pretty good shape. We've had five pound budgets and surplus, which was fun. I mean, now I really get to make investments that make a difference. Now I get to do housing. Now I get to speed up the rail service by 15 or 20 minutes in each direction. Now I have the state of Connecticut feeling positive about itself. The positivity feeds on itself. And I'd like to think we have some of that momentum now.

Q: The Connecticut budget has been in surplus for four years and your rainy day fund is also at the legal limit. What was the process of that like? How difficult was it to do that?

A: So our revenues are like this, right? And when Facebook and Google are doing well, we're feeling really rich. And then they used to just spend right up to that moment. And then when the market went back, all of a sudden we had a deficit. So we said that doesn't work. So we put away about 15% of our budget as you point out, in a rainy day fund. I used to think a rainy day fund was all about a recession. But now it's when the Republican Congress goes back into session and you may have a lockdown, and it gives us a lot of stability. It gives the business community a sense that if we have this recession, we're not going to have to raise taxes, we're not going to have to cut education spending. Certainty is really important. You can give people hope and dreams, but also a little bit of certainty, which gives people the confidence to make investments.

Q: You seem to be a pretty big sports fan. You were trying to talk to the NHL about possibly bringing the Whalers in?

A: We have the heart for Whalers. Connecticut doesn't have a lot of professional sports teams and so when they left, that was a body blow. It's 25 years later. I was just at a memorial service for a cop who died tragically, and he had the whole XL center festoon with Whaler jerseys just to show you what a hold it had on him as a young boy growing up. So I've reached out to Gary Bettman, he's the commissioner of the NHL. It's an uphill climb, we have a lot of hockey teams already in the northeast and he says, "Boy, for TV I want to have a team in the southwest." And I go, "That's great, but nobody likes hockey in the Southwest." So we're making our case, but we'll see.

Q: Did you have a role model or a mentor that helped you get to where you are today? Is there anyone that inspired you?

A: Yeah, I think Chuck Dolan was a great entrepreneur. From that business side, I loved him. We had a swashbuckling guy named Ted Turner; he started up CNN and he was an outlandish personality. And then, in my hometown, we had a guy named Lowell Weer who went on to be a Governor. So from a political side, I admired him. He was a conservative Republican, but then the Republican party moved on him quite a bit. He became an independent and got elected as Governor as an independent. I thought that was pretty inspiring.

v. Wade, how has that affected Connecticut as a state?

A: I thought the courts were there to protect our rights. Now you have a Supreme Court that was funded, taking away a right that we thought was established going back 50 years. So we re-established it loud and clear in Connecticut. We said if you come from a red state where they're outlawing or virtually outlawing abortion, come to the state of Connecticut to get your full range of reproductive care. And if they try and come after you with prosecution or something out of Texas, we'll protect you. We won't participate in that. I sent a message and it's part of why some businesses and a lot of young families feel comfortable with Connecticut's values.

Q: What are some specific goals for your last couple years that you think the people of Connecticut will be really excited about?

A: I want to bring our cities back to life by having more affordable multi-family units in downtown areas with all the restaurants that go with it. Also speeding up the city transportation hubs. Look, young people want to be in a more urban environment. We had the stereotype that Connecticut was this leafy suburban area but we have some great cities. They went through some hard times, but now they're coming back. We have a lot more people living there, and I want to keep that momentum going.

Q: In freeing up space for housing, do you have to wait for monetary policy to change? Is there anything that you can actually do to combat that with currently really high rates, or is that a time matter?

A: Well, we're doubling the amount of investment the state's going to make in housing. Instead of walking away, developers come to the state of Connecticut and say, "Give us a low interest loan so we can make up the difference." Before I thought we were just going to turbocharge and everything was going to go. But now, as you point out with higher interest rates, I'm just trying to keep the momentum going.

Q: Is there any debate about Connecticut having the best pizza?

A: We debate a little bit with New Jersey. They think they have pretty good pizza, but I point out to the governor of New Jersey that there's a movie called *Mystic Pizza*, as in *Mystic Connecticut*.

Editor's Note: The Exonian requested an interview with Governor Chris Sununu, but his schedule would not permit it.

Q: Switching topics, you passed multiple bills protecting the right to abortion in Connecticut. Why is that important to you? And especially with the overturn of Roe

Students Reflect on Campus Construction

By PHIN GIBBS, AMY LIN, MAX MANTEL and ELAINE QIAO

Throughout the past few weeks, the sounds of Exeter in autumn have been joined by the loud humming of jackhammers and drills. This is the product of the Academy's new construction efforts, many of which are projected to end in 2024.

On the Academy Lawn, workers are currently implementing 86 new geothermal wells that intend to serve the Academy Building and the new dining hall. This new building, which is set to replace Wetherell Dining Hall—affectionately referred to as “Weth” by students and faculty alike—is also undergoing its own construction, alongside dormitories Merrill and Langdell Hall.

Although these projects have only recently affected campus life, they have been in the works for a few years. “Planning started in 2010 [and continued in] 2011 for the Academy Lawn’s

geothermal well field,” project manager Joana Rossi said. “The first construction phase of the well field was completed in 2012. The second phase of the geothermal well field broke ground the week of June 5, 2023.”

Rossi continued to explain the progress being made on each project. “The new geothermal wells are in the testing phase, the geothermal piping will be backfilled, and the lawn replaced. Construction is on schedule to provide a new Academy lawn for graduation in 2024. More tests and commissioning of the system are to be performed and completed in 2024 when Langdell becomes operational after the building renovations. The new dining hall and renovated dorms are scheduled for occupancy next school year.”

At the beginning of the year, students initially struggled to adjust to the new changes. “I know there have been more than one



Exeter construction includes rebuilding a new dining hall and renovating Merrill and Langdell Halls.

Austin Desisto / *The Exonian*

occasion where I've been woken up to the sound of a jackhammer coming through my window. Sleep is something that's very important to me in my daily life, and it really affects how I go through my day, my participation in class, and how I'm feeling,” upper Jackson Lyle said.

For upper Jacquelyn Addo, the construction forced a change in how she walked around campus. “In terms of how [the construction] affected my daily life, walking around those areas became less efficient. Instead

of crossing the quad diagonally, I have to walk around on the sidewalk,” Addo said.

However, as the school year has gone on, some students have begun to adapt to the construction. “My window is [faced] right towards the construction,” senior Thomas Roper said. “On the first day, I woke up earlier than I wanted to [because of] the construction, but since [then] that hasn't really bothered me since the construction's only there on weekdays... Usually it's not that loud for me.”

“If you're working through free blocks [with construction], that can be a little bit tough, but if you're listening to some good music or just have something to tune it out, then it's perfectly fine,” upper Adam Tang said.

Other students hold more optimistic views. “In my opinion, the noise and inconvenience doesn't really bother me. The construction sites are [just] there in the background,” upper Claire Han said. “I'm very excited for the new dining hall and dorm, though, knowing what those buildings used to look like. It'll be fun to see the new renovations and interior design.”

“Being part of the Langdell community, I'm excited to move back into the new space,” Han added.

Addo agreed. “I'm really excited [about] the new construction, especially because we've seen what the new Weth could potentially look like. I miss the vibe of old Weth, so I hope they keep that. Also, since we lived in Merrill and Langdell, I want to see how [they're] renovated.”

Though lower Sophie Low shares the excitement about the new buildings to come, she noted the lack of transparency about what will happen to students

living in New Hall, which currently houses students who originally lived in Merrill and Langdell. “I'm looking forward to the interior of Wetherell, and for dining-staff to work in a more comfortable environment. As a resident of New Hall, [however], information regarding our future dorm situation is pending. Understandably, this will affect other students as well,” she said.

Students have also expressed their desire for a more clear-cut plan of the construction happening on campus. “I feel like it would be [better] if they gave the students and faculty a rough schedule or timeline of the constructions in an email or through other forms of communication,” Addo said.

Despite these concerns, the Academy's efforts to renovate its buildings and energy sources are certainly positive in the long term. Rossi emphasized how the new dining hall will benefit the community moving forward. “[In the future], the new dining hall will enhance the well-being of all who use it due to the state-of-the-art technology and welcoming aesthetically pleasing interiors,” Rossi said.



Geothermal wells are being installed on the Academy lawn.

Austin Desisto / *The Exonian*

Academy Restructures Consent Training

By LAUREN LEE and ROXANE PARK

On Sept. 7, as part of the 2023-24 school year orientation, Exeter organized mandatory consent training workshops for all students. These workshops featured interactive presentations by HAVEN, a New Hampshire nonprofit dedicated to preventing and supporting victims of domestic and sexual violence. Students were divided into groups of around fifty based on their class and attended sessions in various locations across campus at staggered times throughout the morning.

In previous years, consent training was typically held en masse, assembly-style, at times split by grade-level or upperclassmen/lowerclassmen. In contrast, this year's small groups facilitated a style of discussion similar to Harkness in the classroom.

Director of Student Well-Being Dr. Christina Palmer shared that these changes were based on past input from students and discussion with the

Dean of Students office. “We recognized the importance [of providing] messaging about healthy relationships, consent, boundary setting and learning about available resources as the school year begins,” Palmer said. “Having this training is about providing the right tools, and language for our community members to feel safe and respected, and be a community of care.”

Students affirmed the importance of effective consent training at school. “It's essential for students to be educated on this subject to understand the significance of consent in relationships and to promote a safe environment for everyone at PEA,” upper Nicholas Li said.

“I definitely think that the training is important and I like that it's mandatory,” upper Sophia Jia echoed. “I also liked how they covered the age of consent in various situations, like if your partner lives in a different state. I think that for a lot of the scenarios they talked about, even though

they're very common, it isn't common knowledge whether it's consensual or not.”

As a new student at the Academy, prep Grace Yang recalled encountering new information through the training. “I thought in certain instances consent was assumed, but I learned that without clear consent it's not okay,” Yang said.

Across the board, students felt the small groups enabled open discussions and ensured everyone's voice was heard, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of the topics discussed.

“I liked that it was in the Mayer auditorium this year, that it was in smaller groups...It was incredibly different [from previous years], and I appreciated that difference significantly,” senior Defne Koyluoglu said.

Jia agreed. “When you're sitting there and there are two hundred people next to you, you don't want to raise your hand. Even though the silence is awkward, you don't want to be the one who speaks up. But in a

room of fifty people, it felt a lot more comfortable raising your hand and asking or answering questions.”

The smaller groups also served to increase some students' ability to absorb the information. “I liked that the groups were smaller because it allowed me to focus better,” upper Pranavia Vedula said. “Last year there were so many people and sometimes people would make disruptive comments or snide remarks. The smaller environments were more productive.”

On the other hand, many returning students noted that the presentation consisted of the same content as the years before. “The training was mostly a refresher of the things we learned last year,” lower Tiffany Sun said. “I felt like it was useful, but I didn't really learn anything I didn't already know.”

“I know the Academy's heart is in the right place, and that consent is an extremely important topic. However, there was nothing introduced that anybody in the audience hadn't learned in middle

or high school already,” upper Ben Soriano said.

“While the smaller groups made it feel more like a discussion and made answering questions easier, it was difficult to truly engage with repetitive material that frankly took up time from our day that could have been spent doing something more enjoyable. I believe that most of what was said could have been condensed into a much smaller ten to fifteen minute talk,” Soriano continued.

Jia mentioned another area that could use improvement, citing the slideshow in which students were asked to guess whether a scenario depicted incomplete or complete consent. “Only the first one was yes and every one after that was a no,” she said. “I think it would have been more engaging and also provoked more critical thinking if they sprinkled in some more yes situations.”

To combat this feeling of repetition and unproductivity, students suggested that workshops

in future years could be more class-specific, expecting that older students remember what was taught in previous years and allowing them to build on their existing knowledge. However, new students from all backgrounds come to Exeter every year, meaning that the administration would need to strike a balance between ensuring all students are educated on basic consent, while also introducing new material.

While many agree that the consent training was a valuable experience, this is only the start of planned activities that aim to educate students on healthy relationships. Among these, as Dr. Palmer mentioned, are the required Health and Human Development classes that students take every year, a winter assembly on boundaries, the now annual “Take Back the Night” event coordinated with Exonians Against Sexual Assault (EASA) in the spring, and an upcoming exhibit in the Lamont Gallery.

Faculty of the Week: Albert Leger



Science instructor Albert Leger smiles for a photo on the library lawn.

Austin Desisto / *The Exonian*

By **ETHAN DING, JOONYOUNG HEO, and LAUREN LEE**

The polished whiteboards and the black lab benches of a classroom in Phelps Science Center, at first glance, have little to do with the chipped floorboards and the red shells lining the walls of the Academy's Boathouse. The patterned sofas in the common rooms of Amen Hall, too, are a good distance from the spacious office on the Mezzanine floor of the Science building. But, they do indeed have something in common. There, sitting at the Harkness table in the chemistry classroom, standing by the back doors of the Boathouse, lounging in Amen Hall's common room, working in the office on the Mezzanine floor, you will find Dr. Albert Leger at home.

Leger arrived at the Academy in 2006 and currently teaches chemistry classes as the Chair of the Science Department. Beyond academics, he coaches the boys varsity crew team and will lead them to several major competitions throughout the year. He is also affiliated with Amen Hall, where he serves as faculty on duty every week. Known for his warm spirit and bright smile as much as his role as a talented instructor in the classroom, Leger has certainly earned a superb reputation in his 17 years at the Academy.

Fresh out of his graduate and postdoctoral studies, Leger had decided to become a high school instructor. Before Exeter, he taught for five years at Montclair Kimberley Academy in Montclair, NJ, and later, for another five years, at Hopkins School in New Haven, CT.

"Part of my job was to write job descriptions for new faculty," Leger said. "I was looking around for different examples when I saw there was an open position at Exeter. I thought it would be very exciting to

go from a day school to a boarding school, so when I talked to my family and I was offered the position, we decided to move."

If a fortuitous turn of events led to his first year at the Academy, his decision to stay for nearly two decades thereafter was deliberate. "I think Exeter is an incredible institution," Leger said.

"I love the job and I love the students," Leger continued. "They choose for themselves to be here, and that makes for a community of students enthusiastic about learning. As a teacher, I had to shift the focus from myself to the students. It's not just me giving the information — it's a class learning together, and every year I learn something new. All of it makes Exeter a wonderful place to be a teacher."

As an instructor in science, Leger has often taught the accelerated chemistry sequence. "It's a challenging course, but the students are usually eager to learn," Leger said. "They accept the challenge and they're very smart. We basically cover two years of chemistry in one, and that pace and the level of instruction are very exciting for me."

Besides accelerated chemistry, Leger has also taught the regular chemistry sequence and, more recently, the Earth and the Climate Crisis elective course. "It's a course I developed from an initial focus on geology to looking at the planet as a dynamic system. My doctorate is in Earth science, so I've always loved being able to study how our planet works," Leger said of the latter.

"I also think understanding the science behind climate change is very important, not just waving it around as a political issue," Leger continued. "As an instructor, I hope that if we put our minds to it, we'll be able to find ways to mitigate the issue. I'm just glad to

be part of teaching the next generation of young people interested in learning and doing something about it."

Leger's passion for his coursework has left a strong impression on his students. "Dr. Leger is that rare combination of intellect and cheerfulness that makes 50 minutes in his classroom feel like a privilege," senior Harrison McGovern said. "As a teacher, he is singular in his ability to act with patience and thoughtfulness in every aspect of his classroom environment."

"I had him for two terms of chemistry," senior William Soh said. "Dr. Leger is a wonderful teacher. He brings passion and enthusiasm to classes — and, outside of being an amazing educator, he was great at creating a positive and social atmosphere in class. He played music during labs and made it a really fun time. I also think I ended up taking a lot of his time with stupid hypotheticals, but he was very patient with me and entertained my ideas."

For upper Leonardo Chung, who was a student of Leger for all three terms of the accelerated chemistry sequence, Leger's classes were an unforgettable experience. "I remember always being excited beforehand and coming away with a sense of fulfillment," Chung said.

"Initially I didn't have much interest in chemistry compared to other STEM classes, but through having Dr. Leger as a teacher, I came to really love chemistry," Chung continued. "He has a specific teaching style that I very much appreciated. He was always passionate and taught to help students retain information and become genuinely interested in the course material."

Outside the classroom, Leger is also the Chair of the Science Department, a role he has served for nearly five years and to which he has applied his

many talents. "It's a big department, with almost 30 of us in four sub-disciplines," Leger said. "It's a very active, very energetic group of people."

"I love being able to help create a vision for the entire department — what we want to do as a group, how we want to educate our students. I especially love helping new faculty who come here. I want them to be successful and happy. It's a lot of work, but it's good work," Leger continued.

Just as students have seen and appreciated his devotion to the classroom, so have members of faculty in the department setting, who certainly take notice of his leadership. "I've been fortunate to witness his care for students and his superb organization in that role," Dean of Faculty Eimer Page said. "I get to see firsthand how kind and supportive he is to his colleagues, too. He's a steadfast presence on this campus."

On the other side of campus, Leger has served as the head coach of the boys varsity crew team since 2012, recognizing Exeter's long history on the water and doing his best to maintain the level and interest of the athletic program over the years. "I help organize the whole program and coach the top two boats," Leger said. "That's been a lot of work, but very satisfying."

That work has paid off, evidenced by the team's notable performance in the past few years. "Two years ago, we had a spectacular season and we went to the national championships in Florida," Leger said. "This October, we're going to the Head of the Charles Regatta. The spring is our interscholastic season, and I am looking forward to having some fast boats racing in our NEIRA (New England Interscholastic Rowing Association) championships in late May."

Many rowers recalled Leger's enthusiasm for the team. "When I first considered rowing," senior and rower Marcus Lorgen said, "Coach Leger was very welcoming. I immediately felt like I was a part of the team."

Senior Michael Goodall, a captain of the crew team, has fostered a close relationship with Leger for many years. "When I first visited Exeter as a prospective student in the seventh grade, he really took me under his wing and gave me an awesome tour of the boathouse," Goodall said.

"Since then, I've known him as someone who's very thoughtful and caring about the team," Goodall continued. "He has a philosophy of improving one percent every day to see massive improvements over the course of a season. We also share a deep love for rowing in general. Whenever there's a major rowing event, at the national or international level, we like to talk about it on the phone—what schools did well, what their rowing styles are. It's really nice that he cares about the sport and loves it himself."

Leger's coaching philosophy was also memorable for senior and rower Alex Luna. "Dr. Leger is a great coach because he's always there for the team with a happy smile," Luna said.

"I think the biggest 'lesson' I've learned from him is the motto he has at

the end of every email to the team, 'Improve every day,' which is an extension of the motto 'Any seat, any day,'" Luna continued. "It reminds me to have an open mindset and be willing and capable of improving every practice, able to adapt to any new situation and making the best of it no matter what. That motto keeps us focused on what we've improved on, individually and as a team, and it keeps us motivated to work hard."

Goodall and Luna are not the only ones to recognize Leger's commitment to the team, of course. "I started crew my upper year and have always felt comfortable talking to him about improving," senior and rower Chris Serrao said. "At first, I was confused and felt left out because I was joining the sport as a junior, but his constant guidance helped me. Even small words of encouragement before races stand out. He helps foster the family and community of the crew team and pushes all of us to surpass our limits and be the best we can be."

Yet what might be considered a smaller commitment beyond the classroom and the boathouse, on the contrary, is perhaps the most telling detail of his character. Remarkably, Leger has taken the same dedication and earnest passion to his role as a faculty affiliate in Amen Hall, where his readiness to care for his students has stood out to many residents.

"Although Dr. Leger doesn't live in the dorm, he does have a huge presence that we constantly feel," upper and Amen resident Stella Song said. "He is very popular at check-in, and people go to him all the time with homework problems or questions because he is so helpful."

Song recounted Leger's enthusiasm while on duty. "I remember one time when I had no sense of direction and no idea on how to approach a chemistry review problem, he worked with me for as long as he was on duty that night to help me out. He cares about all of us in the dorm and makes such an effort to support us whenever we need help," Song said.

"Last spring, I couldn't figure out a chemistry problem, so I went to the first-floor common room," upper and advisee Natalia Ulbin echoed. "Dr. Leger and I worked on the problem together for half an hour until I understood it. He was so patient and eager to help."

Leger's advisory has been a similarly warm space for his students. "He's like a dad on campus, always interested in asking about what happened in my day," lower and advisee Rebecca Nguyen said. "I know I can always talk to him—he just makes you feel a lot better."

"Once, he suggested a fun advisory outing and we went to Chipotle and Trader Joe's," Nguyen continued. "He drove us all the way there and it was a great time. You can tell he really does want to get to know us and make us feel comfortable all the time."

Others in his advisory had their own special moments to share. "I always tell people that having him as my adviser is the best thing that's happened to me at Exeter," lower and advisee Maya Ilangovan said.

"He's super sweet, so easy to talk to, and ready to listen," Ilangovan

continued. "I was really behind during finals week last year and Dr. Leger was on duty, so I went down and stayed with him close to midnight, studying. He was quizzing me and helping me through the material. It was really nice."

Lower and advisee Whitney Pickett described, "I have cried in front of Dr. Leger, ranted in front of Dr. Leger, overshadowed completely to Dr. Leger," Pickett said. "I look forward to his duty nights in Amen so I can sit with him after check-in, just talking about life. He's by far one of the easiest people to talk to."

Ultimately, you cannot fit Leger into the role of a science instructor, or a crew coach, or a faculty dorm affiliate, or a student adviser—he is all of them and more. Leger applies empathy, hard work, and commitment across his many positions with such consistency that it becomes impossible to tell them apart.

From the Department Chair position to his dorm community, Leger embodies a role of kindness and support. "Mr. Leger is one of the kindest and more giving members I have served with on a dorm team," Art Department Chair and Amen affiliate faculty Carla Collins said.

"He works so hard, both as chair of the Science Department, Crew Coach and here in Amen. He is always willing to go above and beyond to support his dorm team and students," Collins continued.

Collins shared a personal note with Leger. "We bonded over sharing some similar French-Canadian customs and love of corton or gorton (a pork meat spread on toast)," she said. "I always leave a conversation with him, feeling positive and inspired to be better and to do better."

"Whether he's serving the science department or coaching crew or leading remarkable trips for students to Maui or the Grand Canyon, in every case he is completely focused on creating the best possible experience for students and colleagues," Instructor in Science Townley Chisholm said. "His patience and good humor are inexhaustible, and he is always kind."

Chisholm shared a memorable experience with Leger amongst their students. "I will never forget the joy that Dr. Leger took as he showed our student group the Great Unconformity in the Grand Canyon, or his delight in explaining the volcanic features of the Haleakala Crater on Maui as we hiked through them," he said.

"I think of how much fun he had body-surfing with students at Hamoa Beach, his incredible organizational skills on those crew trips, and how patient he was when I got our little caravan lost on Maui or in Arizona," Chisholm continued. "He is the perfect traveling companion. We are all very lucky indeed to know Albert Leger. There is nobody like him."

It is little wonder, then, that Leger has stayed with the Academy for nearly twenty years and looks forward to more. "It's very exciting to be here as a teacher, a coach, and an adviser," he said. "At the end of the day, I love getting to know the students in different aspects of the school. It makes for a busy week, sure, but for a fulfilling life as well."

Senior of the Week: Clara Peng



Senior Clara Peng posing for a photo outside of Grill.

By ELLEN JIN, AMY LIN, ROX PARK, and LILY RAMPE

As a beloved proctor in Amen Hall and a co-head of four clubs, senior Clara Peng holds a special place in multiple communities across campus. With her natural kindness and deep passion for everything from activism to history and anthropology, Peng has touched the lives of countless Exonians and leaves a legacy of thoughtfulness and leadership at Exeter.

The youngest of three sisters, Peng grew up in Seattle, WA, and loved to play lacrosse. As a child, she read books about boarding school but never saw attending one herself as an option until her mother, who knew students from Phillips Academy Andover in her own school days, suggested that she visit a few. “No one in my family thought I would really get in because it seemed really far-fetched,” Peng recalled. “I was just so excited that my parents were happy to let me go.”

The new home that Peng was introduced to at Exeter was Amen Hall. She has experienced the warm atmosphere of Amen Hall throughout the three years she has spent in the dorm and cited a surprise party some friends threw for her as one of her favorite memories. “We were just sitting around playing card games together. It was really sweet because I just felt that it was so nice to have all my friends there,” Peng shared.

As a proctor, Peng now loves to organize dorm events

and create a community where every student will feel that same sense of home, which she has done through small but thoughtful gestures. “She has a way of quietly and surely getting to know everyone in the dorm through her genuine interest in and care for who they are,” Peng’s German instructor and Amen dorm head Marianne Zwicker said.

“When she asks get-to-know-you questions, she remembers what people say so she doesn’t have to ask twice,” Zwicker continued. “She’s sensitive to people’s likes and dislikes and makes everyone feel welcome by honoring their priorities, seeing and hearing them, and remembering what’s important to them. She provides fun, low-key spaces where everyone feels welcome, like an informal Amen breakfast table in Elm. And she makes sure to remember birthdays in our class and to know if someone has a concert, a performance, or anything where they might benefit from some support or a friendly word.”

Chair of the Art Department and Peng’s advisor Carla Collins agreed. “She is the type of student who always says hello on the path and never takes the adults in her life for granted. I appreciate her calm, mature, humble, and open demeanor.”

Peng’s caring for her community is also seen by student members of her dorm community. “She’s really caring to everyone. She just became proctor and is already having talks with a lot of preps about being homesick,” upper

and Amen resident Emily Chai-Onn said.

Upper and Amen resident Freddie Chang recounted a specific memory from her lower year in the dorm. “It was Easter and I went into my room [and] there were jelly beans everywhere.” Chai-Onn recalled the same day, adding that Peng “put a bunch of candy around our rooms and in little Easter eggs.”

Even as a teacher, Collins recounted a similar memory. “Clara and I bonded over our love of apples and apple picking during Academy Life Day last year. She recalled once about how I gave her apples on her birthday. After that, on her first day back from Christmas break, she brought me her favorite type of apple from Washington (cosmic crisp) and left it outside my door on my birthday without realizing it was my birthday until I told her. It made my day. She is so caring, and anyone who is her friend knows how deeply she cares for humanity.”

“I think her ability to bring people together is something very special. She facilitates spaces in a way that really promotes friendship, so it’s easy for her to bring people together and build connections with one another,” senior Ayaan Akhtar shared.

In the larger Exeter community, Peng’s peers spoke similarly of her presence. “I think she’s always there for you when you need her,” senior Aden Lee said. “She’s very sensitive and she knows when someone needs support. I think a lot of people can agree with how compassionate she

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is.”

Upper Ava Helbig agreed. “She’s always so kind and very sure of who she is and what she wants to say. She’s just so sure of what the right thing is, how to get there, and what to do.”

Another upper, Kayla Villanueva, described her as “committed and driven,” while senior Luke Davis said that she “makes everyone around her better and lights up a room.”

Akhtar also mentioned how it was “really easy to lose track of time when talking with Clara.”

In addition to within the dorm and among her friends, Peng is deeply involved in fostering communities for the things she cares about, including the four clubs that she leads on campus: the Multicultural Exonian Society (MCES), Gender and Sexual Alliance, Biology Club, and Exonians Against Sexual Assault.

“She’s definitely a leader,” Helbig asserted. “She definitely cares a lot about the community, about the people in her respective communities, and I just really respect that about her. She’s very involved.”

Describing their personal relationship, Helbig explained that she met Peng through the MCES: “She was [a] co-head last year. The more meetings I went to, the more I got to know her and we eventually ended up getting dinner.”

Other friends shared that meals with Peng were always good memories. “I started talking to her by going to breakfast with her,” Chai-Onn said. “I think I was just in her

room one day and talking to her — then we ate breakfast [together.]”

Peng’s engaging and inviting personality translates not only into her personal friendships but also into the classroom, where her teachers have agreed that she plays an outstanding role. As Peng’s German teacher, Zwicker shared that Peng’s “sense of humor and her genuine interest in her classmates made our Harkness discussions so much fun, and she’s a keen observer of people and what motivates them, not only in real life, but also in literature!”

One of Peng’s favorite classes at the Academy has been U.S. History, as she enjoys history and anthropology. “Right now, I’m working on a senior project with Dr. Samuels where we are revitalizing the anthropology museum,” Peng explained. “We started doing it in the spring, but my official class is now and we are doing a lot of research and cataloging everything. It’s been really exciting.”

Lee expressed admiration for the work that Peng is doing with the museum. “Her senior project is looking at the Exeter archive and finding artifacts that belong to indigenous people, returning those artifacts to indigenous people. I think that that really speaks to what kind of person she is.”

Collins said, “She is a model example of an Exonian, using her knowledge for goodness and for social change. For example, she is actively working to help the anthropology department return various artifacts they’ve collected over the years to their rightful tribes. Clara has a strong moral compass and is not afraid to use her voice.”

History Instructor and Peng’s senior project advisor Troy Samuels shared, “We’re two people who care about this space and want to create it into something that’s useful for the school.” Samuels expressed his appreciation for the co-learning experience he had with Clara.

Witnessing Clara’s dedication towards the anthropology museum project, Samuels continued, “In a school full of go-getters, students who drive their own learning, Clara is one of the

go-getterest students I’ve ever worked with. She has a vision, something she’s interested in, and her own drive that affected so much change around that space. It has been really fun to see her go about finding something she’s passionate about and just getting to direct her as best I can.”

“It’s really cool to see the stuff she produces,” Samuels continued. “She has brought in multiple specialists to campus just on the strength of her cold emailing. This [project] is a passion that’s tempered by a sense of responsibility. The way she has taken that [passion] and partnered rigorous research, learning, and understanding the space she’s trying to redesign is what our school’s two virtues of knowledge and goodness are. She’s really expressing that here.”

Reflecting upon the legacy Clara will leave, Samuels said, “I think the work she’s doing with the Anthropology Museum has already changed how that space looks. As part of her senior project, she’s redesigning parts of the space and has taken down parts of the displays to put things up in their place that are going to be better suited to our school and the values of our community. She’s changing the way we as a community view that resource, and I think it’s really cool how that’s going to last well beyond her time here.”

In terms of her legacy on Amen, Zwicker shared, “Clara will leave behind a dorm community who has been able to see and experience her unique and effective style of leadership, and I’m sure a number of younger students will want to follow in her footsteps.”

There is no doubt that Peng has left a mark on the students, teachers, and culture at the Academy. “There are people out there who are meant for you and care about you,” Peng reflected, addressing younger and future Exonians.

“I think a lot of people have a lot of worries about the way that things are going to go with friends, or classes, or teachers, or dorm life. The amazing thing is that even though there’s only a thousand or so kids here, there’s so much variety and there’s always going to be somebody who is going to be your friend or who wants to help you, really values you, and cares about you,” Peng concluded.

Exonians’ Summer Vacations

By CHERISH AMBY-OKOLO and LEO ZHANG

Free from school, Exonians had the time to explore over their summer break. Students took advantage of the three months off to rest or delve into their interests or hobbies through vacations, standardized test preparations, internships, and college applications. Whether an incoming prep getting ready for their first time at boarding school or a four-year senior getting ready for their last year, students had a restful and productive summer.

Exonians traveled to different parts of the world with friends or family. Upper Tommaso Cucci described his trip to an island near Italy. “I went to this island off the coast of Sicily called Vulcano, which means volcano in English,” he said. “With a volcano on the island, there are black sand beaches because of the volcanic activity. I was also able to meet up with a lot of friends

this summer in Italy and I went to some clubs, which I was allowed to do. I had a lot of fun dancing in the clubs and hanging out with friends while also meeting new people.”

New senior Khadeeja Sarr highlighted her cross-continental travels. “I left the UAE after having lived there for 16 years and traveled to Senegal where I stayed for five weeks. I got to meet family, including cousins I haven’t seen in many years.”

Prep Toto Papathanasopoulos spent two months in France while visiting his grandma and attending school.

Like Toto, many other incoming preps had some form of preparation for the Academy. Prep Jacquie Lonian talked about her preparation. “I definitely was studying a bit,” she said. “Whenever I go into a new school year, I redo any of the school homework they made us use so that I’m fresh on it. I tried to fix my sleep schedule which miserably failed, but it’s fine now.”

Prep Dani Mendez also had her own preparation mechanism. “My time in New York was with my program SEEDS,” she said. “We did one month at the Masters School. It was really just to prepare myself for the academic intensity here at Exeter.”

Many students used the extra time in the summer to get involved in internships or paid jobs that align with their interests. Senior Oliver Liu talked about his experience working in a hospital. “I worked at a pathology lab for a couple of weeks during the summer,” he said. “At the lab, we were primarily looking at the anatomical pathology and the histopathology of different patients that were at the hospital. So, the pathologist I was working with was primarily seeing breast and hematopathology cases. I went over a bunch of slides of breast tissue and blood and learned about a bunch of different diseases and their pathologies. I saw a lot of ductal, invasive, DCIS, lobular, and inside

chew carcinoma.”

Senior Emilie Carranza had lots of options for her summer plans. “I spent most of my summer interning at a biofabrication laboratory, working as a lifeguard, and volunteering in Emergency Medical Services,” she said. “During my upper winter and spring term, I applied to various summer programs and internships. By the end of spring term, I had options of where I wanted to intern or take summer courses. I was fortunate to accept a research internship in an Advanced Biofabrication Laboratory focusing on regenerative medicine and medical devices. As the only high school intern working with undergraduates, graduates, PhD students, and PhD candidates, my mentors were aware of my inexperience and took time to explain their past and current work. My summer also included volunteering at my local EMS, where I would cover shifts often from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m., once to three times a week. On weekends, I spent my days

working as a lifeguard and participating in additional EMS training. The research and EMS volunteering made my summer extremely fun, as well as educational.” Emilie also provided advice for uppers. “My advice for upper year is to look for summer opportunities during fall term as many deadlines are in the winter.”

But for seniors, summertime meant college applications. Liu explained the burdensome process. “I have very few college applications done and they take forever,” he said. “I spent six hours the other day sitting there, and I only got three essays done. It was terrible.”

On the brighter side, Exonians gave back to their communities through volunteering. Before going to Vulcano, Cucci helped out at a local furniture shop. “I wanted to do some volunteer work quickly because I knew I was going to Italy,” he said. “So I just looked online, found Habitat for Humanity in New York City, registered,

and signed up. I was volunteering at a Restore, which is just pretty much a kind of cheap furniture store where we collect donations from people who want to donate furniture stuff. My job was just pretty much to move the furniture out onto the floor, and help customers.”

Although the break felt short, Cucci enjoyed his time. “I did it with a bunch of other guys, none of whom I had known before, but I met a bunch of different college students who were all there,” he continued. “It was great. I loved it.”

Prep Dani also participated in community service over the summer. “I was a day camp counselor and I helped with younger children in my state,” she said.

Summertime could mean relaxation and catching up with friends or volunteering and working, but no matter what they did, Exonians made the best use of their summer.

Students Reflect on Academy-Sponsored Summer Programs



Exonians on the Archaeology in Italy program pose for a photo.

Photo courtesy of @pea_italy2023

By ERIN HAN, LUCY JUNG, and ELAINE QIAO

Many Exonians spent a busy summer packed with unique adventures, conducted through the Academy’s Global Initiatives Program.

From Stanford, California to Tokyo, Japan, six programs were offered, all of which reflected the wide range of Exonians’ passions and interests. Students traveled across the world and were given opportunities to participate in hands-on, immersive learning experiences in various fields, namely entrepreneurship, archaeology, scientific research, and sustainability.

RIKEN SUMMER INTERNSHIP

“The Riken summer internship was an extraordinary experience to get involved with hands-on nuclear physics research through the Riken Nishina School, a summer workshop held by the Riken Nishina Center for Accelerator-Based Science (RNC) in Tokyo,” explained senior Ishaan Vohra. The three Exonians who embarked on the trip, Vohra, Cee McClave and Daria Ivanova, frequently participated in lectures alongside undergraduate and graduate students and conducted various hands-on experiments.

Vohra reflected on one of his favorite moments from the program. “We were investigating the gamma spectrum produced by a proton impinging on an aluminum-27 target, and though we didn’t observe anything out of the ordinary, it was interesting nonetheless to see our findings match up rather nicely with the theoretical predictions from the existing scientific literature.”

He added, “It was sort of a beautiful verification that all the tiny particles we read about in our textbooks really behave in a way we, the scientific community, can somewhat understand and reproduce, even if we can’t see them with our own eyes.”

McClave also commented on the culturally educational aspect of the program. “Aside from just learning more physics, I think it was super

cool to learn more about Japan as a country through experiencing it firsthand.” They added, “I think that it was also just cool because there are a lot of aspects of American culture that, because you’re ingrained in it when you’re here, you sort of forget can be different in other places. [In that way] I think [the trip] gave me a clearer picture of not only what Japan is like, but also what makes American culture, American culture.”

ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN SINGAPORE

The three-week Entrepreneurship in Singapore program was conducted in collaboration with the CIEE institute and organized to fit both classes and tours into the students’ everyday schedules. “One part of [our program] was to explore Singapore and immerse ourselves in the culture and the people around us. The other part of it was learning about businesses and entrepreneurship, especially how to start a business and pitch it to investors,” upper Kenzie Carty recalled.

When asked to provide his opinions on the overall organization of the program, senior Mitchell Tam responded, “I think that the program was well-organized. Everything was run smoothly, and nothing comes to mind when thinking of mishaps. The balance between class time, site visits, and free time was great: it was allocated perfectly, giving us a good mix of learning, entertainment, and freedom.” Carty talked about the tours and cultural experiences of the trip. Carty noted that a lot of the cultural adventures were done together as one large group, and wished there had been more free time to explore the wonders of Singapore independently. “We only got one day off where we could go and explore all by ourselves. I wish we had [these free days] once a week,” Carty said.

Carty also spoke on her favorite part of the trip: the trip had been her first time in Asia, and the striking differences between Singapore and her home, Boston, stood out. An example was the public transportation system. “I had never seen really a public transportation system like

that. I could get anywhere and it was a lot more accessible.” Carty said. She continued, speaking on how great it was to see that the Singaporean government prioritized things like environmentalism and the safety of citizens.

Reflecting on their three-week experience, Tam and Carty both reached a consensus that they would most definitely go on the trip again if given the chance. “At first, I thought [the program] was too long — three weeks is a long-time commitment — but the program went by a lot faster than I thought,” Tam said. “I would definitely apply for the program again. I loved my experience there and I don’t think I’d do anything to change it: I got to learn quite a bit about entrepreneurship and Singapore, while also meeting a whole group of new people,” he finished.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN BERLIN

“It was a three-week entrepreneurship program and we basically took classes in the mornings to learn about social entrepreneurship and global entrepreneurship. And then in the afternoons and evenings, we were able to explore the city of Berlin and get to know some more about German culture,” upper Catherine Yan said.

Yan continued, “It was really cool to explore another country because I have never been to Europe before, so being able to explore Europe and Berlin specifically with friends and classmates and also learn about entrepreneurship in the Berlin setting was a very unique and memorable experience.”

Yan shared why she applied for the program. “I joined Exeter Business Club and competed in FBLA competition, so I was pretty interested in business and entrepreneurship.”

“I think overall it was pretty well organized because we had a balance of learning as well as having fun... getting to explore the city, and learning culture that way,” Yan reflected. “We had lots of time to reflect on how entrepreneurship could be seen in the daily lives of Berliners, and getting to interact with them was also a fun way to learn about it.

Yan concluded what she

learned from the program. “There are lots of problems, lots of issues in the world right now, and you can always think of solutions to issues you’re passionate about and...be the agent of social change. No matter what your age is, what your background is, if you have a solution and an idea to a problem, you can be an entrepreneur.”

SUSTAINABILITY IN VERMONT

Upper Ben Soriano participated in the nine-day Sustainability and Service Learning program in Vermont. Soriano said, “The main purpose of our trip was to reconnect with nature and cultures we normally would never interact with. Through working on trails and talking with Abenaki elders and high schoolers in rural schools, we were able to view a world we otherwise would never have seen.”

Upon being asked to recall his favorite part of the trip, Soriano said, “My favorite part was definitely the mountain biking. The Northeast Kingdom’s mountain biking trails stretched through this entire valley and served as a great way for us to unwind and have fun in the middle of the program. It was quite physically challenging and pushed us all out of our comfort zones.” Soriano continued, “I think that the program was truly great. If I could change one thing, I would decrease the amount of trail work we did and add another day of mountain biking. Am I a little biased because I loved it? Absolutely. But it was a great bonding experience for the entire group and pushed us all emotionally and physically.”

BIO670 INTERNSHIP AT STANFORD

Seniors Valentina Zhang and Jenna Wang spent their Augusts as interns in the Seung Kim Lab at Stanford University under the mentorship of Dr. Lutz Kockel, as an extension of the *BIO670: Biology Research* course that they took during their upper springs. They spent their days both conducting experiments primarily involving fruit flies at their mature and larvae stages, examining results, and attending lab meetings

alongside other researchers.

When asked about her favorite part of the program, Zhang reflected, “I would say that the most enjoyable part of the project was actually getting to see the results, and really think about how to interpret the results.” Zhang continued, “So for instance we had a hypothesis with the aging project, which was that, as the flies age their transposons would express at higher rates. So we were expecting that if we look at an adult fly that’s one day old, it would have, let’s say no transpose expression versus a fly that’s, you know, 30 days old. However, there were a lot of unexpected results.”

Zhang also spoke about experiencing firsthand some of the challenges that a scientist faces during their research. “One thing we struggled with was how to characterize the expression that we did see. So for instance, if you see a certain expression pattern in the brain of a one-day-old fly and then you see a different expression in a fly that’s 30 days old, how do you compare those two expression patterns and what can you say about the biology just based off of that? And I think getting to explore some of those data with Lutz and with Jenna and just looking through these images were really cool because it really made me feel like a scientist.”

Zhang added, “And Lutz was telling us that that’s a lot of what being in a lab and doing research are about. It’s about looking at your results and trying to analyze things that maybe hadn’t been analyzed before and trying to come up with new hypotheses.”

Wang also reflected on observing and learning from others in the lab. “It was incredible to see the inner workings of a lab. I especially gained insight into the critical thinking and perseverance that is necessary for research work. Seeing how lab members and my mentor, Dr. Lutz Kockel, adjusted experiments when things did not go as planned demonstrated how necessary problem-solving is — not only to research but also to life — and it’s a skill that we practiced often.”

During their time at the program, the two seniors were given the opportunity to interact with Exeter alumni Dr. Seung Kim ‘81 as well as Arjun Rajan ‘17. Wang spoke about being able to meet and connect with them. “At the internship, I gained vast amounts of insight and knowledge from both Dr. Seung Kim and Arjun Rajan. They are both incredibly inspiring and thoughtful people. I am truly grateful for all of the knowledge they have given me.” She added, “Dr. Kim gave me and Valentina advice on how to approach the future and truly cultivated a warm environment in his lab. Arjun helped guide Valentina and I through our bioinformatics project with stellar teaching skills and a genuine desire to help us learn. He also gave us helpful advice, not only regarding the project, but also about school, college, and beyond — and was so fun to talk with.”

ARCHAEOLOGY IN ITALY

Upper Ava Helbig introduced the itinerary of the program. “A week after we landed, we essentially went to this villa that was really close to the excavation site. And then from then on, every morning we woke up, we went to archeology, and we kind of just dug stuff, we excavated.” Helbig continued on the purpose of the trip. “And I think the whole point was to allow

students to kind of explore the archeology career and how it goes and what it’s like and maybe give students something to contemplate, like why this would be a worthwhile career in the long run.”

Upper Laura Saldarriaga added, “We were in Gabii, which is kind of like a little town outside of Rome. And then we really focused on Gabii at that point. But we really tried to understand Roman history, even when we dug.”

Upper Keon Osei shared, “We explored all the museums and the culture, all the parts from the Coliseum and the Vatican. They were very interesting. Then we went for two weeks to an archeology site where we dug on an actual excavation site. And, we found a bunch of cool things like bones, pottery, and a bunch of building materials.”

Osei explained what motivated him to apply. “I was in Dr. Samuel’s Roman history class for Latin students. That really piqued my interest in archeology and Roman history because in his class he has these engravings that we’re supposed to learn and see if we can translate them into Latin, then translate them into English afterward. So then that really made me more excited to find these things in real life and go explore in archeology and also see how we can see the past in different ways and how it can reflect us too.”

Saldarriaga shared more about the trip experience. “The leaders like Doc Sam, who has been in the program since around 2010, and the other people have been there from the very beginning. They’re very well-versed in the history of the place. So they would tell us about the historical importance. It was just a really big learning experience. And then on the weekends, we would go to cute little towns and also many historical museums. There was a lot of gelato.”

Osei shared, “But we had just an amazing experience on how we like to learn. We learned this specific time period that we’re excavating. It was really interesting because I don’t think I could’ve learned those skills. I would never have gotten to try these skills out if it wasn’t for this program.”

On the living situation, Saldarriaga responded, “Oh, I have no complaints about the housing. It was so good. So in Rome, we stayed in a Catholic school. Each of us had their own room, their own little bathroom, and a shared common room.... we would go downstairs to the school cafeteria where the lady would cook for us.”

“I was also not a huge fan of this Roman variant of spinach, which is super bitter,” Saldarriaga joked.

Helbig reflected, “I’m so glad that I did and I was able to experience all of this and meet all these new people who know that they want to do this for the rest of their lives. And it was inspiring to see, especially in archeology, that you have to have a lot of passion in you to keep going. By that I mean you can’t be an archeologist without seriously caring about the history of the people you’re excavating, and their homes or cities. And it’s just so admirable to see people have so much passion for what they do.”

The 2023 summer programs offered by the Academy’s Global Initiatives Programs provided remarkable spaces and opportunities that fostered a great variety of interests and passions. These programs created a very memorable summer for many Exonians.

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Celebrity Status on Culture

By MAX MANTEL '25

Drew Barrymore became a scab recently; her show will return to air despite the current WGA and SAG-AFTRA strikes. This goes against the public image she's spent years cultivating: one of positivity, optimism, and friendliness, which is particularly relevant to her career as a talk show host. A talk show is largely dependent on the friendly personality of the host, and when it becomes clear that that personality is manufactured, audiences

will leave. This kind of problem isn't unique to Barrymore, in fact, it's just one effect of celebrities curating fake personalities.

After all, celebrities are just people at the end of the day, and with the rise of social media, that's all they really need to be. Celebrity culture has shifted with the arrival of platforms like YouTube and TikTok, where achieving fame and relevancy is as simple as being relatable. That isn't inherently negative, but it does put more pressure on celebrities to maintain a curated image that their team has

constructed for them.

Now more than ever, success in the star world ties into maintaining a public image, often overtaking the career of the initial celebrity. Actors like Bryan Cranston and Gwyneth Paltrow have used their own brands and connections to launch businesses removed from their talents, with most of the marketing simply being their faces. This can create a symbiotic relationship between the celebrity and their product: Paltrow's own

business and its... strange marketing choices haven't done her any favors, and even influencers like Tana Mongeau have seen public ridicule due to failed business ventures (in this case, Tana's convention). The court of public opinion is not an easy one to play in, and in making their image so intertwined with their career, celebs run the risk of ruining both.

Perhaps this issue is most prevalent in regard to current

"influencers." The influencer is the modern celebrity, building a fanbase purely off of their antics and life. Celebrity culture feels this shift as well; actors and singers now promote themselves through vlogs, interviews, funny tweets, and their general personalities. This culture change is largely indicative of our increasing urge to see celebrities as "real people" — people who experience the same trivial problems as us despite their fame and wealth. It's easier to form parasocial relationships and "bonds" with those who do share more of themselves and have created a more holistic self-image. In this way, every celebrity is an influencer to some degree, if

not for the fact that they simply have influence. That influence is a double-edged sword though, as it comes with much scrutiny. Celebrities are called out and lambasted online for smaller and smaller things daily, by people both vitriolic and jealous. Oftentimes it feels like the public looks for things that are wrong with celebrities; if one cannot live up to the image they try to project, public opinion on them will shift quickly. As we are invested in their success, we are invested in their failure.

This is perhaps most obvious when examining celebrities like Ye and Elon Musk, who, despite initially gaining public recognition through their music and business ventures, now thrive off of the fact that their actions are absurd and frankly, entertaining. There will always be a market for entertaining failure. As long as we feel the urge to idolize public figures, that will always be the case.



Photo courtesy of Hollywood Wax Museum

The Jefferson Question

By JOONYOUNG HEO '25

Ought we celebrate Thomas Jefferson?

For better or worse, this question had a definitive answer in early America — of course we should celebrate such a man as Jefferson — and anything to the contrary was unthinkable. In modern America, however, when society has been so radically transformed by newer ideals and ideologues, and when there is an ever-growing movement to reappraise how history has been taught in previous decades, that answer has shifted in the other direction.

While this question concerns Thomas Jefferson, moreover, it's relevant to all of history itself. The modern audience is increasingly prone to criticize our predecessors, from Wilson and Roosevelt to even Washington and Lincoln. Taken to an extreme, this tendency is exaggerated in recent cases of public statues being vandalized in parks and universities. Hence, the real question at hand is a broader inquiry: armed with all the facts and the privilege of retrospect, how should we go about weighing between several opposing factors to fairly examine an individual? It's a complicated question with convoluted implications. I simply take the Jefferson case as a revealing model to work through it.

Let us first look at the obvious facts, which are particularly critical for this debate. Born in colonial Virginia in 1743, Jefferson most famously wrote the Declaration of Independence. He was also a masterful diplomat in France and led the crusade for religious freedom, among other individual liberties, after the American Revolution. And when he became the third president of the United States, he dealt with foreign pressure and strengthened the country.

Of course, not all the facts are in his favor. In Monticello, his home

plantation, he owned hundreds of slaves throughout his lifetime. It has also been proven very likely by a recent genealogical test that he fathered several children with an enslaved young woman named Sally Hemings. While the nature of the relationship remains unclear, his conduct from a position of ownership is morally impermissible. These are facts, just as true and indisputable as his many national contributions, and they must be equally accepted to engage in this discussion.

This is the point where "common knowledge" ends — with the Declaration and his slaves. It is quite easy, then, to picture Jefferson as a cruel, twisted man who happened to be a Founding Father. Taking this as a premise, it seems understandable that many of us refuse to celebrate Jefferson for his grave moral failings irrespective of his achievements. When the question becomes a choice between historical contributions and quality in character, we are naturally inclined to favor the second.

But Jefferson's story, like that of most other figures from the past, is of far greater nuance than it initially appears. As it turns out, presuming his devotion to slavery contradicts a number of other facts from his life — primarily that he did hold anti-slavery views. For one thing, Jefferson included a paragraph in the Declaration condemning slavery (though the section was eventually vetoed). Later, he abolished the international slave trade as president and even advocated for a plan of gradual emancipation within the country. The moral evils of slavery, after it seems, were clear to Jefferson.

The objection is obvious: If he cared so much about slavery, why didn't he free his own slaves? Simply put, he could not afford to part with them. His entire estate was tied to slavery, and even then he died with some two

million dollars in debt (in today's currency). Freeing his slaves would have directly defied his creditors, ruining his finances and condemning his family to poverty. His personal refusal to treat his slaves cruelly aligns with this notion of necessity. Thus, if sheer moral ignorance and evil are on one side of the spectrum and abolitionism on the other, Jefferson would be somewhere in between.

Whatever his financial situation was, of course, we ought to roundly criticize him for shrinking from his great duty to free his slaves. He was indeed a coward and a hypocrite when it mattered most, ultimately prioritizing his own financial security over his moral qualms. But even as we acknowledge that Jefferson was a far cry from a perfect human being, we must remember he was just that — a human being. We can recognize his defects without attributing a profound depravity to his character. After all, how many of us, born in colonial Virginia and raised in a culture that has always normalized slavery, would find it in ourselves to sacrifice our lives and our families for a moral cause? If anything, the very fact that he publicized and implemented into national policy his misgivings about his own way of life should be counted favorably — and, at the very least, it shows us that developing historical empathy makes it much harder to dismiss his moral worth as a "vile slaveholder."

We can apply a similar approach to Jefferson's relationship with Sally Hemings. Nothing can justify what happened, but I reiterate — the purpose of this article was not once to justify. Rather, we must examine the full scope of these incidents to better understand Jefferson's character. Here too it seems that his moral sense burdened him a great deal, as there is evidence that he regretted fathering her children. Notably, the

Hemingses were the only slaves he freed upon his death, and Sally herself lived the rest of her life a free woman. Before her death, she even left her

children several mementos of her former master — not the embittered loathing for him that we might expect.

Of course, it is very possible that Hemings was emotionally manipulated or could not otherwise appreciate the full extent of her abuse, but these circumstances do leave ambiguity. We can see that drawing from the Hemings case to characterize Jefferson as a heartless monster is not nearly as straightforward as it's commonly believed.

How, then, to make sense of all this? We have clearly established that passing judgment on Jefferson is convoluted to no end — so how must we proceed? Are we to perceive Jefferson as the great man who wrote the Declaration of Independence and condemned slavery in the public sphere, or the slaveholder who had children with young Sally Hemings? If he was the first man, surely we must celebrate him; if he was the second man, not so. Which is it?

The answer is surprisingly straightforward and concurrently frustrating — he was both. The question of celebrating Thomas Jefferson cannot be definitively resolved. This is ultimately the point. We do not study history to simply sort through facts "for" and "against" an individual, then plug them into some grand calculus to determine whether or not he is worthy of celebration. My argument here is not to dictate a yes or no, but to expose the real



Image courtesy of Mike Scott

complexities of that question. We can commemorate his achievements and at once acknowledge his flaws and

presented under modern scrutiny, was likely not so for them.

Most importantly, we ought not settle for the deceptively simple facts at face value. We tend to rely on these two-dimensional caricatures, ascribing great evil to an individual at a moment's notice, because it's convenient. I reject the disturbingly popular tendency to dismiss historical figures as two-dimensional caricatures the likes of "slaveholder" and "racist," without knowing and seriously engaging in the realities and the contextual nuances of their time. When we do explore beneath the surface and take the time to understand — to really understand — we find that there is far more to the picture than we imagined.

"Most importantly, we ought not settle for the deceptively simple facts at face value."

contradictions.

And indeed, the Jefferson question has revealed a number of significant considerations to this end. For one, we must not allow his defects to distort his many contributions to the United States. That he wrote the Declaration of Independence is just as much a reality as his ownership of hundreds of slaves. For another, we must exercise historical empathy

EDITORIAL: On the Lamont-Sununu Assembly

By NHAN PHAN ‘24

On Tuesday, Sep. 19, the Academy hosted an assembly conversation between New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu and Connecticut Governor Ted Lamont. In what was initially thought to be a decisive, extreme partisan debate about pressing issues impacting society today, this assembly provided a perfect example of what discussions surrounding American public policy should be like one that is civil, respectful, open to disagreements, and direct (as much as possible).

Don't get me wrong, Sununu and Lamont are both seasoned politicians and several of their responses were political. I don't quite necessarily agree with Sununu's usage of examples when asked about why New Hampshire has the lowest minimum wage in the country, but

I understand where he is coming from. Though he never stated this explicitly, Sununu's usage of San Francisco's homelessness crisis (where he repeatedly emphasized that there were 10,000 homeless) in comparison to their minimum wage (\$18.07 as of July 2023, according to the City of San Francisco official website) created an inference that high minimum wage had a direct correlation to increased poverty. This may be true. An increase in minimum wage can cause employers to lay off workers, leading to downward pressure on wages in the informal sector by increasing competition for informal jobs. However, low-wage workers are in insecure jobs without a stable wage, making it impossible for them to get their foot on the starting line and unable to invest in education, a car, a house, or even a better, well-paying job. Moreover, the poverty

crisis in San Francisco is not *only* caused by the high minimum wage: it is essential to remember that the aftermath of the pandemic, an oncoming recession, and a cost-of-living crisis are other consideration factors. Nonetheless, what struck me most during that segment was the respectfulness that the speakers, moderators, and the audience held.

In Harkness, Exonians are encouraged to take ownership of their ideas and comments. Something that simple may be the critical solution to having respectful discussions regarding conflicting ideas: during the assembly, I appreciated how Sununu and Lamont took ownership of their comments by explicitly stating at the beginning of their remarks whether their views aligned or differed with each other's. This indication allowed viewers like me to distinctly

understand that there is a robust conversation happening, not a defamatory, inflammatory shouting match between two grown adults who can't seem to understand that the issues they are debating are bigger than themselves. Moreover, during the segment on approaches to the opioid crisis, I appreciated how Lamont gave credit to Sununu for his work; as good Exonians know to give credit where credit is due in Harkness, maybe Lamont did learn a thing or two during his time here at Exeter.

Sununu admittedly gave a more modest, political answer when asked about Donald Trump. However, Lamont (at the hilarious expense of the moderator) gave a direct, honest opinion on the former president. To me, this moment somewhat represents the state of party-politics tensions here in the United States of America:

Democrats hold onto their steadfast determination to avoid another Trump administration, while Republicans are being careful with what they say but perhaps yearn for change deep down. At least Sununu was slightly more explicit in his call for a change in new leadership as he claimed a "downgrade to yesterday's ideas" is against America's ethos. While it is relevant to note that neither candidate is running for office, this reasoning still holds. In a recent Republican Presidential Debate hosted by Fox News, when asked whether each candidate would support Trump should he be the critical Republican presidential nominee, every candidate raised their hands but continued to criticize Trump's policies later in the debate.

Regardless, this assembly gave me much hope that civility in politics is alive. If anything, we

"When all voices are equally represented, we are held accountable for our views and defend them with our understanding."

should have more of these discussions: when all voices are equally represented, we are held accountable for our views and defend them with our understanding. During these moments, we are exposed to flaws in our understanding and, in turn, expose the flaws in others. The respect exhibited in the assembly is an optimistic sign that free speech can thrive when everyone comes prepared with a basis of understanding. As Sununu best put it, "empathy is something we practice."

The Crisis in Niger

By JOSEPH KIM '26

On July 26, 2023, a sudden coup d'état in Niger, with a military junta led by General Abdourahamane Tchiani took over the government of President Mohamed Bazoum. The ruling military junta, the National Council for the Safeguard of the Homeland or CNSP, took military control over the capital city Niamey and detained President Bazoum and his family in the presidential palace, subjecting them to poor health and life conditions. Despite resistance from Bazoum, the leaders of the Nigerien military sided with the junta, and Tchiani effectively took total control over the state within a few days. But what is perhaps equally important as the coup itself is the aftermath and responses to it.

Diplomatic responses from other West African countries have been immediate. Leaders of member states of ECOWAS — an economic and political alliance between eleven West African countries — met on Aug. 2 to discuss intervention in Niger. Nearly all of the unsuspected member states have denounced the takeover. ECOWAS Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security Abdel-Fatau Musah proclaimed, "Let no one be in doubt that if everything else fails, the valiant forces of West Africa... are ready to answer to the call of duty." The Federal Republic of Nigeria, which constitutes for more than half of ECOWAS' GDP and military, mobilized and built up troops near its border with Niger. Nigerian president and current ECOWAS chairman Bola Ahmed Tinubu declared that ECOWAS and the democratic world "will not tolerate any situation that incapacitates the democratically-elected government of the country." Tinubu made it clear that Nigeria "will not accept coup after coup in West Africa again." However, the Nigerian senate rejected Tinubu's proposal for a military

intervention in Niger, suggesting a peaceful way "to resolve the issues in view of the existing cordial relationship between Nigeriens and Nigerians." The strong response from these West African governments shows the importance of the situation in Niger to the security of the entire region.

ECOWAS members are not the only states to be appalled by the government overthrow. France, Italy, the United States, and the United Kingdom issued statements demanding the release of Bazoum and expressing support for an intervention in Niger. French foreign minister Catherine Colonna demanded that Niger "must return to constitutional order" and "must see the will of the people of Niger respected." United States President Joe Biden stated, "The Nigerien people have the right to choose their leaders. They have expressed their will through free and fair elections, and that must be respected." Secretary of State Anthony Blinken said that the junta

was "disrupting the constitutional order and Niger's democracy." The United Nations Security Council condemned the undemocratic takeover.

Yet, certain countries and groups are supportive of the coup. Mali, Guinea, and Burkina Faso—all countries that have been suspended from ECOWAS due to recent coups in each respective nation — expressed solidarity with the Nigerien junta and delivered equipment to Niger. Both Mali and Burkina Faso agreed to militarily support the Nigerien junta if it were invaded by another country. The Biafran government-in-exile also endorsed the government change. Russian President Vladimir Putin strongly opposed a violation of Nigerien borders and stood for the continuation of the junta rule (although he sent no equipment). General Salifou Mody, one of the main junta leaders, entered conversations with Wagner Group, a paramilitary force with a presence in many Sahel African countries as well as in Ukraine, requesting assistance. This outside

influence greatly impacted Niger internally. Pro-coup demonstrators in Niamey have stormed the exterior of the French embassy, even setting the door on fire. Many of them flew Russian flags and shouted slogans such as "Down with France!" and "Long Live Putin!" before the angry demonstration was dispersed by the army.

But why does this

"Besides the importance of Niger's uranium exports, the strife in Niger is significant because it is a part of a larger struggle for Western powers."

event in a distant third-world country matter? Besides the importance of Niger's uranium exports, the strife in Niger is significant because it is a part of a larger struggle for Western powers. The coup in Niger is a shrinkage of the spheres of influence of France, Nigeria, and the United States, which is important to each government in its own way. One by one, juntas arising in West African countries in the last couple of decades created

threats against the West. Recent developments have brought the crisis even closer to Western states after the Nigerien junta demanded the French, Nigerian, Togolese, and American ambassadors in Niamey to leave. French President Emmanuel Macron refused to withdraw French Ambassador Itté, calling the junta government "illegitimate authorities". In response, Tchiani revoked Ambassador Itté's diplomatic immunity and his family's visas and ordered the police to remove him. Needless to say, this caused diplomatic outrage from many Western states and the European Union.

It seems clear that Niger continuing to remain under de-facto junta rule is a problem for Western-aligned countries, including those in NATO and ECOWAS. Many Western leaders have shown willingness to be directly involved in the conflict. France, the United States, Italy, and Germany all have military bases in the country, and next door Nigeria has an army of over 150,000. While some countries like the United States have been working to withdraw from Niger completely, many more are increasing their force in

the region. France, which already had a significant military presence in the Sahel Region including a force of 1500 in Niger, recently started deploying weapons and personnel to ECOWAS countries for the purpose of countering the Nigerien junta. Since August, Nigeria has prepared a force of several thousand for a potential intervention. Alassane Ouattara, the president of the Ivory Coast (an ECOWAS member), declared that "Ivory Coast will provide a battalion and has made all the financial arrangements."

Because the Nigerien crisis is an ongoing event, further news will continue to tell us what the future of Niger and West Africa will be. Although the junta government stated that it will return to normal life in several months, it is unclear as of now whether such undertakings will happen. It is also uncertain whether an international military intervention will take place in Niger. Regardless of whether direct or indirect should be taken, it is clear that the Nigerien junta has proven itself to be a threat to Western and ECOWAS nations, and the world is on the lookout for further responses.



Supporters of Niger's ruling junta gather for a protest in Niamey, Niger, on Aug. 3.

Photo courtesy of Foreign Policy

Why Children Are Not Nihilist

By FORREST ZENG '26

Student 1 and Student 2 find themselves at the beach on Academy Life Day. In the background, their dorm members run in the sand, playing football.

Student 1: It is so good to finally be back on campus.

Student 2: Perhaps. And yet, in front of us, we have another year of struggle and new experiences.

Student 1: That is true.

The two students are silent for a brief moment.

Student 1: Say, I enjoy Harkness. It is a much more demanding but also engaging method of learning.

Student 2: I agree. I meant to tell you about a math class — or rather, what I heard after the discussion.

Student 1: Well, go ahead.

Student 2: You see, I am in a math class with Joseph. Do you know him?

Student 1: Indeed.

Student 2: Yes. Anyway, we ended class normally, and we both had a free period after. He came up to me, and we struck up a conversation about our English classes. Joseph believes that English exemplifies the Harkness method, while I don't believe that.

Regardless of that, he went on a certain tangent from the discussion, which, although it was irrelevant to our conversation about English, was the most significant event that I remember from my conversation with him. We never resolved our debate about English, but I heard an interesting story.

Student 1: Well, don't make me wait!

Student 2: He began on track:

"Look, I am in an English class with a bunch of stupid philosophers. They enjoy bringing up all these mundane philosophical ideas during class and connecting those ideas with the text. This particular class wasn't too bad — we simply talked a little bit about our homework and also about the artwork we saw around campus."

"Radiant Beasts?" I asked him.

"Yes," he replied. "After packing up, I went into the hallway of the basement and upstairs, following these two philosophers, Sam and Niko. The former is known for his debate skills and the latter as a pilot."

At this point, Joseph and I were walking to Elm Street to get some food. He continued to talk quickly, even as we crossed the street with eight honking cars on both sides.

"I decided to follow them, for I didn't have much to do. I knew them both pretty well, but at the moment, they were engrossed in some kind of energetic discussion that I couldn't make out. They sat down in Agora, plopping down in the massive brown sofas. I sat down near them. This time, I could hear clearly what they were saying.

Sam asked Niko, 'Let's look at it this way. Why do you fly planes?'

Facepalming, Niko responded, 'It just seems so amazing to fly in the air with no care of being bound to the ground.'

'So you are elitist.'

'When it comes to being trapped on the ground, yes. Don't be limited to two dimensions.'

'Yet, when you die, you will forever be stuck to the ground. If your purpose in life is to fly airplanes and to escape the ground, then everyone fails, because eventually, we all end up as soil in the ground. How can your purpose be flying airplanes, then, if it will always fail? Logically, then, there is no purpose in life.'

'Ah, but what if the purpose of life is simply to continue life? I fly airplanes because I enjoy it and because it is a good paying job that lets me live longer.'

'Let's say that scientists one day discovered a magical drug that could make you immortal. The philosopher's stone has been found. No matter what happens to you, you will eventually heal and live forever. Nothing could stop your existence.'

'I can see that.'

'You believe that the purpose of life might simply be to continue life — so essentially, to fight against death.'

'Yes.'

'The philosopher's stone, however, would remove that necessity.'

'What do you mean?'

'I mean that, if we were immortal so that life was infinite, then we don't have to do anything anymore. At the same time, we would choose immortality over mortality because it is the end all be all tool for fighting biological death.'

'I see,' said Niko. 'While immortality gets rid of biological death, it also leads to the death of purpose. There isn't much to do after you've lived forever. But that doesn't mean the purpose of life isn't fighting death. What we have shown is only that the means of fighting death is an end in itself.'

'Yet we all die eventually, yes?'

'Obviously.'

'And our purpose, therefore is futile. In that no matter how hard we fight

QUESTION OF THE ISSUE

Describe this 5 coming year in words.

As simple as that.

Submit your responses (short or long and may be anonymous) to exonian@gmail.com. Anyone is welcome to submit! Note: answers to this question will be published on the next issue! Faculty and adult members of the community are equally as welcome to submit a response.

death, it will catch up to us anyways.'

'It seems so.'

Throwing his hands up, Sam exclaimed, 'So life has no purpose!'

Niko shifted in his seat and said, 'But wait, don't make that jump just yet. If fighting death is futile, then what about serving your country? Or what about simply being a virtuous person?'

'These are indeed common purposes. Let's examine them closely, then. What philosophies are these purposes based upon?'

'Serving one's country in the military would be from patriotism, and being a virtuous or 'good' person can be seen through the Neoplatonist perspective of imitating God.'

'What do all these have in common? They rely on a supernatural existence that provides meaning and purpose to life. Patriotism is blind attachment to an imaginary country — and Classical virtue is an imitation of the supernatural.'

'That is correct.'

'In that sense, religion, too, gives a purpose to one's life through supernatural ideas — especially because most ritualistic religions such as Christianity guarantee existence after death.'

'It seems so. It also seems that while many people say that the purpose of life is staying healthy and fighting death, almost certainly, they will also have another purpose. Whether it be fighting for one country, being a well-rounded person, or working for a more pleasing afterlife, purposes of the supernatural kind are prevalent in humanity.'

'At the same time, from a rationalist and materialist point of view, there is absolutely no purpose to humanity. A materialist would believe that religions and countries are phony myths. A materialist would believe death and chaos are inevitable.'

'You describe a nihilist.'

'I do — nihilists are materialists in nature. This is because they won't accept any purpose, whether it be physical (fighting biological death) or supernatural (fighting for a nation). Do you think many people are nihilists?'

'Not many, but I think

more than animals who live in the wild,' Niko said.

'Wild animals? And why is that?'

'Well, think of it this way. We have discerned two kinds of purpose in life — physical and supernatural. Do you agree that only humans can have the supernatural purpose since humans are the only animals that can imagine myths and stories?'

'I'm not sure what you mean.'

'I mean that only Homo Sapiens can create non-tangible social fictions, allowing many humans to collaborate.'

'Give an example.'

'Take the United States of America. What exactly is it? It's a nation, yes?'

'Right.'

'But can you touch it? Hear it? See it? You can sense the land which the USA possesses. The idea of the USA, though, isn't a physical thing. Yet at the same time, we treat it as if it's a real thing. The USA, although an imaginary myth, is very real in our minds.'

'Interesting. And so what is the purpose of having imaginary myths like the USA?'

'They allow for massive human collaboration. Think about religions — they are inherently non-tangible ideas that are nevertheless social. If I am a Muslim, then I am connected in some non-tangible way to every other Muslim in this world. And this is very powerful. It allows the citizens of abstract nations, the followers of non-tangible religions, and the employees of mythical companies (e.g., "Apple" or "Phillips Exeter Academy") to work together and survive.'

'That seems to be an accurate way of describing society. However, I don't see how this connects to our discussion of nihilism.'

'I'm getting there. Do you agree that, since only humans can create imaginary social fictions, only humans can have imaginary purposes — like serving one's country or following in the footsteps of a prophet?'

'I suppose. I couldn't see any other animal doing that sort of thing.'

'And if a human doesn't believe in a supernatural purpose, because they are atheist or perhaps

RESPONSES FROM LAST ISSUE:

Share with us a favorite moment with a graduated senior!

"The time I nicked a packet of Earl Gray tea from Jessica Huang's backpack." — Joonyoung Heo '25

disinterested in public service, then they are left with a physical purpose.'

'It seems so.'

'But here comes the twist. For any other animal, a physical purpose is enough: there isn't anything beyond spending life foraging for food and fighting for predators. Humans, however, can question this physical purpose. They can be skeptical of the physical purpose. They can engage in nihilistic, philosophical discussions like we are having now. Only humans can doubt whether life is worth living.'

'And that leads people to be nihilists.'

'Right. Humans can think logically and out of the box.'

'Alright — so to review, to develop the perfect nihilist, you need someone who has no supernatural purpose and someone who can be skeptical of life.'

'That's right.'

'But why would someone be skeptical, though? For a typical person who isn't a philosopher, it would seem like a waste of time.'

Niko thought for a second, then said:

'Skepticism is the human condition. When difficulty arrives, the human asks, "Why am I doing this?" When the human asks, skepticism takes over. When skepticism takes over, the human loses purpose.'

We are predisposed as a species to overthink. We are predisposed to look for reasons before solutions.'

They both sat there in the chairs for a moment, thinking deeply. Then Sam asked, 'So let me ask you this. First of all, do you have a younger sibling?'

'No,' Niko replied.

'I have a sibling who is nine years old right now — and what I've noticed is that he is far from a nihilist. He has a clear purpose, which is to have fun and perhaps annoy his older brother. But he also satisfies the conditions of a nihilist which we detailed earlier. He isn't old enough to understand social fiction — so he can't be patriotic or religious. But I have never met a nihilist child.'

'So you are asking why children aren't nihilists, while adults are?'

'That's right.'

'Do children have the ability to question things?'

'They do — in fact, one of the strongest abilities. Children are always curious

about the world, wondering and questioning about different things.'

'What exactly is it that children question?'

'Well, I suppose small things — why the sky is the color blue, where dinosaurs came from, how airplanes work, and the such.'

'The object of his questioning is, therefore, physical things, then. Have you heard your brother ask yet about the nature of morality or the purpose of life?'

'No, not yet. It seems like although he is an apt questioner, he doesn't yet deal in abstract ideas.'

'So why not?'

'A matter of maturity, I guess. At the moment he is discovering his environment and this sort of curiosity helps him gain a greater understanding of the physical world. The physical world, after all, is the first thing he is exposed to. Although, it does become annoying after some time.'

'Upon birth, the human knows little about the physical world, except that its purpose is to survive. That is encoded in its DNA. The human will cry when not fed, smile when tickled, and sleep when needed.'

Within human DNA is also the ability to question. First, the human questions the physical world. Throughout its childhood the human experiences and absorbs knowledge. With nothing to stop it, the human voraciously questions its surroundings. One day, it will run out of questions — and so ends the curiosity of a child.

But the human cannot stop questioning. So it turns to the next most obvious thing to question—the abstract world. The human will doubt. The human will think about life and existence. Human nature will push it to never be satisfied. And if the human thinks enough, it will know that life has no purpose.

Children aren't nihilists because they aren't at that stage yet. Abstract ideas develop after physical ideas.'

And here we had to go to class, so I couldn't hear the rest of the conversation.'

All of this is what Joseph told me.

Student 1: A fascinating discourse. Let us enjoy our Academy Life Day knowing these things.



Ava Zhao / *The Exonian* via Midjourney

Humor

Rating HC Food

By MAX MANTEL '25

1. Toast – Cliche, yet consistent. It can be breakfast, lunch, dinner, and dessert. Butter and jam is the best combo, but make sure to spread the butter first. Technique is important for this one; be sure not to scrape off the top of your toast! 9/10

2. Water – ALWAYS cold and crisp. Maybe I just don't drink enough water, but the refrigerated water bottles never get old. I didn't see the water bottle refiller in the hallway for a while, so I just kept getting new plastic bottles, which was honestly really wasteful but also pretty satisfying. This would be ranked highest, but it's really wasteful which knocks it down a slot. Yay the environment!

3. Gatorade – General flavor ranking: Green>Blue>Orange>Red>the weird Arctic one.

4. Lollipops – Very nice to enjoy while waiting in the lobby; pairs pretty well with a headache. I think campus has had a general influx of these lollipops; I've seen so many at club expo tables or in dorm common rooms, unwrapped and on the ground like a dead baby turtle. Treat your lollipops well!

5. Famous Amos – Like if Chips Ahoy wasn't awful! Contrary to most other bagged snacks, the best part of this one is the crumbs; it's usually just a ton of chocolate chips. Sugar.

6. Ice Cream – One of the nurses went to the class events and got everyone ice cream from it. Really, really good and a sweet gesture, and it's only placed so low because I got a headache right after eating it.

7. Fruit – The apples are pretty good but also can be a bit sour at times.

8. DHall Food – I feel like DHall Food is generally the best when you can modify it. I always add salt, pepper, soy sauce, ketchup, and other various condiments to whatever I get, but you just can't do that in the Health Center.

Senior Fall as a New Senior

By CHERISH AMBY-OKOLO '24

Senior year is here. Whether it's the prospect of 10 p.m. check-ins or meditations, senior year, especially fall term, comes with a lot of fast-moving parts. This can be especially difficult for a new senior, who has the Exeter experience of a prep but the workload of a senior.

However, this was already the expectation from the beginning. Coming in as a new senior means no pass/fail for that first term, no leniency, and the expectation to be able to juggle new courses, a new environment, and the dreaded college apps. Applying to college is at least one task new and returning students share.

But what's different for us? I just had my first week of classes, but I feel like I've been on campus for months. Going to a former school without sports, I'm not used to the physical stamina required to navigate Exeter, especially with up to five classes a day and two hours of volleyball practice. It's not all bad. With three to four sleep-ins a week, I enjoy waking up late and just casually strolling from Hoyt to my classes.

A block, C block, reserves? It's still a confusing process,

but OLS and Campus Commons have been my best friends. As for the classes themselves, I already internalized the Exeter workload, but experiencing it firsthand blew me away. I'm used to a two-day alternating block schedule, so to have classes with long assignments due the next day was a new concept. However, 10 p.m. check-in times have improved my time management. Studying at the library or in EPAC motivates me to be productive and as the clock approaches 10 p.m. and the hustle of Exonians subsides, my productivity rate skyrockets.

Even as a new senior, I've found it easy to make friends at Exeter: people in the classroom, people at volleyball practice, people in my dorm, and people at clubs. People are everywhere and these people turn into friends. While fall term as a new senior will have its share of fun and stress, I know I have a developing community of Exonians to lean on for support.

AVA'S CARTOON CORNER

If you'd like to draw for *The Exonian* or simply have a piece featured, email Ava Zhao at yzhao4@exeter.edu! Anyone is welcome to submit.

CAN YOU GUESS THE FACULTY?

- Week 1 -



By AVAZHAO'24

The Crossword Corner By Finn Tronnes '24

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
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64	65				66						67			
68					69						70			
71					72						73			

ACROSS

- 1- City in SW Russia
- 5- Repeated before “a man after midnight”
- 10- Seat in Parliament?
- 14- Plural of solo
- 15- Window style
- 16- Creepy look
- 17- Ever so slightly
- 18- Famous brothers who went to the year 3000
- 19- Museum curators’ degs.
- 20- “Money Trees”
- 23- “Iron Chef America” host Brown
- 24- Retiree-paying program: Abbr.

- 25- Will Ferrel Christmas movie
- 28- Afro-Brazilian dance
- 32- Second-generation Japanese-American
- 34- Alysha and Jaq _____, ‘23&’21
- 37- Scandinavian Muppet
- 40- Informal negative
- 42- “This is only _____”
- 43- Faction
- 44- Trick to try on a RedBike
- 47- “Shut up!”
- 48- Volunteering words
- 49- Prefix with frost
- 51- Cheap Thrills singer
- 52- _____-Wan

- Kenobi
- 55- The gram
- 39- HIS410 era
- 64- 90.5 FM
- 66- “_____ big deal”
- 67- Cleans up a spill
- 68- Since
- 69- Seagoing mil. training group
- 70- Related to
- 71- Some online pics
- 72- Purple Muppet whose self-identified species is “Whatever”
- 73- What gives some dorm rooms a bright red glow

DOWN

- 1- Tennis star Naomi
- 2- Cheap lodging on a road trip
- 3- Incline
- 4- Youngsters
- 5- Asian berry marketed as a “superfood”
- 6- Noelle’s boyfriend’s car in “Teenage Dirtbag” by Wheatus
- 7- Rodent with nice fur
- 8- Breakfast, lunch and dinner
- 9- “Anna & _____ Frozen Playground” (Lego set)
- 10- _____ Mater
- 11- Reloads
- 12- Black or Red or Dead or Mediterranean or North

- 13- Hosp. areas
- 21- Genetic messengers
- 22- Ho Chi _____ City
- 26- Slimy parasite
- 27- Amendment that may be pled
- 29- Kiss sound
- 30- Dumb, à Grenoble
- 31- Take _____ breath
- 33- Suffix with robot
- 34- Dark blue ore in Minecraft
- 35- Fancy mayo
- 36- as a substitute for
- 38- Of Man, for one
- 39- Mix
- 41- Graffiti signature
- 45- Sheep hair

- 46- Radiate
- 50- Drummer Muppet
- 53- Bounce sound
- 54- Opener
- 56- “Blowin’ _____” by Kacey Musgraves
- 57- Not so hot?
- 58- Orgs.
- 60- Bricks
- 61- Takes the stage
- 62- 1998 bug movie
- 63- Bananas
- 64- Tail shake
- 65- Tire pressure meas.

Sports

» **PRE-SEASON**

Read about student athletes pre-season training this year, 13.

» **TRACK**

Read about varisty track and field's competition at Nike and New Balance Outdoor Nationals, 14.

» **COTW**

Read about the Captains Of The Week: Varsity Football, 14.

Athletes Train For Pre-Season



Varsity football players in action during preseason.

Photo courtesy of @exeterathletics

By **TEDDY CAPOZZI and LANG GUO**

On Aug. 31, Big Red athletes, both new and returning, made their way to campus. Coaches, aiming to make the most of their brief preseason, created arduous but rewarding schedules for the athletes. Our fall teams took advantage of this time to meet players and adjust to the new teams formed.

Despite temperatures hovering around 90 degrees, senior field hockey goalie Audrey Sim felt the coaches accommodated harsh weather conditions well. Sim noted, "The coaches made sure that we were hydrated and none of us were ill or anything." However, she wished schedulers were more considerate in lining up practice times with the weather. "I would have preferred the practices to take place earlier in the morning and

later in the night to make the weather conditions less harsh," Sim continued. In respect to the field hockey team, Sim felt that preseason was a prime opportunity for the group to bond and transfer their strong progress from the previous year. "We have a really strong team. I think our defense and offense looks very good so I think that we can do better than last year and we're off to a great start."

Similarly, lower and ex-football player Quinn Smith appreciated the coaches' willingness to accommodate the athletes in terms of dining. Smith noted, "At times the practices interfered with dining hall times but we were provided snacks." Smith was particularly keen on the bagels. When asked about the coaches' demands upon players, Smith applauded the coaching staff for main-

taining a rigorous schedule in order to keep up with the excellent results from last year. More specifically, he appreciated the resources and support set in place for players. "We had all the resources for it not to be too demanding on our bodies. We were given time off from coach Voulgaris in order to recover which was really great." Smith continued speaking on the team's commitment to achieve their goals this season. "Even though the schedule was difficult at times, it is really just the cost of winning." Senior football player, Cordel Epale became particularly animated when asked about the football team's future success as a result of a strong preseason. "We're starting to have a lot more competitiveness within the team, which is a good and positive competitiveness. We're pushing ourselves more, we're holding each other accountable." Prep Melody Ma enjoyed the camaraderie that volleyball preseason provided with the two-to-four hour days on the court, excluding team meals. "We spent hours together a day not counting team dinners. The food was really good." However, her strong early impressions of the dining hall were quickly abated once the academic schedule commenced, "the food

at preseason was a lot better than right now." Although the dining hall food exceeded expectations, the boys cross-country team ventured into town a lot for team bonding meals. Senior David Goodall shared, "I went to town with a lot of my teammates, and we ate at Me and Ollies together in harmony." Waking up early for practice was difficult but Goodall was "happy to get a wild berry smoothie afterward." However, Goodall's positive experience was cut short. He said, "We did a long run, which was good, until I got scratched by a lot of poison ivy." Senior Aidan Ting on the cross-country team commented on the tough practices. "On average, the eight or nine miles a day we ran in the sweltering heat was difficult. But we built camaraderie during those long runs." This preseason for Big Red athletes proved to be a challenging yet productive period marked by dedication, teamwork, and adaptability. Through their hard work and guidance from coaches, the athletes remained committed to their goals and are excited for a successful fall season.



Girls varsity field hockey gathers for preseason practice at Hatch field.

Photo courtesy of @exeterathletics

The Exonian

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

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Captains of the Week: Varsity Football



Varsity Football captains smile for a photo outside of library.

By JOONYOUNG HEO and SID MAHAJANA

Thirty minutes before the game, the boys varsity football team can hear the rumble of hundreds of feet outside as spectators rush into the stadium, picking out their seats and shouting across the rows. The team waits in anticipation in the locker room as the racket gets louder and louder, then louder still. But three voices rise above the deafening noise—these are seniors and team captains Cade McMillan, Nihaal Rana, and Reid Burke, and in the past few weeks, they have strengthened the team and prepared them for the season ahead. When the players rush onto the field and the whistle blows, they do what they’ve trained tirelessly for—they win, and they win as a team. Unsurprisingly, the captains have had a long history with

football. “I’ve been playing football since I was eight years old,” Rana said. “So I’ve spent a lot of time with it. Thankfully, my head is still intact.” “I started playing football as a sixth-grader in Texas,” McMillan said. “Then I played all the way through my junior year in Texas before I reclassified and came to Exeter as a new upper. Coach Vulgaris saw me at a football camp and talked me into taking a look at the school. I visited campus, liked the people, liked the facilities, and liked the school.” Despite missing their first few years at the Academy, the team quickly recognized their many talents. “As a new lower on the team, I guess I made an impact,” Rana said. “Leading by example, being a voice, being someone that everyone could look up to, doing the right thing. For this year’s captaincy,

it was a player’s vote, so Coach Vulgaris grabbed all of us and he said, think of the top people who you think would fit as the captains of this team. And my name was one, and Cade and Reid were the other two.” The team’s decision has evidently paid off. “They definitely deserve the job,” upper Thomas Hoey said. “They all help out the team in different ways. Nihaal’s our starting left, just a great player. He’s more of a physical presence than a vocal one, but his play on the field makes him someone we can look up to. Reid and Cade are also players who come in every day and put in everything they have during practice. They get kids on the right track and keep us in line. I really appreciate having them as captains.” “I think the most notable thing about our captains is their ability to lead by example,” senior Cordel Epale said. “They

often set the tone of practice and make sure that others follow their lead. They are highly energetic and demand excellence with everything and everyone, and they ultimately get the intended results.” Head coach Panos Vulgaris agreed. “In the early going of the season, the captains have shown that they are driven to set a good example for the team,” he said. “Their work ethic and commitment to discipline have been strong.” Besides the practical success of their captainship, the team has also developed a special kind of captain-player dynamic. “I wouldn’t say it’s a relationship between captain and player at all,” upper Ewan Newton said. “It’s more player to player, teammate to teammate. They’re the captains, sure, but we’re all very familiar with each other. We always socialize together, and I think that transfers to the

field.” “They’re outspoken when they need to be, but there’s not any huge power dynamic,” upper Aiden McCarthy said. “Everyone is friendly with each other, and that brings the entire team together.” To maintain this special relationship within the team, the captains draw great inspiration from their predecessors. “Both of the previous captains were easy to approach, easy to get in touch with, and played with a lot of heart,” McMillan said. “So I think that’s my goal — when I get on the field, I just do my best to win, and I make sure my teammates know that they can come to me if they need anything.” “Last year’s captains have definitely influenced my leadership style, especially Brandon Wong,” Rana said. “One thing I took from him is trying to bring that energy. He was always ecstatic to be at practice. He was always the one yelling, doing all the chants, and we’re just trying to do that for ourselves with this team.” In particular, the benefits of their spirit-building leadership shine through when the team might otherwise hit a rough patch. “The relationships between the players on the field have really improved since preseason, and that makes a big difference,” McMillan said. “When you’re narrowed in and you want to compete, it can be hard to work together. But our team has that bond, and it gives us what we need to win a game.” That also means the team can get back together in an instant. “Recently we just had a very competitive practice,” Rana said. “In the intensity of the moment we got after each other and kids were getting heated, but it’s what the team needs sometimes. And

once it was over, that was it. None of the hostility carried over and we remembered that we’re family again.” This close sense of family has equally translated into some memorable moments off the field. “My favorite is when we’re listening to music in the changing room after practice,” Epale said. “The energy is electric and you’ll have guys singing their hearts out. The joy of being there at that moment is almost a getaway from everything else at school.” “Before preseason, we had a three-day camp in early August for kids who could make it,” Hoey said. “We would have some tough practices, but it was also just a fun time. We went out to dinner as a team and really spent those little moments together. Those moments add up, and they’ve set us up for success in the rest of the term.” Looking to the season ahead, captains and players alike are determined to continue their impressive record. “We have such a great roster this season,” Rana said. “Of course, it’s going to be decided on who’s going to show up and who’s going to be the better team in the moment of truth, but that’s how it always is. We’ll take it one game at a time, focus on the week ahead, and if we’re successful each week, it’ll add up to a great season.” “We still have a long way to go with many challenges ahead,” Vulgaris said. “The goal is to persevere through the inevitable challenges presented to us. We must be resilient.” “Our goal is to go undefeated,” McMillan said. “I’m sure it hasn’t even been stated by anyone on the team, but it’s every bit implied. We want every win this year to be very convincing and not let it come down to bad plays. I know we have the players to do it.”

Big Red Track and Field Dominates at Nike and New Balance Outdoor Nationals



Track and Field athletes competing at Nike Outdoor Nationals in Eugene, Oregon.

Photo courtesy of @exeterathletics

By ETHAN DING and LILY RAMPE

This past summer, Big Red’s track team traveled to Eugene, OR, to compete in the Nike Outdoors Nationals. The meet was held at the University of Oregon on the famed Hayward Field. Many students boasted personal bests, and senior Byron Grevious won a national boys’ 5,000m race. The team had just capped off a strong track season with an extraordinary 28 students qualifying for Nationals. Most of the athletes felt proud of their performance and team dynamic at both Nationals and the season. “We have a really great team, and it was so nice to practice and compete with teammates who are always supporting me and pushing me to be better,” upper Jannah Maguire said. Senior Tenley Nelson added, “We had such a huge group that

met these national qualifying marks. It really showed the depth and hard work we’ve put in for this team the whole season. So we really did a good job of building that up over the course of the season to culminate in this meet.” Upper Jaylen Bennett, who ran the 100, 200, 300, and 400 meter races at Nationals, felt that he did his best in the 400m event. “I placed 14th overall with a time of 48.65 [seconds, in the 400m race], which was in the range of my best times,” Bennett said. In addition to a great individual performance, Bennett was proud of the team as a whole. “Considering the time difference and the travel, our team did very well. Our team at Nationals had many athletes from different grades, so it was amazing to see how everyone on the team put in their best effort.” “So many people ran records that it’s kind of hard to believe,” Nelson added.

“The most obvious highlight was probably when Bryon Grevious won the 5,000m and won by such a crazy margin. All of us were there in the stands watching when he won; it was a really big deal. Overall, it was a very successful meet for all of us.” Beyond setting records and breaking personal bests, many students cited the location and atmosphere of the meet as their motivation and a large part of why this meet was so special. Maguire said her favorite part of Nationals was the day of her race. “I competed in the 400 hurdles at Nationals. It was super cool to experience running at a bigger meet, and to do so at Hayward was especially great because the atmosphere and history there is so special,” Maguire said. “It was really magical being in the stadium and getting ready to run, and the race itself is always super

fun,” Bennett added. “My favorite part at Nationals was the track atmosphere. The Oregon stadium was beautiful. Also, knowing that many pro events were held here and that pro athletes ran on this track was motivating.” “I would say the highlight of the meet for me was definitely just being on Hayward Field and Hayward Track. I’ve watched a lot of races that took place there. The world championships were there last year, the US trials were there, and tons of Olympians have run on that track,” senior Max Lacombe said. For All-American senior Tanner Boulden, who competed at the simultaneous New Balance Nationals Outdoor in Philadelphia, PA, while the team competed in Eugene, the meets were a culmination of a great overall track season and a lot of hard work. “It’s a time after you

have done the most work and you have the opportunity to show it. Even if you don’t perform well, you’re still there and that says something in and of itself. This year, we had the largest number of people to qualify for Nationals in a long time,” Boulden said. “I think it definitely shows how our team is going in the right direction, even on top of our NEPSAC win.” The coaches were vital to the successes at Nationals, supporting the athletes throughout the training process and during the meet. Nelson said, “Overall, our coaches worked really hard to give us a great experience, and we owe them a lot for taking us all the way across the country to take us to this meet. It was a really good experience to have as a high schooler.” In addition to performing well at Nationals, “We had a very strong season this spring, and we did very well against

the other prep schools in the regular season,” Nelson said. “We were really happy with that, and it was a great way to finish it off, and on top of that, we had so many people qualify and go to these national qualifying meets. I think it really showed the depth and hard work that we had put in as a team, and that we did a good job building ourselves up for this meet.” For Exeter, “Our performance at these meets says to everyone that we are nationally competitive as a school. Exeter doesn’t get a whole lot of recognition on the national scale since, historically, we’ve been mostly in the prep school league and not going to these big state and national meets. Through our performance this time, though, I think we’ve made a name for ourselves and really reinforced what we know our team is,” Boulden said.