The Choate News

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Wild Boars "Plant" Seeds of Service

By **Elliot Sun '28**
Copy Editor



Photo courtesy of @gochoate on Instagram
Students and faculty at the North Branford Land Trust.

On October 2, the Choate community set aside classes, practices, meetings, and daily routines to focus on a shared goal: serving the community. More than 1,000 students, faculty, and staff spread out across Choate's campus and the greater Wallingford, New Haven, and North Branford areas to support local organizations through projects ranging from trail clearing and tree planting to food packing and gardening. Community Service Day reflected Choate's mission of empowering students to make an impact on their local and global communities through service.

According to Director of Community Service Ms. Samantha Nelson, Community Service Day is special because it brings the entire Choate community together under one common goal. "Community Service Day is the one day a year where we set aside everything and we dedicate time as an entire community," she said. The goal, Ms. Nelson explained, is to "meet the needs of our community and our community partners, and come together as a whole community to do good."

This year, students worked with organizations including Neighborhood Housing Services, Massaro Community Farm, The Curtis Home, the Wallingford Community Garden, the Wallingford and North Branford Land Trusts, Connecticut Foodshare, LEAP New Haven, Upon This Rock Ministries, and U.S. Hunger. Students also participated in community cleanup projects throughout Wallingford.

Ms. Nelson said the planning process often starts with a simple question: "What do they need?" She emphasized that non-profits understand their communities and missions better than anyone else does. "They know what they need better than we do," Ms. Nelson said. "They're already doing the work." Whether that meant clearing trails, gardening, or collecting litter before a community event, students completed projects contributing to the missions of each partner.

A major component of this year's event was a partnership with Plant Baby Plant, a non-profit organization founded by botanist and *Braiding Sweetgrass* author, Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer. Following Dr. Kimmerer's visit to Choate last year, the collaboration allowed the School to continue exploring sustainability, reciprocity, and environmental stewardship. Ms. Nelson saw the partnership as a natural extension of Choate's values.

"I think it's nice that we had Robin Wall Kimmerer come last year," Ms. Nelson said. "We didn't drop the ball on it. We kept running with the ball." She connected Plant Baby Plant's mission of reciprocity and giving back to nature to Choate's desire to be "forward thinking about sustainability."

Executive Director of Plant Baby Plant Mr. Brian Ratcliffe, expressed gratitude for Choate's support. "Plant Baby Plant is an invitation to turn from extraction to reciprocity," Mr. Ratcliffe said. The organization seeks to build "a grassroots movement of people who know their gifts and give them to the world." He said he was inspired by Choate's tradition of bringing together hundreds of community members to support local causes. "The ethos of community care felt really strong," he said.

Mr. Ratcliffe wishes projects like these will encourage students to rethink their relationships with the environment. "The phrase that kept coming to mind was this notion of how humans can be medicine for land," he said. Mr. Ratcliffe also believes communities can play a role in restoration. "Humans are capable of being in the right relationship with land," he said.

Several groups participated in environmental restoration at the Kohler Environmental Center (KEC), removing invasive species and planting trees near the new bridge as part of an effort to restore and create a native plant corridor onto campus. For many students, the day's impact extended beyond the projects themselves. Rowan Kane '28 worked alongside members of the KEC to remove invasive autumn olive trees. "It really showed a community within a community," Kane said. "I feel like it brought the KEC group together as well as the school community together." Ms. Nelson said the organizers intentionally selected native plant species that would support the local ecosystem while also giving students a long-lasting connection to their work. "We thought it would be really sweet for when you eventually come back for your reunion years to go see the tree that you planted," Ms. Nelson said.

Mr. Ratcliffe pointed to native oak, hickory, and birch trees that had been crowded by invasive bushes. After volunteers spent several hours clearing the area, those trees had more room to grow in the future. "The thing I hope that people take away is a felt understanding that we can be medicine for each other and for the earth," Mr. Ratcliffe said. "As we heal the land, the land is healing us back."

Behind the scenes, coordinating Community Service Day required months of preparation. This year's event involved multiple school buses, dozens of advisory groups, and service sites across the region. Ms. Nelson coordinated transportation, project preparation, accommodations, supplies, and communication with each partner organization.

Ms. Nelson compared the planning process to a "giant game of Tetris." Each organization determined how many volunteers it could accommodate, requiring organizers to carefully balance group sizes, transportation limitations, and individual needs. While Jayden Chen '28 thought that "[the day] could have been improved logistically because [his group] had no idea where to go for the first hour," when planting trees near the newly erected bridge, "I could feel how much I was helping the environment every time I dug with my shovel," Chen said.

The day also reflected Ms. Nelson's efforts to incorporate student feedback during her first year as the Director of Community Service. One new initiative involved replacing traditional written reflections with advisory-based discussions.

"I firmly believe that reflection is where the learning happens," Ms. Nelson said. After observing several conversations during advising block, she found that students often developed deeper insights when discussing their experiences with their peers rather than being restricted to written reflection.

Connor Bao '28 agreed with that. "It was really nice being able to hear everyone in our advising give their perspective," Bao said. "The seniors gave really different perspectives from the freshmen because they participated in so many Community Service Days [in the past]." He added that hearing about the different projects helped his advisory appreciate both the service work and the employees who helped maintain Choate's campus.

Ultimately, Ms. Nelson believes that Community Service Day offers more than an opportunity to fill a requirement. One of the most valuable aspects of the day for Ms. Nelson was the opportunity it created for students to connect with others while making a meaningful contribution to the broader community. "What a gift to meet new people, do new things, do good," Ms. Nelson said. "It's never lost on me how cool it is that it's cool to try here."

Through projects ranging from local cleanups to environmental restoration, Community Service Day demonstrated how collective effort can strengthen community ties and support local organizations. Through thousands of small acts of service, Choate continued its tradition of giving back while reminding students that meaningful change often begins with simply showing up and doing the little things.

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Mx. Annalee Newitz Discusses Writing, Robots, and Rights

By **Oola Breen-Ryan '29**
Copy Editor


Photo courtesy of photos.choate.edu
Mx. Annalee Newitz participates in a Q&A session in Colony Hall.

On October 13, Mx. Annalee Newitz, author of Choate's 2026 summer reading selection, Automatic Noodle, visited campus to address the school and meet with various members of the community.

At School Meeting, Mx. Newitz was introduced by Ollie Edwards '28. After reading a passage from *Automatic Noodle*, Mx. Newitz participated in a question-and-answer session with Noor Gonzalez '28 and Harry Kim '28. Gonzalez and Kim's questions addressed Newitz's writing process and the central themes of the novella, which included artificial intelligence (AI), marginalization, and labor injustice.

Mx. Newitz also offered students a preview of the sequel, titled *Noodle Union*. After School Meeting, students had the chance to sit and talk with them in the library.

Mx. Newitz said they enjoyed their visit to Choate. "Everybody has been very curious, and I've gotten some great questions." They hoped their visit empowered aspiring authors in the audience. "My main goal is just to make sure that people know that you can do it. You can be a writer, and it isn't impossible," they said.

Behind the scenes, English Department Head Dr. Sarah Hancock, who took over the role in August, said she was "fitting the rest of the pieces in the puzzle together to prepare for the event." She also helped the student interviews turn criticisms of the book into "curious questions" that "might also generate interesting conversation." Her favorite part of the process was planning the English faculty dinner for Mx. Newitz. "I worked with SAGE, and we had some hand-pulled noodles as the featured dish," she said. "It was really fun to get to celebrate that part of the book."

Dr. Stephen Siperstein, English teacher and summer reading committee member, explained what went into the decision. "It's short, but also packed with a lot of different 'entry points' ... It's a book that, through a futuristic narrative about robots, addresses issues like labor injustice, queer love, gender equality, gender norms, the impacts of war and PTSD," he said. "You can read the book and enjoy it as, like Annalee [said], a cozy book about noodles, or you can go deeper into some of the more challenging topics in it."

Students responded to the visit in different ways, with some appreciating the opportunity to engage with Mx. Newitz regardless of their opinions of the book. "It was an incredible opportunity to meet such an accomplished author and journalist, regardless of my personal opinions of [the] novella," Edwards, who introduced Mx. Newitz at School Meeting, said. "Rather than approaching our interactions with hostility and criticism ... I took a neutral approach both to our interactions and the intro itself. We ended up having a great conversation about our mutual relationship with the Bay Area, particularly San Francisco, where the novella was based, and the alternative scene there."

Other students felt that the presentation reinforced aspects of the book that they were not keen on. Milan Chiravuri '29 took issue with a comment Mx. Newitz made comparing AI models to enslaved people, "I think that the harmful ideas that I saw in the book were reinforced after the author's visit, due to their ideas on AI and slavery," Chiravuri said. "How can [the] usage of AI be slavery if the AI is neither sentient nor are we using them in [that] way?"

Max Urdaneta De Leon '30, despite his negative opinion of the book, sought out Mx. Newitz in the library after the discussion to ask them questions. "I got a better idea of the intention behind it, so I guess you could say in that manner it was positive. There was a lot they told me ... that just wasn't in the book, but they thought about the world. If [they] had mentioned that, I think [it] would have been a lot more coherent."

Mx. Newitz's visit gave students an opportunity to learn about their writing process and engage with the ideas behind the novel. As Dr. Siperstein said, "One of the best things about summer reading at Choate ... is the opportunity to hear from a real-life, living author, and really hear about their process. Like, how do they work? How do they do their writing, but also, how do they think and see the world? Whether you like the book or don't like the book [in] any given year, that window into how writers go about doing what they do is really valuable."

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Read it, then recycle it.

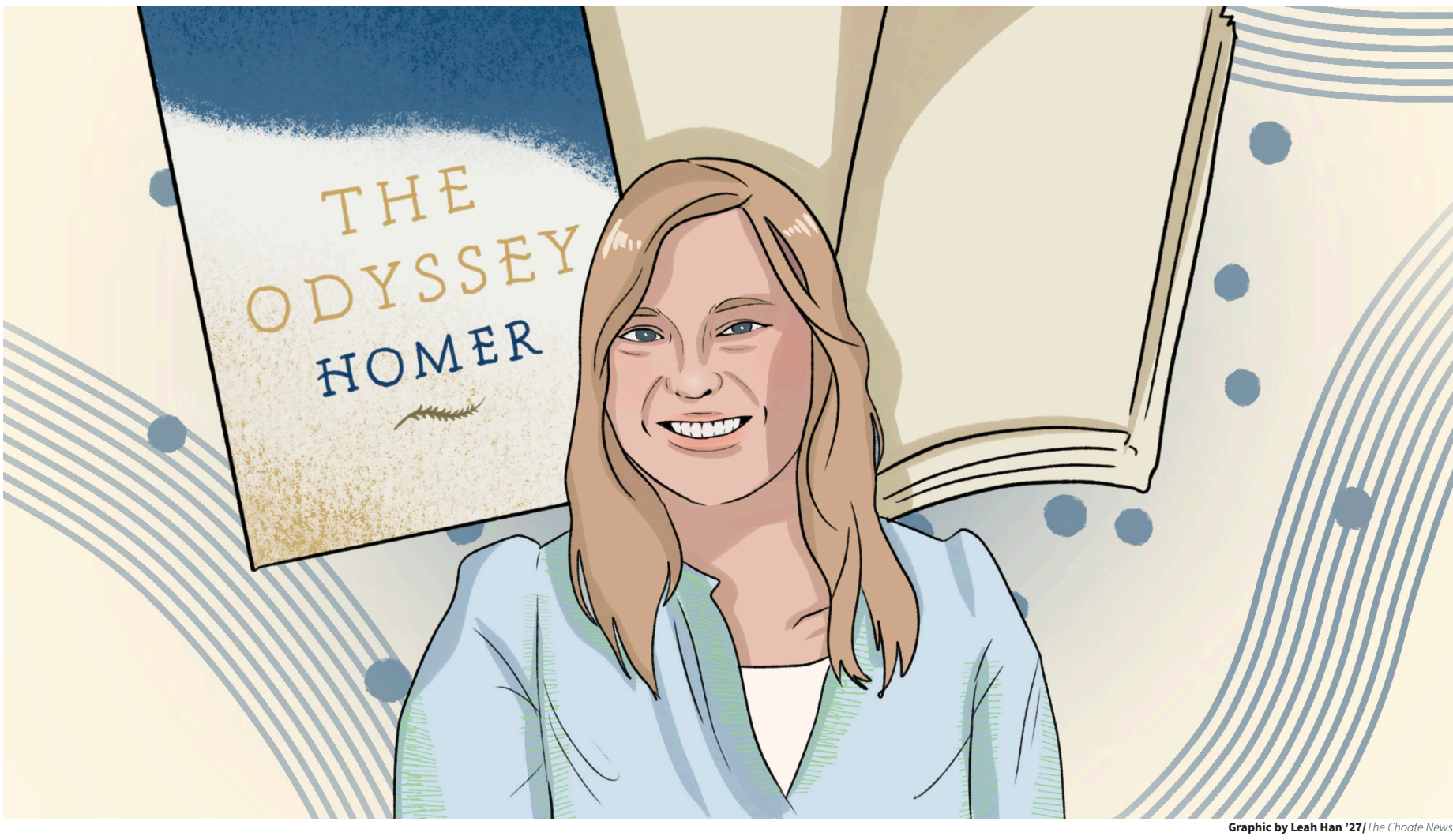
Visuals by Leah Han '27, Ann Ma '28, and Choate Photos.



SCHOOL NEWS

CLASSICS CLUB HOSTS DR. VAN GEEL

By **Taeyoung Kim '28**
Reporter



Graphic by Leah Han '27/*The Choate News*

On October 9, Classics Club invited Dr. Lien Van Geel, a former lecturer at Columbia University and current professor at the Institute of History of Ancient Civilizations, to campus for a seminar examining the portrayal of women in Homer's *The Odyssey*. The discussion explored the roles of female figures in the ancient epic, including goddesses, wives, nymphs, and sorceresses, as well as how these characters might be interpreted in Christopher Nolan's recent film adaptation.

Classics Club President Susan Ma '27 was interested in Dr. Van Geel's research on women in antiquity, so she began contacting Dr. Van Geel over the summer to arrange a lecture. She hoped this lecture would inspire students "to question and negotiate with social institutions that have existed since the Greco-Roman Empire and continue to persist in modern Western civilization," Ma said. By comparing the film with the epic's original lines, Ma hoped students would use this perspective as a new way to understand *The Odyssey*. Through analyzing the roles of women, students could "question [the] social institutions that have existed since the Greco-Roman empire and continue to persist in modern Western civilization," Ma said.

One aspect of the lecture that stood out to Vice President Callie Crowell '28 was Dr. Van Geel's examination of the motivations behind the female characters' actions. She pointed out that Athena was used more like a tool for the plot's forward movement instead of a deep character with actual motivations," Crowell said. She also emphasized the importance of approaching ancient literature from perspectives that students might not consider in popularized portrayals of mythology. By examining the sources and considering different interpretations, Crowell hoped students would recognize that studying classics involves "asking questions, examining evidence, and thinking critically about the past."

Latin, Greek, and English teacher and Classics Club faculty adviser Dr. Scott Davis said the event reflected the club's efforts to connect Choate students with scholars from universities and historical institutions. "Bringing them to campus ... was a wonderful way to bring the perspectives of these gifted scholars to the wider Choate community." He added that the connection between the ancient epic and a modern film adaptation offered an opportunity to demonstrate the continued relevance of classical literature.

These different interpretations of ancient literature also reflect Classics Club's broader goal of encouraging students to engage with the world from new perspectives. Jason Sohn '28, who attended the event, asked Dr. Van Geel about the *Telegony*, a lost ancient Greek epic that continues Odysseus's story and presents a different outcome for Penelope. "According to *Telegony*, Penelope marries somebody else other than Odysseus," Sohn said, describing how the alternative account challenged his expectations of the character's story.

Classics Club plans to continue hosting events in collaboration with Hodie et Cras, a program designed to make classical studies and ancient history accessible and vibrant for high school students. Through these events, the club hopes to show how studying ancient texts can offer perspectives that remain relevant today. For Dr. Davis, the value of studying antiquity extends beyond understanding historical events. Reflecting on the connection between ancient stories and the present, he described engagement with the ancient world as "the profoundest reminder that we are all but stories yearning to be told in a future age."

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Choate Paves Way For New Accessibility Projects

By **Ava Hult-Falk '27**
Staff Contributor

As Choate renovates campus buildings and pathways this fall, students may not notice many of the changes. However, improving accessibility without making the changes stand out is the exact goal, according to Chief Financial Officer Mr. Patrick Durbin.

Across campus, Choate is making a series of small changes designed to make buildings and pathways accessible to everyone. "If we do it right, most people won't even notice," Mr. Durbin said. "It looks like it's always been there."

One of these changes came with the renovation of the Pond Lot. Both the stairs from the parking lot into PMAC Circle and a second staircase leading to the Science Center were demolished this fall. Now, someone using crutches, a scooter, or a wheelchair can park in the Pond Lot and access the Great Lawn without going all the way around the PMAC.

Inside PMAC, a new six-story elevator reaches every level of the theater side. The visual arts side is also being upgraded with an elevator, which should be completed by the winter term. The renovated building will host a community open house in November.

The library will soon be accessible from top to bottom, with a new elevator connecting the basement through the study rooms, archives, and dorms. A small addition facing the dining hall will allow visitors to enter at ground level rather than use the back stairs. Next door, an old staircase at Steele Hall's main entrance has been removed to make way for a sloped ramp, part of the new garden between these two buildings coming this May.

For Mr. Durbin, the key is that everyone uses the same door. Before the renovation, a student who was wheelchair bound had to go around the side of Steele Hall and enter through the basement. The new ramp leads to the front door "so that anybody coming to the building can use the same entrance as their friends," he said.

Construction crews have not been without surprises. When installing the PMAC elevator, crews ran into rock much sooner than expected. Still, Mr. Durbin said none of the projects have been delayed so far.

Smaller dorms like Pierce and Lewis House are harder to modify for accessibility, since there is no space to install an elevator. For now, Choate considers practical details, such as whether a dorm's common room is on the ground floor or in the basement. Part of the plan, Mr. Durbin said, is building a new dorm so that smaller houses like Lewis "would actually contract into a 30-person dorm." By building a new larger dorm, Choate can absorb students who would otherwise occupy scattered smaller dorms.

Next on his list are the stairs between the rink parking lot and the Class of '76 field, which could be replaced by a longer, gently sloped path. All of these projects reflect Choate's broader approach to accessibility by making practical changes across campus so that students and visitors can navigate the campus with ease.

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Photo by Edward Wang '30/*The Choate News*

A new paved walkway by the Paul Mellon Arts Center (PMAC).

BEP DRIVES CAMPUS CONSENT CONVERSATIONS



Photo Courtesy of Zahabiya Khokha '27/*The Choate News*

Faculty and BEP representatives lead conversation on support and consent.

By **Aggie McPartland '27**
Reporter

In response to coverage of the tragedy at Cornell, the Bystander Education Program (BEP), a student leadership group, worked to educate students about sexual misconduct, campus policies, and ways to support those affected. The primary goal of the BEP is to help create real change, listen to student experiences, and encourage community members to be upstanders–individuals who intervene when they see or hear something wrong as opposed to standing passive and silent, regardless of the stakes. On October 13, BEP student leaders and faculty hosted "Consent, Support, and Responding to Harm," a session covering trauma responses, Choate's sexual misconduct policy, and support in response to recent events. Three BEP student leaders – Nick Aston '28, Caydence Coyne '28, and Ryan Murray '27 shared practical ways to intervene, seek help, and look out for peers when something feels wrong.

BEP Adviser Mr. James Davidson ("JD") said that the leadership group of fifth- and sixth-formers had been working on upstander education initiatives for form and school meetings since Sexual Assault Awareness Month last spring. When the School Administration asked BEP to participate in the special programming, JD said, "We were able to tie in what we were already working on" while addressing the recent tragedy at Cornell. They wanted "to be sure to mention it, to name it, but not in any way pretend that we know exactly what happened," said JD. For this reason, the BEP portion of the session focused primarily on consent and statistics surrounding sexual misconduct.

Coyne reflected on BEP's approaches to sensitive topics, saying, "We wanted to stick to the facts and [share] how we work on campus." By presenting statistics and information about sexual misconduct, the BEP aimed to spread awareness and encourage people to break the cycle of complicit inaction. They also shared the "Four Ds," a strategy that advises on situations involving sexual misconduct or peer trauma: direct, distract, delegate, and delay. These strategies offer students practical ways to respond to situations involving sexual misconduct or peer trauma. Through this programming, BEP hopes to equip students with the knowledge and confidence to intervene when necessary.

When asked what advice she would offer a student seeking support, Coyne emphasized the importance of asking for help. "Don't be afraid to reach out. I understand that it can be nerve-racking and scary if you are seeking support. However, it's important to know that we are here to help." Through its ongoing efforts, BEP hopes to ensure that students not only are able to recognize harmful situations, but also feel empowered to take action and support one another.

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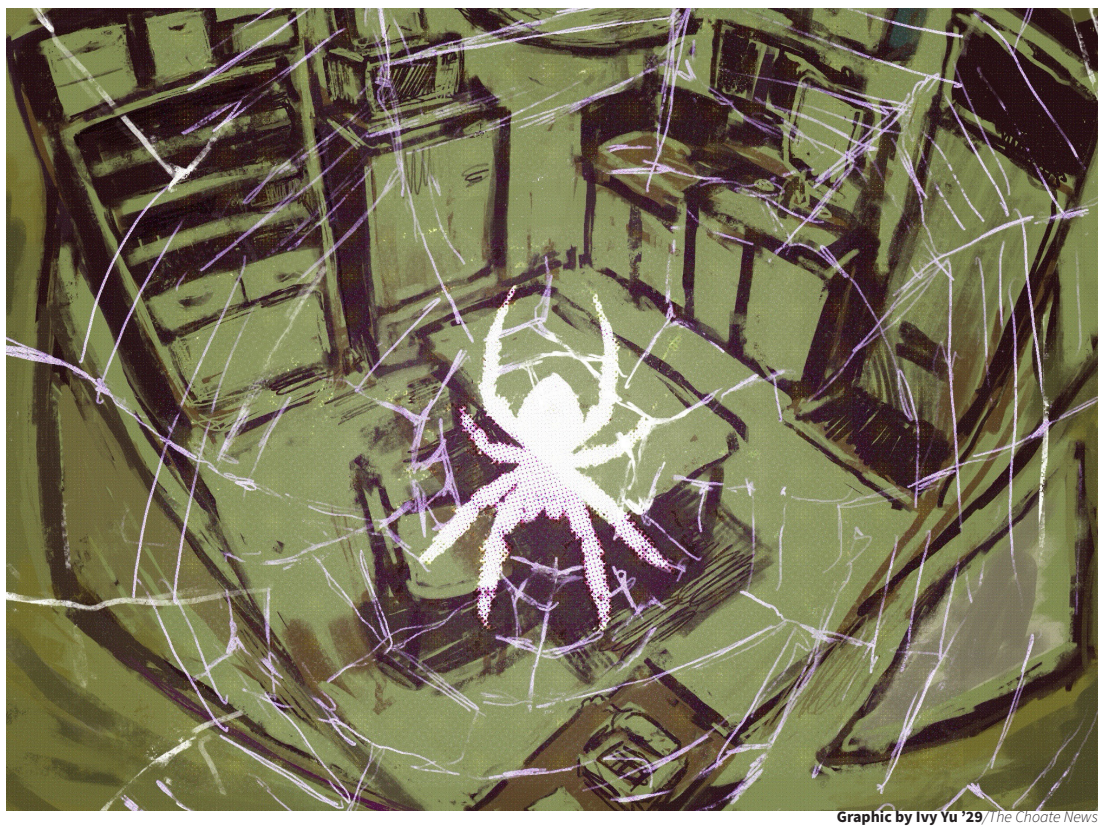
New Eight-Legged Neighbors: Mediterranean Spiders in Wallingford

By **Shyla McNulty '30**
Reporter



Graphic by Ivy Yu '29/*The Choate News*

In Wallingford, the residents of an apartment building noticed unusual spiders that had been lurking in the basement for years. In December 2025, after new residents became concerned about the spiders, a pest management professional was called to the building. Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) Entomologist Dr. Gale E. Ridge later identified the unfamiliar spiders as Mediterranean recluse spiders. These spiders are native to Southeast Europe and North Africa. Although a breeding colony was discovered in late 2025, news of its discovery is now traveling through Connecticut.

Dr. Ridge initially recognized that the spiders were different from the American brown recluse, a better-known species in the United States. She then contacted national recluse spider expert Dr. Rick Vetter, who examined images of the male reproductive organs, or pedipalps, and confirmed that they were Mediterranean recluse spiders.

According to Dr. Ridge, the spiders arrived in Connecticut by traveling on moving furniture. "Generally, they seem to be moving with large objects," she said. She pointed to Washington, D.C., as an example because "State Department [is] moving staff around the world," often along with their furniture and personal belongings. This movement may explain how a species native to the Mediterranean made its way to Connecticut. It is no surprise that these little spiders survived, as they feed on cockroaches and flies, which directly fuel our ecosystem. "It's biocontrol on eight legs," Dr. Ridge said. Recalling something she was told in graduate school about the importance of spiders more broadly, she added, "We would be six feet deep in flies [without them]."

If a Mediterranean recluse spider were to bite you, Dr. Ridge noted that it may just be uncomfortable for a few days, and then one would be able to move on because of the lack of venom injection. Scratching a bite can introduce bacteria from beneath the fingernails and cause an infection. "People immediately scratch it with their fingernails, and under the fingernails [is] just loaded with bacteria," Dr. Ridge said. When spiders are in a stressful situation, it is no surprise that they use their hunting instincts and attack, but they can also bite dry and don't always release venom. The Mediterranean recluses only empty their venom if they are in "dire peril" because they can control how much venom is released. When they release venom, it is very costly, often depleting their energy.

Dr. Ridge assured Wallingford residents that they really shouldn't be worried about these spiders. As their name suggests, Mediterranean recluses are nocturnal and reclusive creatures that shy away from public spaces. They usually hide in steam pipes, basements, and other spaces similar to their cave habitats. Another thing to consider about the Mediterranean recluse spider's behavior is that the spiders do not live in large groups; they tend to congregate in smaller numbers.

When encountering a Mediterranean recluse spider, the best thing to do is leave the spider alone. When someone reaches down to grab one, "that's when you get headline cases," Dr. Ridge said. Although the discovery might seem scary, Dr. Ridge emphasized that the overall public shouldn't be worried about this ordinarily harmless addition to our ecosystem.

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Community Calendar

Oct. 23, 5:45 p.m.–8:00 p.m.

Halloween Happenings
Join Wallingford's Halloween celebration with the Goblin Parade, music, games, crafts, cider, and treats.

Wallingford YMCA/Town Hall

Oct. 24, 7:00 p.m. -9:30 p.m.

Wallingford Food Shuttle
Hop on the shuttle to grab food from Chipotle, Panera, Pokemoto, or Chick-fil-A.

SAC transportation

Oct. 27, 11:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

The Shops at Stone Bridge
Shop, grab a bite, and spend time with friends at The Shops at Stone Bridge, featuring Barnes & Noble, Sephora, J.Crew Factory, Shake Shack, Starbucks, and more.

SAC transportation

Sept. 5–Nov. 1

Bishop's Orchards Fall Festival
Celebrate fall with apple picking, pumpkins, a corn maze, wagon rides, seasonal treats, and other activities at Bishop's Orchards.

Bishop's Orchards, Guilford

FALLING FOR FALL AT BISHOP'S ORCHARDS

By **Anna Park '29**
Copy Editor

When red, green, and yellow start coloring the foliage around Connecticut like a scene out of *Gilmore Girls*, it unmistakably points to one season: cozy, apple cider-filled autumn. Each year, the vibrant New England autumn aesthetic is brought to life at Bishop's Orchards' Fall Festival in Guilford.

The Fall Festival offers a range of seasonal activities centered on Bishop's agricultural traditions, including apple picking, a pumpkin patch, wagon rides, a corn maze, and an Activity Area. Visitors can also enjoy seasonal treats, shop for fall decorations, and explore newer attractions such as the Mega Slide and gem mining.

Bishop's Orchards' Fall Festival is a Connecticut fall tradition attracting locals since the Bishop family started farming in Guilford in 1871. "The festival is a way to share that history with the community while creating lasting memories for families and friends from all over," Ms. Jillian Sandrey, marketing specialist at Bishop's, said. She added that the festival "brings people together to enjoy the orchard, celebrate the season, and experience a little of what makes our town and local agriculture so special."

Over the years, the Fall Festival has expanded its activities. Just last year, the Mega Slide, Cider Hut & Garden, pick-your-own flowers, and Orchard Sweet Shop were added for visitors to enjoy. "What started as a simple pick-your-own apple orchard has grown into a full-on festival with activities, attractions, and farm-centered experiences ... But agriculture is still at the heart of everything we do," Ms. Sandrey said.

This year, a group of about 10 Choate sixth-form students visited the orchard to celebrate Tessa Wilhelm '27's 18th birthday. "We first did apple picking, and that was really fun, frolicking among the apple trees," Wilhelm said. The group also visited the pumpkin patch and drank hot cider before returning to the Student Activities Center (SAC), where they turned their apples into apple turnovers.

For some, the trip was a reminder of the New England charm and an opportunity to create special memories. "It was something that we wanted to do because I remember last year we saw a group of senior girls go, and they took their seniors' pictures there, and it was really cute," Zahabiya Khoka '27 said.

Places like Bishop's offer Choate students a chance to experience more of the local community by participating in meaningful Connecticut traditions. As a former Connecticut resident familiar with the owners of Bishop's, Khoka encouraged students to make the trip to the festival. "I think it's a really great opportunity for students to get off campus and experience something that isn't in the Greater Wallingford area, and it's also just so beautiful. Connecticut has a lot to offer," Khoka said.

Similarly, Wilhelm, a day student, emphasized how special it is to introduce others who may not be familiar with the state's fall customs. "I didn't realize how uncommon it is for Choate students to ... go pick apples and see pumpkins, because we hail from all different places, so it was really fun to see my friends have that experience ... [and] experience that with them."

Due to the multitude of activities offered and a limited time at the Orchard, both Wilhelm and Khoka expressed their desire to return and explore other options, including eating at the new restaurant at Bishop's, checking out the well-known farm market, which sells products from the Orchards, sweets, and more, and trying the corn maze.

Bishop's Orchards Fall Festival leaves its visitors with a greater appreciation of the fall season and local Connecticut traditions, celebrating New England's distinctly toasty fall vibe. As Sandrey said, "We want people to have fun, make memories, and feel connected to the community and the season. And hopefully, they leave already looking forward to coming back next year!"

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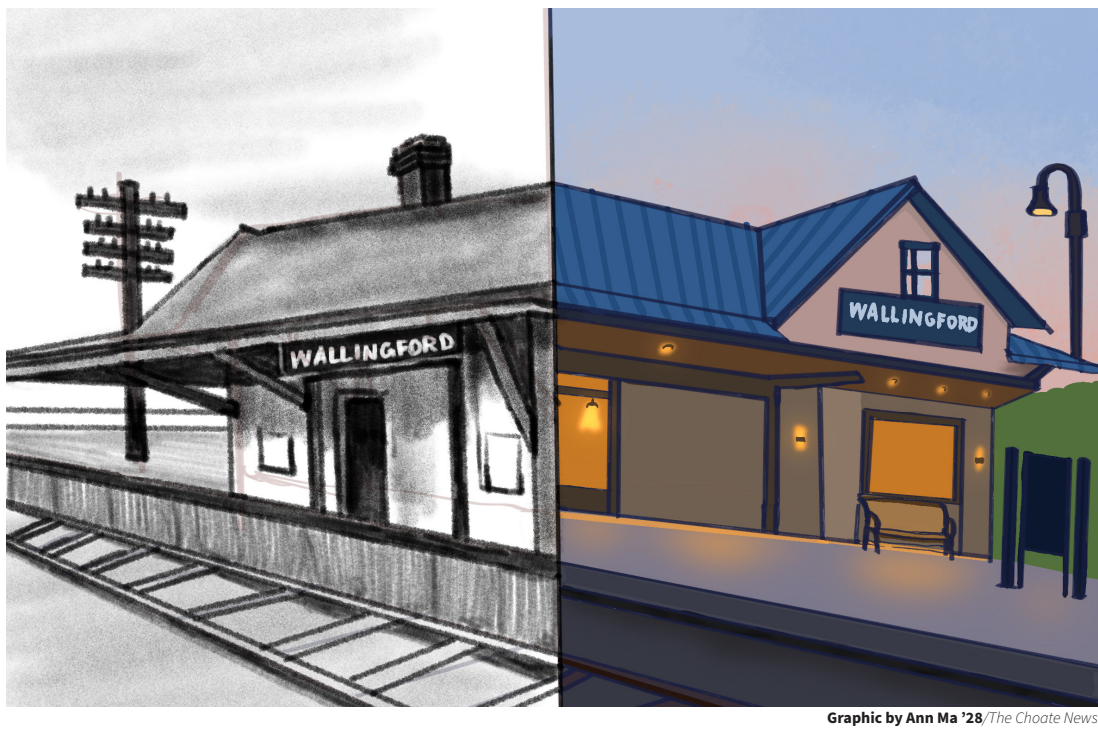
Photo courtesy of Zahabiya Khokha '27

Choate students enjoy a fall outing at Bishop's Orchards.

Wallingford Train Station on Track for Change



Graphic by Ann Ma '28/*The Choate News*

By **Emily Chen '30**
Reporter

For many students living near the Wallingford train tracks, the blow of train whistles is a comforting sound of daily life. Sitting at the center of town, the Wallingford Train Station is a major landmark suspended in time. However, town officials are considering new possibilities for the property after earlier redevelopment efforts stalled, while residents and local business owners are anticipating what this space might become.

Currently, the plans for the train station remain paused. Previous efforts to redevelop the building stalled after the town unsuccessfully applied for several rounds of grant funding. The town also issued a Request for Proposals (RFP), but received no responses because private developers viewed the town's rental terms as overly risky, as the town required a lease rather than a purchase. Local businesses, such as Words on Wood, suggested that having a private owner purchase the property could better secure long-term investment. In the meantime, the town council is considering painting the interior to make it more attractive to investors.

According to Economic Development Coordinator Specialist Mr. Don Crouch, the offices of U.S. Senators Richard Blumenthal and Chris Murphy have requested federal funding to help restore the historic train station, but the funding is currently held up in the Appropriations Committee as Congress considers the federal budget. If the funding does not come through, the Economic Development Commission may meet with the Town Council to determine other ways forward. "It's something that's probably going to take multiple avenues of funding, whether it's on the local, state, or federal level, to put a plan together," Mr. Crouch said.

The Wallingford Train Station has played a significant role in the town's history. It was constructed in the 1870s at the intersection of Colony Street, Hall Avenue, and Quinnipiac Street, in the Second Empire architectural style. The major New Haven Rail line transported European immigrants arriving to work in Wallingford's silverware factories around the 1880s. From 1870 until around 1950, the train station was a very active place to be,' Wallingford Historic Preservation Trust President Mr. Jerry Farrell Jr. '86 said. "The train station was often an immigrant's first introduction to Wallingford. Many Italian immigrants were welcomed to Wallingford by Frank Manfreda, who operated a business near the train station. Mr. Manfreda assisted immigrants in finding housing and employment." Because of the unique memory the train station holds, preservationists stress the need to protect key architectural features, specifically the building's distinctive mansard roof, corbels, and brick facade, during any future work.

Town officials hope to increase foot traffic in the lower downtown area, which attracts fewer shoppers than the upper town center. While upper downtown benefits from the steady flow of Choate students, faculty, and families, lower Center Street lacks a central attraction to draw people down the hill. Business owners suggest redeveloping the station by creating a multi-use hub nearby with restaurants and shops, possibly a modern food hall or an artisan market, would increase downtown activity and benefit small local stores. "The last proposed idea was half of it being a commercial space, something like a food hall concept, and then the other half of the space [being a] community space, could be used for nonprofits or events," Mr. Crouch said.

However, nearby residents share a mix of anticipation and concern regarding the developments for the train station. Some support historic preservation and expansion of the train station, while others are concerned about possible traffic congestion in surrounding neighborhoods. "I hear the train every night from my house, which has grown to be a comforting sound," Sienna Barhost '27 said. "If the train station were to expand, that could potentially increase traffic, which I would not be thrilled about."

As funding and investment remain uncertain, local leaders estimate that it will take several years for new developments to be fully planned. Questions remain regarding the town budget and the exact scope of the train station expansion. Until a plan is approved or rejected, Wallingford can reflect on over 150 years of the train station's history, appreciate its current facade, and anticipate its future.

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The Choate News

120th Masthead

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Embrace the "Joy of Becoming"

By **Prudence Chen '28**
Copy Editor

I, like many Choate students, have a weak spot. I fall victim to the endless void of social media content about college.

One influencer boasts a Common App that got them into all the Ivies. Another claims to have the secret to scoring a 1600 on the SAT. Junior year has loomed over my head like a particularly weighty rain cloud, and the content I consume online certainly doesn't alleviate any of that pressure. I've heard of the pitfalls of taking too many classes, the pressure of producing a strong transcript, and 2:00 am scramble-study sessions. Now that I am a fifth-former, applying to college isn't just a video I watch online; it's a reality that affects my day-to-day life.

For some reason, I already feel like I'm behind. I turn to my left and hear about the prestigious college program or internship my peers did over the summer. To my right, someone else has already taken the ACT twice. People look like they've run a lap of college prep when I'm still at the starting line.

Rhema Woolcock '28 echoed this sentiment. "The stuff we are fed online can put a lot of pressure on students to reach the standards of other people. Especially when [what] people post online are extraordinary," Woolcock said.

Traditionally, Choate students are introduced to college counseling in the winter of their junior year, when they are assigned one of the eight college counselors and begin individual work, as well as small-group seminars. College counselor Ms. Winifred Maloney is always available to underclassmen who wish to ask questions in the college counseling office.

This year, Choate began college programming for fifth-formers in October, a change from January in the previous years. The form was split into four groups by last name and was given a general overview to the college counseling process.

Head of College Counseling Ms. Marcia Landesman shed light on why underclassmen don't receive college counseling. "I think to do it too early would actually almost rob you of the joy of becoming, and would assume that you are ready for that next step in decision-making," Ms. Landesman said. "The best college counseling for a third- or fourth-former is learning in your classes, learning to love learning, engaging with your peers, getting involved in the life of the School ... These are lessons reiterated by advisors and by deans, and the overall ethos of the School," Ms. Landesman said.

Though it's hard to believe, we are on track for our future. Comparison is always the thief of joy, and though we are always told to ignore things that make us feel inferior, it's human nature to do the opposite. But it is crucial to understand that the media and discourse we consume about college feeds into unproductive pressure.

Ms. Landesman urges students not to fall into the social media trap. "[The videos are] terrible. I've shared some of the advice that is coming in those videos with college admission deans and representatives, and they're horrified, and they're really concerned that students are going to follow that advice and have less interesting applications. I would just really stay off the algorithm," she said.

Ultimately, we will gain acceptances to colleges on our own merits — not on the terms of our peers, or online tutors. A large portion of the college counseling process is self-reflection, and "self" is the most important part of it. So when you see a reel claiming to have the key to successful college admissions, scroll past. Focus on your own growth, and know that you don't need to "be there" just yet.

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Balancing Perspectives in the HPRSS Department



Graphic by Leah Han '27/*The Choate News*

By **Kaitlyn Yu '27**
Sports Section Editor

After taking Asian American Studies as a fif, I realized the world of opportunities that lay in taking HPRSS electives — they build upon content introduced in World History and U.S. History, allowing students to discover more about unspoken voices within and outside the United States. Yet, as I scrolled through the course catalog, I observed a pattern: Of the 22 upper form history electives, 10 history electives in the course catalog specifically focused on non-Euro-American cultures, four were designated "advanced" (Modern Japan, Asian American Studies, Black Studies, and Topics in Native American Studies), and three of the "honors" courses (Modern China, Colonial Latine America, and Latinx in the United States) were offered only in alternating years.

I wondered if these course designations had anything to do with which histories we deem worthy to be told at Choate. It can be easy to consider an honors course distinction as a valuation of the history being studied. At the same time, it is important to consider values about course content and rigor from the perspective of both students and faculty. This leads me to wonder how the subject of history is framed at Choate across our required courses and electives.

Beyond our electives, our required World History and U.S. History courses can lead students to view the world through an American or Eurocentric perspective. When we learn about non-American or European countries in class, they are often seen as reactionary forces to Western powers and their decisions. For example, the Scramble for Africa is often discussed through the Berlin Conference and the continent's division into colonial territories, but students seldom consider how African nations and their ways of life differed before colonial pressure. "We have a subconscious bias in how we talk about politics and how we talk about every historical movement," Ava Lavigne '27 said.

This is where the second problem comes in. If required courses cannot cover every single perspective, electives should also give students the opportunity to explore what they've missed. But what happens when the courses that interest students are being passed over in favor of honors courses?

HPRSS Department Head Ms. Courtney DeStefano (DeStefs) shared that "67.3% of our electives are 'honors,' compared to 32.7% of advanced electives." In a department where "honors" coursework is the norm, students can hardly be blamed for treating this designation as a measure of a course's academic value, especially as they consider their course selections according to colleges and their expectations. If students feel that a class that is "non-honors" means it will be less rigorous, they are less likely to choose it as they consider the course rigor that is displayed on their transcripts.

Faculty members have pushed back against this assumption, deconstructing the notion that the course designation determines the value of a course. "If a course is designated as 'non-honors,' that means more students can take it and have accessibility to it," DeStefs said.

Yet, as students continually choose to take "honors" courses because of their perceived rigor, the information they take away often becomes restricted to a Eurocentric lens. "It creates an echo chamber where [students] are not really expanding their historical knowledge," Jun Wong '27 added.

"There was a really deliberate redesign of most of our courses to transition away from it being so Eurocentric in terms of our coverage," Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence Mr. Deron Chang added. Director of Studies Ms. Kyra Jenney emphasized that "there was a real desire" from students and faculty themselves for courses around non-Euro-American topics. Yet students still feel unable to take advantage of them because of the weight an "honors" designation can carry.

Of course, telling students not to worry about course rigor is easier said than done. College admissions are part of the calculation, whether we like it or not. Dean of College Counseling Ms. Marcia Landesman challenged the idea that a "more rigorous" designation for coursework demonstrates greater passion for a subject. "While I think an honors designation is certainly a shorthand for understanding the overall challenge of a student's academic program, ... the other components of the application really help the reader understand the student's journey," she said.

While it is important for students to understand that "honors" courses are not the be-all and end-all, this realization alone may not change the way students perceive academic rigor when building their transcripts. The reality remains that required history courses in the HPRSS department must still make room to decenter American and Eurocentric perspectives, while electives that focus on other cultures often attract less attention from students as they are not designated Honors, which students may interpret as the HPRSS department assigning less value to courses with non-Western topics.

"I feel like if [HPRSS electives] were more available and accessible in a way that didn't weigh on ... what a college is going to think, I feel like a lot more people would be inclined to take these classes and learn more about other communities that they might not be a part of," Jordy Miller '27 said.

Choate cannot introduce every historical perspective into every HPRSS course and neither should all HPRSS electives have to be "honors" in order to be considered valuable by the student body. While students can demonstrate academic rigor through other avenues and not just "honors" courses — not every student shares my perspective. Reconsidering honors distinctions across all history electives may broaden the scope of history for all Choate Students.

If we want Choate students to think more critically about the world, we cannot keep asking them to choose between the histories they want to learn and the transcripts they think they need to curate.

Kaitlyn Yu *is a sixth-former from Hong Kong. She may be reached at kyu27@choate.edu.*

Reassessing the Choate Assessment Policy

By **Anna Park '29**
Copy Editor

We've all been there before. There's no doubt that every Choate student has experienced the sinking sensation when you realize you've got three graded assessments the very next day, whether it's "quests," quizzes, tests, or a dreaded combination of all three. A definite savior for students juggling too much at once is the policy for exemption on major tests. However, this policy has largely been passed down by word of mouth, resulting in vague conjecture and uncertainty among students. The School must end this ambiguity and clarify how it should be correctly applied.

Currently, the policy operates as follows: "If you have more than two major assessments scheduled, you are able to move the third one so that you don't have more than two on a single day ... that's a policy that applies across all academic departments," Director of Studies Ms. Kyra Jenney said. "The goal of it was to try to help students manage log jams in their workflow ... to have three major assessments in one day, when [there] could be hours of preparation needed for just one [assessment], would be unfair to ask a student to do the night before an assignment." The policy is intended to help students create a little more balance and flexibility to reschedule "major assessments" if they happen to be unlucky and have multiple teachers testing them on the same day.

The policy, despite being well-intentioned, risks undermining the actual workload many students face with its major versus minor distinction for granting exemptions. Currently, students could potentially have at least three graded evaluations that require studying and review — tests, quests, and quizzes — but only tests are classified as "a major assessment." Under the literal wording of the policy, quizzes would not fall under the exempted category. "Quests," which teachers often assign as hybrid quizzes and tests to alleviate the pressure of a conventional test, further confuse students by entering an undefined gray area.

Quests are ambiguous, as acknowledged by Ms. Jenney. "A quest doesn't fit neatly ... A quest, if it is significantly fewer points than a test, would be a minor assessment. That doesn't mean it is not a high value assignment, but it is not the highest value assignment that that course offers. So there's a little bit more gray area, but the idea is that a quest would be fewer points or less weight in the overall course grade compared to a major in-class assignment, like a unit test or a large paper project." This reflects the variability among teachers, because different teachers use different grading systems. For example, a test worth 100 points might account for a huge percentage of a term grade, but in another class a 100-point test could only be one of many factors for the term grade.

"I think that what counts as a large or small assessment varies by class, as does difficulty, so such things are hard to manage," Zachary Brenner '29 said. If the policy is intended to reduce academic stress, a system that does not consider the actual pressure and time needed to study for each individual test is insufficient. Moreover, how can the policy be properly implemented if students and teachers alike don't even know when the policy applies, and what is classified as a "major assessment"?

For quizzes and quests, factors such as the amount of content needed to prepare, the length of evaluation, and the final weight of the evaluation toward the final grade must be considered rather than simply singling out "major assessments," which are vaguely defined. For instance, if an assessment includes content from five or more class periods, then it might make sense to classify it as "major." The school has an obligation to clarify these distinctions.

In this way, the basis on which students are allowed to push one evaluation further back must be placed on measurable factors, including the amount of content that needs to be prepared for the test, the weight toward the class grade, and the amount of time preparation for the test takes. It should be recognized that there is a clear difference between a five-minute quiz on last night's reading and a unit "quiz."

The current policy does not address the grey area of a "major" or "minor" assessment; the School must explicitly list what amount of content or preparation required designates a test in either category student or academic handbooks. Otherwise, the existing policy will remain vastly arbitrary, and will not fully serve the needs of students as intended.

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Graphic by Leah Han '27/*The Choate News*

THEY WON'T. STUDENT JOURNALISTS WILL.

By **Maia Shah '27**
Editor-in-Chief

Cereese Qusba, a senior editor for *The Cornell Daily Sun*, pursued a story for nearly two years after the majority of campus seemed to move on. In October 2024, a young woman, Jane Doe, filed a report that she was drugged and raped for seven consecutive hours by seven men at a fraternity house. At the time of her filing, the university claimed to investigate the allegations while local prosecution failed to press criminal charges for such a disgusting atrocity. As campus attention and scrutiny subsided, Ms. Qusba never stopped her ardent quest for information and accountability. She continued to write, interview administration officials, and build a relationship with Doe and her lawyers.

When Doe filed a civil lawsuit this past month, the case regained public attention and garnered national fury. Reporters at *The Sun* stood ready to publish their long-researched editorial. The paper's response extended beyond a reporting of facts. Under Editor-in-Chief Sophia Dasser, four students published a forceful, transparent editorial critiquing the institutional response to the case and boldly printing the full names of all seven accused individuals.

What distinguishes this story is not simply that students published a courageous investigation of national significance, but that their reporting sparked public debate, demanded accountability, and exposed the institution's efforts to conceal the truth. Empowered students continued to pursue information, ruthlessly interrogate, and publish sensitive identifiers. More importantly, these students worked behind the scenes for years even when public attention quickly dissipated. Their work raises broader questions about the obligations of student journalism, particularly at elite institutions.

Prestigious universities, like Cornell, and by extension, boarding schools like Choate and our peer institutions, take pride in finding students who best embody their ethos. We tout these values on our website, recite them in School Meeting speeches, and encourage applicants to write essays showcasing their own core values to gain coveted admission into said communities. These groups promise not only academic excellence, but also a culture informed by shared responsibility, integrity, and student safety. The Cornell website states that the Office of Community Standards resolves conflict with "fairness, integrity, and objectivity for all parties involved, consistent with the university's educational goals." These are the very commitments that should hold institutions accountable, not become the language through which they evade accountability.



Graphic by Leah Han '27/*The Choate News*

The responsibility of student journalists is, therefore, to fearlessly expose the gaping disparities between what institutions promise and how they act to protect the powerful, wealthy, and well-connected at the cost of student safety, dignity, and basic respect. That responsibility, or more accurately, that gift, extends beyond flagging down the most contentious hot-button topics or regurgitating statements released by administrators. It requires diligently following developments long after the initial fury fizzles, examining whether official press releases align with the facts, establishing trust with witnesses, and questioning whether institutional responses afford certain groups undue lenience because of considerations that often corrupt decision-making at elite institutions. In the Cornell case, the diligence and passion of the reporters at *The Sun*, Qusba in particular, ensured that the questioning and attention devoted to the university response did not wane simply because the initial investigation closed or because campus attention shifted elsewhere. Moments like the student response to Ms. Doe's case are when we truly see students embodying these very "institutional values."

Student reporters remain tied to the school long after a story ceases to dominate headlines. They hear the concerns administrators overlook, witness firsthand the repercussions of institutional failures, and recognize the stark juxtaposition between campus reality and the carefully curated public image their campuses project. The horrific violence at Cornell represents more than a devastating case in a pattern that has plagued society for centuries. The students who reported on it were not distant observers. They were students like us, our peers, who recognized the power they possessed and chose to utilize it. Their work stands as a testament to what student journalism can, and must, do.

Cornell is not a distant institution whose failures we can dismiss as a scary manifestation of our darkest fears and worries. It is an institution that shares with Choate a particular set of promises about the communities it fosters and the students it is entrusted to protect. We are taught to highly regard these places as epicenters of culture, opportunity, security, and intellectual growth, governed by people who take this responsibility seriously. When such a heartbreaking case raises questions about whether these responsibilities have been fulfilled, it becomes difficult to reconcile assurances and lofty speech with the uncertainty and fear students are left to confront.

The Sun is the oldest continuously independent college daily newspaper in the nation. In the wake of Jane Doe's story, the importance of financial and editorial independence cannot be overstated. Scrutiny and accountability are nearly impossible when the institution being exposed controls the resources, newsroom, and approval to publish. For *The Sun*, institutional approval is not a prerequisite to publication. This might seem trivial, but in today's journalistic landscape, independence has never been so important. As ethical journalism becomes a scarce commodity, the ability for young students to use their voice as an unfiltered means of speaking truth to power is something that deserves to be celebrated, emphasized, and leveraged to give a voice to those who have been stripped of it.

For student publications at elite schools, this distinction matters. The institutions they report for have extensive resources, powerful alumni networks, and incredible incentives to manage the precise way they are perceived. None of this means assuming that every administrative decision warrants an editorial condemnation. It means recognizing that institutions cannot be the sole arbiters of their own accountability. *The Sun*'s courageous handling of the sexual assault case is a powerful reminder of what student journalists can accomplish when we treat this responsibility seriously and protect it fiercely. Protecting student journalism extends far beyond one elite university and one despicable case. At every university, and even high school, that asks its students to trust its leadership, there must also remain room for students to unapologetically question it when it inevitably falls short.

A particular sense of hopelessness accompanies stories like Jane Doe's. The reporting of *The Sun*, however, offers a reason to feel less powerless.

The September 21 issue of *The Sun*, in the article "Cornell Won't, We Will," demonstrates that students, even when operating with a fraction of the resources available to the institutions they cover, can force those institutions to address questions they might otherwise evade, deflect, or reduce to a "reflective essay."

There is something especially compelling about students exercising this kind of independence within institutions that command so much authority over their lives. We spend years trying to earn a place at these schools, but that should not require surrendering our right to boldly and unabashedly question. If anything, the trust we place in our institutions makes scrutiny even more necessary. A school cannot demand the confidence of its students while treating its own decisions as beyond examination, and a newspaper cannot fulfill its responsibilities if the comfort of the institution takes precedence over the questions that community members and survivors deserve to have answered and disseminated.

What occurred at Cornell is a reminder of the devastating reality of institutions skirting responsibility and attempting to shield their hallowed halls from tarnish. No fiery editorial can mitigate a tragedy and no newspaper can claim that its reporting will produce justice. It would be inappropriate to suggest otherwise. However, it would be equally flawed to claim that students have no voice or power simply because they do not have a seat on the board. Cornell's case should not leave students at peer institutions with only a sense of helplessness or consuming sadness. It should remind us of what we are capable of doing. We cannot guarantee that institutions and members of said institutions will act ethically; we can, however, refuse to treat institutional authority as unimpeachable and prestige as proof of virtue.

Student journalists have the power and responsibility to help expose the ways institutions can prioritize protecting their reputations over protecting the people within their communities; often the people that need protecting the most.

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Justice is Not a Spectacle

By **Leela Curry '29**
Copy Editor

Should a person's death ever become a public spectacle? In a world where everything can be broadcast, streamed, and consumed from a screen, there should be limits to what society turns into entertainment. A person's death should be one of them. That boundary came into focus this month when Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth stated that the execution of Nidal Hasan would be livestreamed, the former Army Major convicted for the 2009 Fort Hood shooting. After drawing bipartisan and religious criticism, President Donald Trump P'00 reversed the decision on October 15, announcing that the execution would not be streamed.

Yet, the question still stands. Televising public executions does more than make punishment visible, it transforms the end of a human life into a spectacle. Regardless of what a person has done, their death should not become another event for millions to watch from their living rooms.

The problem with televised executions is not simply that people witness violence, but that broadcasting death changes how society experiences it. Television allows viewers to observe events from a distance, separated from the reality of what they are watching. An execution risks becoming something people tune into out of curiosity, discuss with others, and move on from moments later. A human life becomes a broadcast, and death becomes content. When society treats executions as spectacles, it risks forgetting the gravity of what is actually occurring.

Supporters may argue that broadcasting executions could discourage crime by making its consequences impossible to ignore. However, visibility does not guarantee effectiveness. Watching an execution will not automatically prevent someone from committing a crime. More importantly, even if public executions deterred some criminal behavior, that would not necessarily justify televising them. The effectiveness of a punishment should not be the only measure of whether it is ethical. Society must also consider what it sacrifices in pursuit of that goal.

Televised executions also raise fundamental questions about human dignity. It is possible to condemn a person's actions without believing their suffering should become public entertainment. A criminal's wrongdoing does not erase their humanity, and opposing televised executions does not mean excusing their crimes or disregarding victims. Justice should recognize the seriousness of wrongdoing without turning a person's final moments into a spectacle. If society claims to value human life, that value should not disappear when someone is convicted of a terrible crime.

There is also a risk that repeatedly watching violence could make death feel less significant. When disturbing events appear on screens alongside ordinary news and entertainment, people may become accustomed to witnessing suffering from a distance. Although viewers will respond differently, broadcasting the execution itself crosses a line. True transparency requires accountability, not necessarily the live transmission of a person's death.

Ultimately, the question is whether preventing crime justifies turning death into something people can casually consume. The answer is no. A society's values are revealed by not only how it treats the innocent, but also how it treats those it condemns, and treating someone like a zoo animal has no justification. Justice should be about accountability, not spectacle.

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Is the Peace Prize Still Noble?

By **Mary Higashi '29**
Copy Editor

In the White House, the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize medal sits in a gold frame. It was a gift from the prize's laureate, Venezuelan opposition leader María Corina Machado. This year, on October 9, the Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded the prize to Navanethem Pillay, a South African jurist and former International Criminal Court (ICC) judge. Hours later, the U.S. sanctioned the ICC, calling it a "rogue court" engaging in illegitimate "lawfare." So what makes one Nobel Peace Prize-framed and the other condemned?

The Nobel Peace Prize, in Alfred Nobel's words, highlights work for "fraternity between nations." Pillay fits well, committed to the idea that law should bind every nation equally. Honoring her is a brave stand for the rule of international law and for the idea that "peace requires justice," at a time when that principle is eroding. So, how effective is the Committee's message, really?

Not very, at least among those with the power to act on it. Once awarded, the prize is out of the Committee's hands, and so is its message. Last year's prize is a prime example. Machado won for her fight for democratic rights against Nicolas Maduro's dictatorship. However, after the U.S. captured Maduro on January 3, President Donald Trump P'00 claimed Machado lacked the respect to lead Venezuela. Soon after, Machado gave Trump her medal, calling it a "Personal Symbol of Gratitude on behalf of the Venezuelan People" in what appeared to be an attempt to win back his support. Trump accepted it, "for the work I have done," but did not change his position. The prize honored an entire people's struggle for justice, and it became a bargaining chip that bought nothing.

This year, instead of being rewritten, the Committee's message was disregarded. Within hours of Pillay's win, Trump claimed the Committee had "demeaned" the award, and that same day, sanctioned the ICC. Pillay's career rests on the equal binding of law; ironically, her prize was immediately undercut by power that couldn't be bound.

But the pattern predates Trump. In 2010, China froze diplomatic ties with Norway after the prize went to Chinese dissident and political prisoner Liu Xiaobo. Like the ICC, the prize has no enforcement power; it matters only when powerful states choose to treat it as mattering, and they do so only when it flatters them. When the prize challenges them, it tends to provoke backlash rather than change.

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POLLUTERS MUST PAY

By **Kaashvi Mittal '29**
Opinions Writer

When floods swept through Nepal this August, families had to watch as their homes and loved ones disappeared beneath the rushing water. Some of them had already survived the devastating earthquake in 2015. Now, as another flood hit the Budhi Gankadi River on October 11, Nepal faces the challenge of recovering from successive disasters with limited resources.

The August disaster began when ice and rock collapsed high in the Himalayas, sending a torrent through the Trishuli River system. By early October, authorities reported 1,457 deaths and 5,285 missing people. Nepal's government estimates that recovery and reconstruction for the disaster in August will cost about $4.8 billion. The bank has made up to $170 million available in emergency financing, covering only a small fraction of what Nepal needs. Nepal's situation begs an important question: why should countries that have contributed the least to global warming bear such an exorbitant cost? For decades, industrialized countries burned fossil fuels to power their own economic growth, burdening the rest of the world with vast amounts of carbon dioxide. As a result, countries like Nepal, which only account for about 0.1 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, face rising temperatures that melt Himalayan glaciers and increase environmental risks for mountain communities.


Graphic by Leah Han '27/*The Choate News*

Governments with high historical emissions must follow through on commitments to reduce pollution. Wealthier nations should start by funding permanent housing and reliable warning systems, while working internally to reduce the warming that threatens communities like those in the Himalayas. If climate justice is to have any significant impact, it must result in tangible financial assistance for the communities who bear the brunt of disasters inflicted by wealthier nations who remain insulated.

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FEATURES

RETRACING THE ARCHIVES OF THE CHOATE NEWS MASTHEAD

By **Nick Aston '28**
Copy Editor

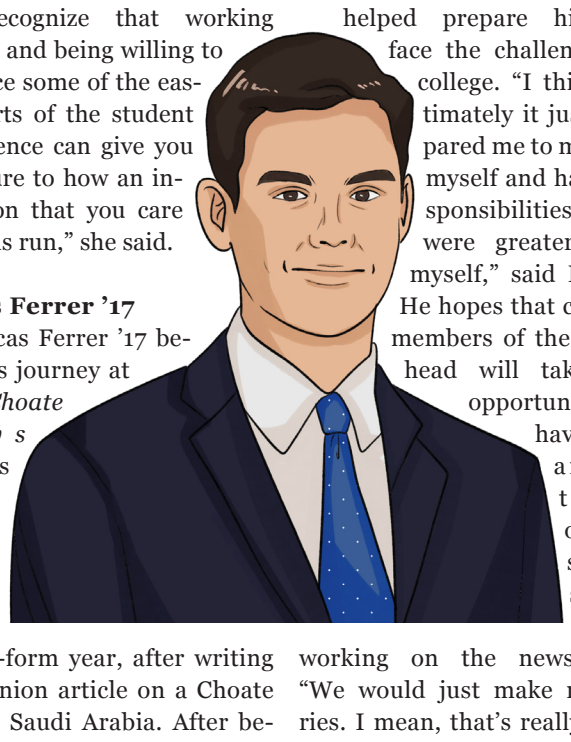
For everyone on *The Choate News* Masthead, there is a particular sense of joy found amidst the demanding process of bringing an issue from assignments to print. Whether it's spending hours copyediting or working into the early hours of the morning crafting layouts, members of *The Choate News* have connected through the challenges of producing the paper since 1907.

Adanma Raymond '12

Adanma Raymond '12 joined *The Choate News* as a copy editor during her fourth-form year. Raymond remarked that much of her inspiration to contribute to the paper came from other editors and the news faculty adviser, Mr. Zach Goodyear. "I wouldn't even say it was a particular moment so much as it was the opportunity to work with him and be mentored by him. He could be quite demanding, but in a way that felt supportive," Raymond said. Her perspective reflects how students build community through hard work and commitment to journalistic excellence through working on the publication.



Raymond recalled the challenge of balancing the paper with other activities while developing a communal voice as Editor-in-Chief of the 105th Masthead (then known as the Editorial Board). By facing these challenges head-on, she gained a newfound appreciation for publishing accurate journalism. Reflecting on the value of student journalism, she said, "Top of mind right now is what's going on at Cornell and how much their publication had an impact there. It was about balancing our own opinions and reckoning with them alongside remaining a collective voice of students." After a gap year, Raymond attended Columbia University, where her Choate experience shaped how she wrote for various publications and served on the student council. "It helped me recognize that working harder and being willing to sacrifice some of the easier parts of the student experience can give you exposure to how an institution that you care about is run," she said.



Lucas Ferrer '17

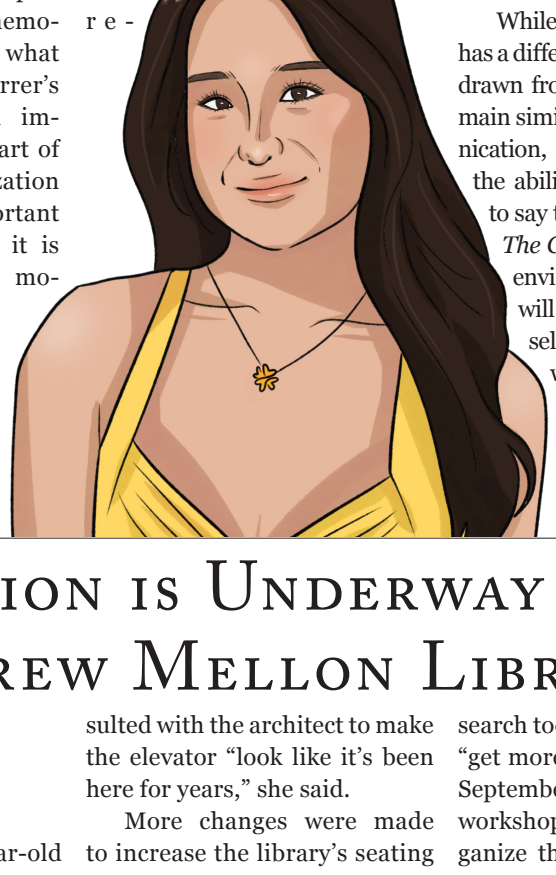
Lucas Ferrer '17 began his journey at *The Choate News* in his fourth-form year, after writing an opinion article on a Choate trip to Saudi Arabia. After becoming an official member of the publication as a copy editor, Ferrer was eventually appointed Managing Editor of the 110th Masthead. Ferrer fondly reflected on high-intensity moments that brought him closer to other members of the Masthead. "I just think the most memorable times that I had were when we were just sending the paper off and rushing to get everything done," Ferrer said.

Later, Ferrer attended Yale University, where his experience as Managing Editor helped prepare him to face the challenges of college. "I think ultimately it just prepared me to manage myself and have responsibilities that were greater than myself," said Ferrer. He hopes that current members of the Masthead will take the opportunity to have fun amidst the occasional stress of working on the newspaper. "We would just make memories. I mean, that's really what it's about," Ferrer said. Ferrer's sentiment highlights an important aspect of being part of any student-led organization — as much as it is important to take things seriously, it is equally essential to find moments to laugh.

Reinah Lee '26

Reinah Lee '26, the paper's most recent former Editor-in-Chief, started her journey at *The Choate News* on the way home for Thanksgiving, her third-form year. Still getting used to navigating the demands of Choate student life, Lee was inspired by a friend of hers to write for the paper. "I was always interested in broadcasting and journalism when I was younger. I was part of my elementary school's daily news network and one of the anchors where we would share the weather and things like that," Lee said.

Lee quickly climbed the ladder of the Masthead, becoming Copy Editor in the spring of her third-form year before becoming Sports Section Editor. As Editor-in-Chief of the 119th Masthead, Lee's most rewarding experience was the collaborative issue with Deerfield Academy, showcasing the beloved rivalry just in time for Deerfield Day. "It was a lot of work, but getting to see it come out, printed, and hearing from Deerfield kids that I knew that they loved the paper ... It was honestly good for me," Lee said.



Now a student at Northeastern University, Lee echoed the sentiment from past leaders of *The Choate News*. "I think our true selves come out when we are under pressure, and [being part of The News] taught me a lot about myself and who I am as a leader," she said. Lee hopes that the current executives, Editor-in-Chief Maia Shah '27 and Managing Editor Rachel Fan '27, will trust their instincts and ideas as leaders.

While every Masthead leader has a different journey, the lessons drawn from their experiences remain similar: leadership, communication, and, most importantly, the ability to have fun. It's safe to say that no matter your role, *The Choate News* is a unique environment in which you will learn more about yourself than you ever thought was possible.

Nick Aston *may be reached at naston28@choate.edu.*

BEHIND THE SCENES: MR. MORRIS IN MOTION

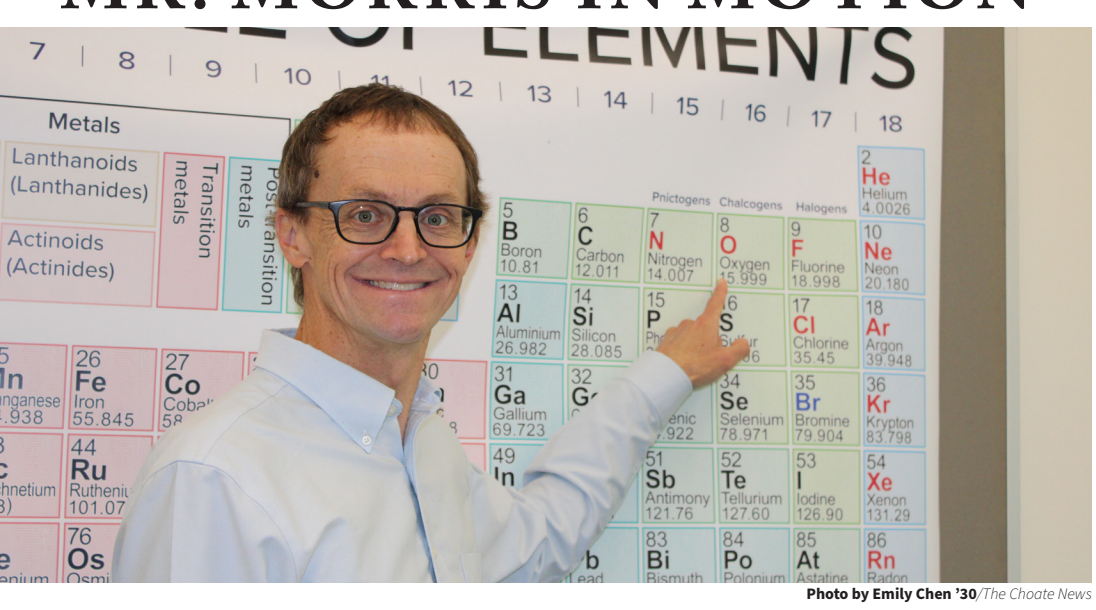


Photo by Emily Chen '30/*The Choate News*

Mr. Morris points at an element on the periodic table.

By **Mary Higashi '29**
Copy Editor

Every morning, Mr. Will Morris coasts downhill on his bike from Rosemary Lane to campus. Every evening, he pedals back up. During the school day, his Choate experience looks a lot like a student's: a full day of classes, afternoon practice, a committee meeting, and after dinner, homework. This routine has been 25 years in the making.

At 6:30 a.m., while most of campus is asleep, Mr. Morris kicks his day off with coffee, breakfast, and a walk up the cross-country course with his family dog Tenner, a rescue he has had for 10 years. For Mr. Morris, the walk is a chance to "get some fresh air and see what's happening out in the woods on a given morning."

Then he hops on his bike and heads down to the Carl C. Ichan Center for Science. From there, no two days look the same. This fall, he teaches Honors Chemistry, regular Chemistry, Chemistry of Food, and two directed studies sections in chemistry. He also oversees (you guessed it) the chemistry section, collaborating with colleagues, testing equipment, and creating lesson plans. Between labs, emails, retakes, and extra help, free blocks rarely stay free.

When the class day ends in the winter term, Mr. Morris trades out the classroom for the squash court. He was a three-sport athlete in high school, played squash at the club level in college, and has coached Boys' Varsity Squash since he arrived at Choate. "He acts with tremendous care and respect towards the players," Pete Areewong '27, a member of the team and chair of the Judicial Committee (JC), said. He added that practice is filled with "constructive feedback and poking jabs," creating "a strong sense of community and humor. [Mr. Morris] is our biggest supporter.

In the spring, Mr. Morris heads to the golf course. Coaching the Girls' Varsity Golf has taught him more about the game: "It's fun to be on the coaching side of that," he said. For Dylann Kong '29, a member of the golf team, a core memory from last spring was the bus rides to the course, where Mr. Morris played old rock and blues songs while driving. "It just makes my day," she said. Appreciating the spirit and care he brought to the team, she added, "I'm really lucky to have him as a coach."

Mr. Morris brings that same combination of humor and seriousness to his role as Judicial Committee adviser, where he attends hearings and meetings. After a decade in the Deans' Office, Mr. Morris returned to full-time teaching in the spring of 2021 but found that he still wanted to remain involved in student leadership, which prompted him to take up the position. Now in his fifth year, and having spent most of his life in academic communities, Mr. Morris values "having a shared understanding about what a community values, and supporting that."

This fall, he has also been training for a triathlon — and, like the athletes he coaches, his afternoons have been busy with exercise in preparation, something he does regularly to "keep [his] head clear." When the day winds down, family dinner is an essential part of Mr. Morris's evening. With both parents working and two children attending Choate, family dinner provides an opportunity to "regroup," he said. After dinner, like students down the hill, he settles in for his own study hours, which mostly entail grading papers. Before bed, he reads for 15 to 30 minutes, usually something unrelated to work.

Days like these have added up to his 25 years at Choate. Since 2001, Mr. Morris has seen the School from almost every angle: as a Chemistry teacher, Form Dean, Director of Residential Life, coach, JC adviser, and a Choate parent. Through every role, one thing has not changed: he runs into students everywhere. Even during a 15-minute interview with The Choate News, he paused to greet passing students countless times. "It's constant," he said, "and it's kind of what makes places like this special."

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Innovation is Underway at the Andrew Mellon Library

By **Kevin Hong '30**
Reporter

Renovating a 100-year-old library is an exciting but also challenging undertaking. For a century, the Andrew Mellon Library has undergone improvements to make it a better space for students, optimizing the student academic experience to help enrich library use. Since last year, the Library has been working to expand seating, add an elevator to improve access to all floors, and reopen collaborative spaces in the basement after their temporary closure. The Library has also welcomed a new Assistant Director Mr. George Aiello who supports student research.

Increasing accessibility was a primary goal for the renovation. Library Director Dr. Sherry Marrotte Newman explained that after the Hill House fire, the closure of the accessible ramp between the dining hall and library left visitors relying on stairs. For students with injuries or difficulty moving between floors, "going up stairs is not always easy," Dr. Newman said. The elevator will provide access to the library's floors, including the School's Archives on the second floor. Its wooden decorations were designed to match the library's existing appearance. Dr. Newman credited Head of School Dr. Alex Curtis and the senior officers who consulted with the architect to make the elevator "look like it's been here for years," she said.

More changes were made to increase the library's seating capacity to about 80 people, compared to approximately 20 when Dr. Newman arrived eight years ago. Dr. Newman said the renovation added more comfortable furniture and space for extended periods of reading. Students can now use the collaborative spaces in the basement and a silent study area on the second floor — a space previously used by the Dean of Faculty's office.

Student requests have also influenced some of these arrangements. Brad Mallory '27 previously wanted more study rooms available because "they're all filled by students during midterms and finals." Now, with more study rooms on the second floor of the silent study section, "The study rooms are really great, giving a quiet space for group work during weekends or for projects for my classes without it being so crowded and unavailable," Mallory said.

Along with new study arrangements, a new faculty member Mr. Aiello joined the library. As the new Assistant Director of the library, he is working with students on capstone projects, directed studies, and research. He hopes to expand support for digital tools and skills such as Microsoft Excel or video production, noting that digital research tools would help students "get more done in less time." In September, he led NoodleTools workshops to help students organize their research. Students can also reach library staff through the website's chat feature or Zoom during study hours — "Never be afraid to come in and talk to us," Mr. Aiello said.

Academic support continues after classes with the new Library Assistant Mr. Luke Slater, who works two weeknights and on weekends alongside his daytime work in a Rham Middle and High School library. He said he has been impressed by the "self-driven nature of the student body," pointing out students staying until closing to finish assignments. As a new faculty member, Mr. Slater hopes to build relationships that help students feel comfortable reaching out to library staff with any questions about research or technology.

Looking ahead, Dr. Newman hopes to add smaller, soundproof study rooms and make further changes to the second floor and the basement. The Library brings together quiet study areas, collaborative spaces, technology resources, and access to the School's Archives. Students can work independently or together to receive academic support from library staff or student tutors.

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Photo by Gisele Yeung '27/*The Choate News*

Mr. Aiello smiles in front of bookshelves in the library.

ARTS AND LEISURE

Taylor Swift Rewrites Her Story in *The Life of a Showgirl: The Encore*



Grahic by Leah Han '27/The Choate News

By **Prudence Chen '28**
Copy Editor

Just over a year ago, I was given the opportunity to do what every Swiftie loves to do — talk about Taylor Swift. *The Life of a Showgirl (TLOAS)* had just come out, and I wrote an article diving into a release that rewrote records and sparked fiery discourse amongst Swifties on campus. Swift dropped *The Encore* to *TLOAS* on September 25, a deluxe album featuring four new tracks, following the initial release and her highly publicized marriage to Travis Kelce, tight end of the Kansas City Chiefs.

Responses to the album itself have been divided. Critics of the album have particularly questioned Swift's songwriting ability, despite her induction into the Songwriters Hall of Fame on June 11 as the youngest woman to receive the honor.

Connor McLaughlin '28, a self-proclaimed Swift superfan and enthusiastic supporter of the original album, was not disappointed by the deluxe. "I liked in 'Cleveland' the line: 'My baby likes what he likes ... the taste of me is acquired, but it's his favorite dish,'" McLaughlin said.

Director of Student Activities Ms. Alexandra Long also highlighted 'Cleveland' as a standout. "What really resonated with me was the idea that the whole world doesn't have to love you when you've found someone who thinks you're the best," Ms. Long said.

Other Swifties express their joy for the star, but admit that her new music just isn't for them. "I'm really happy for Taylor Swift as a person ... because it seems like she's really found the love of her life ... [but] I don't feel the same connection to [*The Encore*] as I do to some of her old songs," Safiya Gonzalez '30 said.

Swift has also faced criticism for backtracking on her statement that *TLOAS* would only contain the original twelve songs. McLaughlin explained his theory for the addition: "It's just [that] life happens ... feelings come up, and you're able to write new music. It's quite literally an encore." Ms. Long echoed this, adding that more songs were the only thing that could have made the album better. "The encore felt a little darker than the original, but it still had that pop energy. Four songs are more of a snapshot than a full album, so it's hard to compare the two, but I enjoyed them," Ms. Long said.

As a longtime fan of Swift's and a general music enthusiast, I understand the debate surrounding an artist releasing a deluxe edition a year after a polarizing album. *The Encore* doubled down on what Swift did in *TLOAS*; tongue-in-cheek pop, backlit by dreamy, synth instrumentals. It isn't an album — or should I say, "era" — written with a quill, with lyrics we need a dictionary in hand to understand. *TLOAS* is a glitter-gel pen project where Swift isn't afraid to shout from the rooftops.

I doubt Swift will escape the microscope of fame, no matter what she does. However, I believe art is rooted in self-expression, and it becomes most meaningful when it is fulfilling for the artist themselves. I applaud Swift for doing her own thing, even if it isn't what gets her the public's endorsement. I view *The Life of a Showgirl: The Encore* as Swift's message to her listeners: "I'm going to write about what makes me happy, and you don't need to like it."

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SYNK, Dance Company, & Motion Under the Spotlight



Photo courtesy of photos.choate.edu

SYNK performs on the Colony Hall stage during the Spring Dance Concert.

By **Regina Choi '30**
Reporter

The music begins, footsteps merge, and the dancers hit the stage — hours of practice culminating in an effortless performance. At Choate, student dancers with varying levels of experience come together through Dance Company, Motion, and SYNK to showcase their unique styles while collaborating with others who share a love of dance.

While Dance Company, Motion, and SYNK all share a dedication for dance, each has an individual identity. Their distinct identities are reflected in their rehearsals and performance styles.

The Dance Company allows students to contribute in a wide range of ways, from choreographing to performance."We are a very diverse group, and we support any form of dance," Dance Company Co-Choreographer Isabella Jiang '28 said. Jiang shared her experiences as a student choreographer. "When you are a choreographer, you need to think a lot beyond just the dance [movements]," she said. "You need to think of the formation or the theme of your dance."

Motion, Choate's contemporary-focused dance group, incorporates expressive and abstract movements, often taking creative approaches in creating dances, such as filming choreography and turning it into a short dance film for pep rallies or holiday shows.

In contrast to other dance groups, SYNK primarily performs K-pop-style dance. Music that SYNK danced to in previous years includes songs by renowned K-Pop groups such as BTS and NewJeans. Beyond dance, SYNK fosters a sense of community for students with an interest in the same music genre. "Knowing that there's other people who also like K-pop makes me feel a sense of belonging," SYNK Junior Officer Sora Miyahara '28 said.

During weekly practices, members of dance clubs spend hours learning choreography and refining their movements while synchronizing with fellow groupmates. Dance Company practices are divided into six blocks every Sunday, where dance teachers guide students through choreography and improvisation. In SYNK and Motion, however, the club leaders typically teach students choreography. "During practices, our leaders run through choreography step by step," Miyahara said.

Special performances throughout the year provide dance club members with opportunities to showcase their work and create lasting memories. Jiang recalled her favorite performances over the past two years: "I adore the fall showcase and also the spring final dance concert ... last year, the one in spring was my favorite."

For many first-time dancers, auditioning for a dance group on campus can feel daunting; however, Dance Company, Motion, and SYNK welcome students from every skill level. According to Jiang, dance is open to "any dancers coming from different backgrounds." For many students, joining a dance club allows them to find a community to explore and share their interests.

The clubs' inclusivity is also reflected in the club leaders' advice to prospective members. "Even if you don't have prior dance experience, everyone can join ... It's really fun and inclusive," Miyahara said. Dance Company President Cindy Tian '27 acknowledged that many students hesitate to join because of fear of rejection, emphasizing that the club strives to foster a welcoming environment with minimal judgment. "I think a big part of what makes these clubs different is the trust in the student body ... we can create the pieces that we want with dancers with diverse backgrounds and levels," Tian added.

Dance Company, Motion, and SYNK bring the Choate community together through the universal language of movement, transforming individual passions into shared rhythm and harmony.

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The Little Theater: Cutting the Ribbon and Raising the Curtain

By **Nick Aston '28**
Copy Editor

On October 8, donors, the Board of Trustees, and arts faculty gathered in the newly renovated Little Theater for a ribbon-cutting ceremony, marking the completion of over a year of renovations. With upgraded lighting and sound systems, the Little Theater will enable performers to take their art one step further, using advanced technology to bring stories to life.

In addition to technological improvements, the Little Theater was reconfigured from approximately 800 seats to 450 seats. The new theater was intentionally designed to create a more intimate space for performers and to make it easier for viewers to get in and out of their seats. "[The theater's] still really big, but it's nice to have that feeling for the kids of it being full when there are 400 people there," Theater Department Head Ms. Deighna DeRiu said.

To accompany the ribbon-cutting ceremony, Ms. DeRiu worked with a group of six theater students to present a short, cabaret-style performance featuring a musical arrangement combining multiple duets with snippets from "A Musical" from *Something Rotten!* "I think it was really special for them because they got to not only see all the hard work that everyone did to make the renovation happen, and how beautiful the renovation turned out, but also got to see students doing what we do best within that space," Ms. DeRiu said.

For student performers, the new space offered an opportunity to showcase their passion for musical theater to some of the most prominent figures in the Choate community. Ryan Murray '27, who performed "As Long as You're Mine" from *Wicked* alongside Prudence Chen '28, noted that "the PMAC has held so many formative memories during my Choate career. As I close out my final chapter at Choate, it feels like such a nice full-circle moment and send-off to mark this new beginning." In this way, the cabaret performance served as the beginning of the end for the sixth-form theater students. Murray also hoped that the new theater will encourage more students to come and support the productions by offering an enhanced viewing experience.

For Mia Cueto '28, the performance was accompanied by feelings of excitement and nerves. "When I was told I was going to be one of the first people ever to perform on the new stage, I was already nervous, and on top of that, also performing for the board of trustees and the donors," said Cueto. However, Cueto's nerves vanished as she sang the part of Audrey from *Little Shop of Horrors* in a duet of "Suddenly Seymour" with Nick Aston '28.

For both viewers and performers, the ribbon-cutting ceremony was a memorable way to begin a "second act" for Choate's Theater Department. As Arts Concentration students began touring the new theater, anticipation built for its first production, *Sense and Sensibility*. Until then, the rest of the Choate community will have to wait patiently to experience the Little Theater in all of its thespian glory.

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Photo courtesy of photos.choate.edu

Students perform in front of faculty, donors, and the Board of Trustees in the newly renovated Little Theater.

ARTS CON GOES 3D AT "WORKS IN PROGRESS" EXHIBITION



Photo courtesy of Eliza Aldrich '27

One of the arts pieces that will be exhibited at "Works in Progress."

By **Oola Breen-Ryan '29**
Copy Editor

What do a wall of plants, a bedroom, and a tent have in common? All three can be found in "Works in Progress," the current Visual Arts Concentration (Arts Con) exhibit at the Paul Mellon Arts Center (PMAC) through December 1, with a reception on November 6 from 5:30–7:30 p.m. The exhibit features three-dimensional installations that represent Arts Con students' workspaces and artistic mindsets through a variety of media, materials, and forms of creative expression. Further, the exhibition will remain ongoing and will continue to be developed throughout the course of the term as students add completed artwork, illustrating how their work evolves, and with it, the stories that their works tell.

While a visiting artist's work is normally displayed in the PMAC gallery during the fall term, this year, the visiting artist is coming in the winter. Because of this, the Arts Con students have commandeered the space for Parents' Weekend and the weeks following. "We're trying to show process over product, and that's going to be our display," Emmy Jones '28 said. "[It's] more like a showcase of the work process and installations on artists' identities and styles, rather than a full-on formal exhibition, which will be at the end of the fall term, going into winter term," Ann Ma '28 said.

"This installation is going to be a representation of what different people's work habits and work zones are," Jones said. According to Nairoby Liriano '29, the exhibition involves "thinking not only on paper or in a set space. It's using three-dimensional stuff ... I'm able to use all the resources that I have," as Nairoby explored the use of a desk to create her three-dimensional piece.

The exhibition includes a wide range of projects. Ma worked on a self-portrait in oil paint. "I have been exploring the cycle of life and time [and] timelessness since last spring, so this year is a continuation of similar themes as I think more about identity and the concept of 'self,'" Ma said. "Hopefully, when people look at my work, they can be inspired by how colors create unique moods and emotions, as well as by the ways I chose to present my identity through my work."

Jones constructed a "bedroom area" with an interactive component. "You can open the drawers of a little table that I have and look at my sketches and stuff like that. I have different parts of my process and inspiration taped and pinned up around the area," she said.

Vera Lampe '27, meanwhile, is creating an enclosed space with curtains, a foamcore and fabric ceiling, an armchair, and a television. "As a day student, I really feel like I don't have a [personal] space on campus ... and so I like the opportunity to make a space that's catered to me, but can also be catered to the viewer," Lampe said.

Overall, the artists are excited for the Choate community to see their work. "I'm grateful for the opportunity to have my work showcased in the PMAC, and I'm excited to show my friends and their families my final installation for Parents' Weekend," Ma said. Jones looks forward to the new perspective the exhibit will offer the Choate student body: "I'm hoping it gives people a little bit more insight as to how artists work and ... much more appreciation for the process ... It lets the viewers see each artist on a more personal level." Visitors are encouraged to continue visiting the exhibition through the closing reception on November 20, to see how additions of completed artworks and examine how stories told through the exhibits shift through time.

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THE CHOATE NEWS

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SPORTS

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FIELD REPORT

Choate Fall Record

60 - 32 - 8

Varsity Games

Boys' Water Polo (7-1)
vs. Andover, 18-7

Girls' Soccer (5-5-1)
vs. Ethel Walker, 3-1

Boys' Football (4-1)
vs. Avon Old Farms, 50-25

Girls' Volleyball (10-2)
vs. Andover, 3-0

Girls' Field Hockey (3-5)
vs. Taft, 0-3

Boys' Cross Country (2-3)
vs. Andover, 43-16

Girls' Cross Country (3-1)
vs. Andover, 43-16

Boys' Cross Country (2-3)
vs. Suffield, 10-17

J.V. Games

Girls' Soccer (2-3-1)
vs. Taft, 5-1

Boys' Soccer (5-0-1)
vs. Andover, 4-0

Girls' Field Hockey (3-4)
vs. Andover, 1-3

Boys' Water Polo (1-1)
vs. Deerfield, 1-6

Family Fun across the Athletic Fields

By **Stephanie Li '30**
Reporter

For some Choate students, sports are more than just practices, competitions, and victories. Their love for athletics is closely connected to family and childhood memories, which come together through shared practices. Family members can make both the fiercest competitors and biggest supporters — and sometimes, the competition even extends beyond the playing field.

For Gaby Yeung '29, her swimming journey has always been closely tied to her older sister, Gisele Yeung '27. Having grown up swimming together competitively, the sisters have spent countless hours training and racing alongside one another, eventually taking on girls' water polo together after Gisele introduced Gaby to the sport.

According to Gaby, their competitive spirit extends far beyond the pool, from racing for the front seat of the car to competing for who gets to shower first. "We could be bonding in one second, and arguing in the next," Gaby said. But the Yeung sisters always treasure time together in the pool. "Some of my favorite memories of swimming with Gaby are the relays we participated in together; I think it's a fun way for us to bond," Gisele said.

As the older Yeung sister approaches graduation, Gaby hopes their tradition will continue during school breaks in Hong Kong, where the sisters can return to the pool for another race, and perhaps settle on who's faster. As Gaby described it, having her sister by her side means having "a support system I can always go to, but also a vicious competitor that I'll always strive to beat."

For Kate Wai '28, some of her favorite family memories were made on the golf course. "I've played golf with my family since I was really young. We used to always go every Sunday ... I have a lot of fond memories of the view and having fun with my parents," she said.

The source of warm memories is not limited to people, but also objects associated with them. "My most memorable moment from golf was when I got a purple golf ball from my sister, and it was my most prized possession. I remember playing it for all of my lucky shots," Wai said. She enjoys the casual nature of golfing with her family, which allows her to relax and unwind on the course while taking in the scenery. "Even though I'm not that good at golf, I feel like it's a really fun thing to do with my parents," she added.

Proud Tangkaravakoon '27 spends her free time dabbling in tennis, squash, and badminton. "I would say me and my siblings are very racket sports heavy," she said. "I play this with my older sister Prim [Tangkaravakoon '24] and my younger sister Pearl [Tangkaravakoon '29], and I guess we were influenced by our older sister ... whenever she took lessons when we were younger, we would always be there and help her pick up balls."

"I really enjoyed being [with Pearl] in the same team," Tangkaravakoon reflected. She enjoyed spending moments with her both on and off the court, saying, "I definitely saw [my younger sister] a lot during the winter and the spring where we both played sports together."

Shaleen Sheth '27, a long-distance running enthusiast, spends some of her weekends running with a cherished family member. "My brother and I run half marathons together, we run 10-mile races together. Every time I do a long race, I run it with him," she said. "One of my favorite memories is our first marathon, we ate 12 donuts afterwards in the car ... he ate six, I ate six."

Whether it's friendly competition with siblings or a relaxing afternoon out on the course, the Wild Boars enjoy forming connections with family members through sports.

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Photo courtesy of photos.choate.edu

Gisele Yeung '27 and Gaby Yeung '29 pose for a photo on Media Day.

Fall Classic Forecasts

By **Amira Faiz '29**
Reporter

It's every baseball fan's favorite time of the year: the playoff season. The highlight of Major League Baseball (MLB) — the World Series — began on October 23, featuring matches between the American League and National League champions. Predictions of this year's winning team are widely talked about, as the Milwaukee Brewers and Tampa Bay Rays are expected to show up and show out in this tournament.

Jason Schmidt '27 has a strong personal interest in baseball as both a player and a spectator. He predicts that the final series will conclude with a victory for the Milwaukee Brewers after six games. When asked what his biggest reason behind his prediction is, Schmidt said, "there's a statistic that can't be measured. It's called grit, and when you watch the Milwaukee Brewers, there is a sense of grit that can't really be imitated by any other team." To Schmidt, Christian Yelich of the Brewers is a standout player. "I've been watching him on the Brewers for about seven years now," Schmidt said. "He's been with the team so long, and he's always been a great player ... and I've grown up watching him, so I hope he has the biggest impact."

On the other hand, Elishua Mercado '27 predicts that the Tampa Bay Rays will face the Milwaukee Brewers in the World Series and ultimately win the championship. Mercado anticipates the series will last approximately six games due to the Brewers' competitive nature. When asked how confident he is in his prediction and what could possibly change it, Elishua said, "I'm pretty confident because I have faith in [Junior] Caminero; I have faith in how hard he plays and how much he cares about the Tampa Bay [Rays]." He added, "What would change my mind is if [the team] comes out first game and puts on a show and shows us why they deserve it, and demonstrates that pitch arsenal and how they are meant to be there."

Liam Zeller '28 noted that the World Series is a time when fans can unite, something not commonly seen during the regular season in the spring. He anticipates that the Milwaukee Brewers will make it to the World Series. When asked what his biggest reason behind his support of the Brewers was, Zeller said, "They have Jacob Misiorowski, who's been the best pitcher in the league. He has a 105-mile-per-hour fastball with disgusting speeds, and it's not good for a hitter to face him." He added, "The Brewers just have more depth through their pitching and positional players to make a really good run and hopefully win."

"Each game and every pitch, every moment really matters ... [the World Series] is just really fun to watch," Schmidt said, highlighting his passion for baseball as a spectator. "You can just feel a team's energy [from the screen]."

Wild Boars should stay tuned for more exciting games to come during the postseason and watch to see if these students' World Series predictions come true.

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YOUR BOAR: #14 KICKS OFF

By **Ethan Lee '29**
Reporter

Beneath the soft-spoken demeanor of Jelani Harvey '28 in the classroom lies a relentlessly fierce competitor on the field. Born in Colchester, England, before moving to Kingston, Jamaica, Harvey first laced up his soccer cleats at the age of five and has been tackling opposing attackers on the field ever since. Harvey is a center back who has been a welcome addition to the Choate Boys' Varsity Soccer team this year.

Harvey is motivated by the impact soccer has had on all facets of his life. He credits Coach Sydney McFarlane of his home club, Harbour View FC, with being an unmatched influence in his life. "[McFarlane] had me since I was eight years old ... [he's] just been guiding me the whole way through, on and off the field," Harvey said. The supportive sentiment that Harvey enjoyed at his home club carried over to the soccer community at Choate. "I've liked how the team feels like a family," he said.

Harvey describes his love for the game as a paradoxical serenity he feels amid the unpredictability of soccer. "I think it's all the up-and-down moments in the game, whether it be conceding a goal and feeling down with your team, but having the passion to get up and go again, I think that's what really makes the game," he said. "I try to clear my head before the games ... Just try to relax and just take it as any other game."

Before arriving at Choate, Harvey was no stranger to the international stage, playing with Harbour View F.C. in the Bandolino Cup in Italy and the Gothia Cup in Sweden. Harvey further added to his list of accolades with a selection to a Jamaica Premier League matchday squad last year, in addition to invitations to the Jamaican National U15 and U17 camps.

Among his many international performances, Harvey points to winning the Kingston and St. Andrew Football Association (KSAFA) U17 Championship as his most memorable soccer moment. "In Jamaica, I hadn't really won any championships before that U17 one. I've always been reaching the finals, coming second, and that one just solidified everything because we were so dominant in that competition, and it was my last competition with the club," he said.

Harvey's teammates and coaches have expressed appreciation for his sportsmanship and personality on and off the field. "I've known [Harvey] since about three years old ... [there's] always going be a memorable moment with him," teammate Nicholai Banton '28 said. "He brings everybody together and helps everybody stay focused." Teammate Tofick Sheikh '27 agreed. "His big smile ... keeps everybody excited, and he's able to calm me down when I'm stressed," he said. "I think [Harvey] has a bright future ahead of him in soccer. ... I think his IQ for the game is really high, and that's one of the biggest attributes that he brings, and he has to continue growing," Head Coach Charlie Fuentes added, commending Harvey's performance during the season so far.

The Boys Varsity Soccer team has recently earned the ninth spot in the Sports Illustrated October rankings of top prep school boys' soccer teams. "We really want to go undefeated. We've done that so far in the season," Harvey said. The team has its sights set on winning a Founders League Championship (last won in 2022) and eventually a NEPSAC Class A Boys Championship, and Harvey will be at the forefront of the defense, vigilantly going against opponents on the pitch.



Photo by Harry Kim '28/*The Choate News*

Jelani Harvey '28 kicks the soccer ball during a game.

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Powerful in Pink: Wild Boars Take on Andover Day

By **Jaime Chen '29**
Reporter

Choate students traded their usual gold-and-blue outfits for all things pink on Andover Day, as Boar Pen organized a Pink Out event in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Breast Cancer Awareness Month has sparked important conversations across campus and spurred student athletes to compete on Andover Day in support of this meaningful cause.

Choate Boys' Varsity Water Polo defeated Andover 18-8. Despite falling behind two goals early in the game, the team found its momentum. The decision to move Captain Britt Clark '28 from his usual defensive position to the wing. Teammate Rowan Kane '28 was alsoamong the strategic adjustments made to secure the win, as Andover did not score another goal for the next two quarters. Clark also discussed the importance of spectators. "Any time that you score a goal and you look up to the stands, you see 50, 100 people," he said. "It really gets the team fired up."

In addition to support from the stands, team chemistry and consistency also helped. Boys' Water Polo Manager Lola Giraldez Greco '28 said, "If they ever lack on offense, they just double it down on defense. They have strong communication, strong borders, and strong goalies that are unmatched." This comes from the players' ability to anticipate one another's movements, developed through practice and bonding outside of training.

Meanwhile, Girls' Varsity Field Hockey had, according to Karolina Zaccareo '27, "the best [match] we've played against them in all of my time [against Andover]." Although they fell to Andover 5-0, Zaccareo said, "the score definitely does not reflect the game, because we had possession [of the ball] a lot of the time." She highlighted the performance of their midfield and defense and credited their Coach, Ms. Emma Russell, with improving the team's communication and developing a strategic game plan.

"Our team really showed up," Zaccareo said. "We hairsprayed all of our hair pink," she added, highlighting the team's cohesion and their collective commitment to the theme.

Beyond the results of the matches, Andover Day's Pink Out bridged athletic performance and community care by making Breast Cancer Awareness Month more visible at Choate. Boar Pen promoted the event through Instagram, Club Hub, and School Meeting. Tori Vollero '27, a member of Boar Pen and Girls' Varsity Field Hockey, recalled meeting a Choate parent at the stands who is a breast cancer survivor, demonstrating the personal significance of this event. Vollero said, "Showing appreciation towards survivors and respect is a huge part of it."

Such sporting events offered students an opportunity to recognize the privilege of competing and to support people facing breast cancer. Karis Wales '28, a spectator of multiple games, echoed the supportive spirit on campus during Andover Day. "It's not hard to make an effort towards these kinds of things," she said. Spectators and athletes showed how small gestures can make a huge difference. Boar Pen is planning ahead to continue this school spirit with other awareness events in the near future.

Andover Day and the Pink Out were crucial factors to encourage students to show up and show out for the community. At Choate, after the final whistles of games, Wild Boars will continue supporting these important causes.

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