



Photo courtesy of David Schamis

Varsity Football's five-year win streak came to an end last week, when the team lost to St. Thomas More 34-9.

John Legend and the Team Behind His Visit

By **Niki Gummadi '21**
Copy Editor

On September 3, during Convocation, Head of School Dr. Alex Curtis announced a series of events set to take place during the first weekend of October to celebrate the opening of Ann & George Colony Hall. One event stuck out: on October 3, re-

nowned singer-songwriter John Legend will play a free concert for the Choate community in the complex's new auditorium. This performance is the culmination of almost a year of planning, involving people from across the School and beyond. The idea of hosting a concert in Colony Hall has its origins in the opening of the Paul Mellon

Arts Center (PMAC). When the PMAC was completed in 1972, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, featuring pianist Victor Borge, performed on the main stage. Four years later, in 1976, another performer rocked the PMAC stage — Bruce Springsteen. “The students that were there, even 40 years later, they’re still telling me about

it,” Dr. Curtis said. He and other Choate administrators wondered if the School could do something similar for the opening of Colony Hall. Soon, Mr. George Colony ’72, Chair of the School’s Board of Trustees and C.E.O. of Forrester Research, a market-research

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CONFERENCE SHIFTS, AND STUDENTS CHANGE THEIR HABITS

By **Claire Yuan '21**
Copy Editor

In the first few weeks of school, returning students noticed a shift in the class schedule, most notably that the 30-minute Conference period now begins at 10:30 a.m., and not roughly an hour earlier, as it did last year and the year before. This new schedule comes on the heels of the larger schedule change made in 2017, when the School lengthened its 45-minute classes to 70 minutes. Mr. Deron Chang, Director of Curricular Initiatives, was a driving force behind this year’s tweaks. “We knew when we instituted the first iteration of a long block schedule that we would need to revisit it,” he said. “You can almost never be sure about a schedule until you actually live it.” Some students have speculated that the School moved Conference to later in the morning so that students could no longer use the block to extend a sleep-in. Mr. Chang said this assumption isn’t true. “The primary reason for us moving Conference was that it made very little sense for us to have a break after only one block,” he said. “We want to avoid a situation in which students have three consecutive classes.” The later Conference block may also help alleviate lunchtime crowding by providing a longer early lunch slot.

Since classes began, students have debated the schedule revision. Many miss the opportunity provided by an earlier Conference block to grab breakfast when it was still relatively early in the morning. Alex Nam ’21 said, “We did ask for more time during the lunch period, but if you don’t have early lunch, it’s just an awkward 30 minutes. The placement is very awkward compared to last year when students could get breakfast.” Although that option no longer exists — and students who want to eat breakfast need to do so before classes begin at 8:00 a.m. — the School has agreed to provide bagels throughout the day in both the Dining Hall and Lanphier Café. The other changes to the daily class schedule include flipping the early and late lunch blocks from the previous year and creating a flexible block on Wednesday for form, Wellness, adviser, and College Counseling meetings from 10:30 a.m. to 11:40 a.m. The campus as a whole seems amenable to these relatively small adjustments. “Ultimately, the number one goal has to be designing something that can allow students to learn best,” Mr. Chang said. “It may make it a little difficult here and there, but that is so we can maximize [students’] ability to learn.”

Claire Yuan may be reached at cyuan21@choate.edu

CHOATE UNVEILS ENHANCED EMERGENCY RESPONSE APP



Graphic by Sesame Gaetsaloe/The Choate News

The new RAVE app was introduced to students at the year’s first school meeting on September 10.

By **JeeHwan Kim '21**
Copy Editor

This year, the School transferred to a new notification system, RAVE Alert, recognizing the importance during emergency situations for every member of the Choate community to not only receive some type of notification but to take correct action. During the year’s first school meeting, students were asked to down-

load the RAVE Guardian app, one of the components of the new system. Prior to RAVE Alert, the School used the Mitel Mass Notification system, more commonly known as Blaze-Cast. According to Director of Information Technology Services Mr. Andrew Speyer, the transition process began two years ago, and Choate began granting funds towards the development of the program this

past year for its implementation over the summer. The impetus for the transition came from the general slowness of the Mitel Mass Notification system. “The old system could take up to nine minutes to get the message out completely to all the different spaces,” said Mr. Speyer. “We wanted something that would get us about three to six minutes.” The RAVE Alert system is cloud-based and does not

inundate the poles of carriers, which led the older systems to operate slowly at during periods of high traffic. Beyond speed, the notification system offers several other improvements. The SMS component of the RAVE Alert system signs up everyone in the Choate community by default, unlike the old system, which required an opt-in. RAVE Alert also facilitates international calling, and allows respondents

to share their safety status via text messaging or the app. The RAVE Guardian app allows customization — users can create their own emergency contacts and set their preferred notification radius — and has six main features, including a call directory and a list of emergency procedures. The entire system is “more user-friendly and more dynamic,” said Director of Communications Ms. Alison Cady. The School acknowledges that, while it is an impressive piece of software, the RAVE app comes with its shortcomings. Of the four layers of the emergency protocol — SMS messaging, emailing, calling mobile phones, and sending messages to speaker systems (or calling classroom phones) — Mitel still dictates the speaker systems aspect. “There are limitations to us getting messages to the far reaches of campus where we might not have Wi-Fi signal or connection,” said Ms. Cady. In the coming years, Mr. Speyer hopes to eventually replace the phone system with a cloud-based system to stop using Mitel completely. Moreover, Ms. Cady acknowledged that bugs may yet

be found in the entire system. “We probably would need to test [it] a few more times to make sure that it’s working exactly the way that we want [it] to,” she said. Javier Castillo ’20, a prefect in Memorial House, stated that, “I think that we saw in the lockdown drill last week that the school is ramping up the levels of communication to a student to make sure that each and every one is informed of the situation; RAVE helps by providing another layer of resources.” And so, even as the School begins to make use of a technologically-advanced emergency app, individual preparation is critical to ensure the safety of all students. Ms. Cady said, “The most important thing that we can do in response to a crisis is actually before the crisis happens — that’s to be prepared, to review our procedures, understand how we’re going to get messages, and practice the drills.” The aim, she said, must be to gain “much more muscle memory and understanding of how we should respond.”

JeeHwan Kim may be reached at jkim21@choate.edu

New Faculty Aboard
Choate welcomes 18 new faculty members to campus.
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Walmart and Guns
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Say Hello to Your New Faculty!



Ms. TANISHA CLARK

Ms. Tanisha Clark, a new assistant athletic trainer, joined Choate this fall after studying anatomy and training preparation at Colby-Sawyer College, in New London, N.H. In high school, Ms. Clark played volleyball, softball, and basketball, and she is excited to join a new community where she can witness student-athletes develop. She calls her work both “taxing and rewarding,” and when she isn’t in the trainers’ office, she enjoys hiking and working out.

— Brian Harder ’23



Mr. AUSTIN SANCHEZ-MORAN

A graduate of Rhode Island’s St. George’s School and Virginia’s George Mason University, and formerly on the faculty of Maine’s Hebron Academy, new English teacher Mr. Austin Sanchez-Moran comes to Choate to teach Introduction to Literature and American Literature and Composition. He lives and advises in Memorial House, and, in the spring, he will coach Varsity Baseball. Outside of the classroom, Mr. Sanchez-Moran enjoys traveling, writing poetry, and playing a variety of sports.

— Ashley Jiang ’22



Mr. NICK TAGGE

A new addition to Choate’s Math Department, Mr. Nick Tagge teaches Precalculus and Calculus, Honors. He will be coaching Thirds Basketball in the winter and JV Tennis in the spring. His favorite aspects of teaching include engaging students in the classroom, solving problems, and talking to people face-to-face. He taught at Kimball Union Academy, in Meriden, N.H., before, but he said that Choate’s amazing facilities and people lured him away.

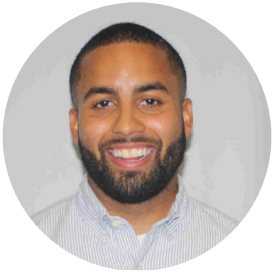
— Stephanie Su ’21



Mr. NICK SKITKO

Mr. Nick Skitko is a new member of the Admission Office. A graduate of the Hill School, a boarding school in Pottstown, Penn., Mr. Skitko is excited to return to a boarding school community after years as an admissions officer at a variety of colleges and universities, including Duquesne and Carnegie Mellon. He said that “seeing the community on the flip side as a faculty member” makes him more empathetic to the students he works with. Mr. Skitko loves a cappella and is currently pursuing a Master of Liberal Arts degree from Johns Hopkins University.

— Victoria Jiang ’22



Mr. RYAN STRANGE

Set to oversee applications from Georgia, Oklahoma, and Vermont, Mr. Ryan Strange is a new member to Choate’s Admission Office. Before coming to campus, Mr. Strange worked as a maitre d’ at Babbo, a Michelin starred Manhattan restaurant. There, Strange said, “I learned how to prepare for and handle difficult situations.” Last summer, he backpacked alone across Europe, from Iceland to Amsterdam for one month. With his ability to communicate and propensity for new experiences, Mr. Strange is excited to support Choate’s student body.

— Praj Chirathivat ’22



Ms. ASHLEY SINCLAIR

Born and raised in Chicago, Ms. Ashley Sinclair, joining Choate as the new Director of Global Programs, has long fostered a love for traveling and experiencing new cultures. In fact, she says that she was “the very first person in my family to get a passport and leave the country.” After organizing international programs for colleges, Ms. Sinclair is excited to engage with high-school students and expand Choate’s study-abroad signature program. In her free time, she enjoys letter-boxing, a kind of treasure hunt in which participants leave each other online clues to the locations of items hidden in the area.

— Siri Palreddy ’20



Mr. SERGIO LOPEZ

New to the language department this year, Mr. Sergio Lopez is a Spanish instructor teaching Second Year Spanish and Third Year Spanish, Honors. Before joining Choate’s faculty, Mr. Lopez taught political thought and philosophy in Bogotá, Colombia, his hometown, and volunteered at Cold Spring School, in New Haven. There are many reasons that joining the Choate community excites Mr. Lopez, but he is particularly attracted to the independence that teachers have to craft their courses and daily lesson plans.

— Tigo Ponce de Leon ’22



Mr. SAM CHRISTENFELD

Mr. Sam Christenfeld joins Choate this fall as a World History teacher, boys’ crew coach, and adviser in Memorial House. Mr. Christenfeld grew up on a farm (which once housed a pig weighing more than a thousand pounds), started rowing in high school, studied as an undergraduate at Harvard College, and earned an A.M. from Brown University. This is his first year teaching full-time, and he hopes to create a learning environment that encourages students to think for themselves. For the future, Mr. Christenfeld is eager to develop strong, lasting bonds with students and faculty.

— Alyssa Jaster ’23



Dr. MIRIAM COHEN

Dr. Miriam Cohen, who has traveled to Asia as a doctor and diver in the Navy, and worked as a community pediatrician in Wallingford for more than 20 years, is Choate’s new Medical Director. She enjoys interacting with the many students who bring diversity to the community. As Medical Director, Dr. Cohen hopes that “students can feel comfortable coming to the Health Center.” She said, “We are hoping to build a health center where everybody feels comfortable and welcome, no matter how big or small the problem they have.”

— Joy Bang ’22



Ms. JANET DE LEON

A poetry lover and long-distance runner in her spare time, new English teacher Ms. Janet De Leon comes to Choate from American Heritage School, in Delray Beach, Fla.

Ms. De Leon teaches Composition and Literature and American Literature and Composition. “I love to hear what student’s first impressions are to the readings,” she said, “and to see within the course of the discussion what natural truths prevail.”

Ms. De Leon lives in Chapel House, and this spring she will help coach the track team. “I feel like I’ve come home,” she said. Ms. De Leon hopes to embrace the Choate community, “I am in the dining hall and room 113 of the Humanities building. Let’s have a conversation!”

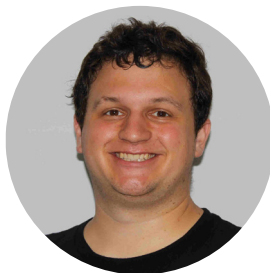
— Nick Visuthikosol ’22



Ms. ARIG ELHAMOULY

Ms. Arig Elhamouly, who has worked as a Muslim chaplain for Choate’s Spiritual Life department, has now joined the School’s Language Department as a new Arabic teacher. Before coming to Choate, Ms. Elhamouly taught Arabic at Rollins College in Winter Park, Fla., for five years. She is devoted to the health of her students during their learning experience, noting the way those at Spiritual Life “care about the total well-being of the students as a whole person.” Ms. Elhamouly hopes to enable more students to participate in cultural excursions, taking students on trips into Wallingford and throughout Connecticut to fall in love with the Arabic language and to explore more about Middle Eastern culture.

— Pranav Pendri ’22



AVERY FEINGOLD

Avery Feingold, a new Algebra II teacher, loves to teach, mentor students, and be a part of a community. They grew up in the Jewish neighborhood of Squirrel Hill in Pittsburgh, PA, where the synagogue shooting occurred last October, a mere four blocks from their childhood home. They attended Dartmouth College and developed a love for playing, watching and later coaching Ultimate Frisbee. They came to Choate after teaching math for a year at Amistad Academy Charter Middle School, in New Haven, specifically for the boarding-school environment. (Feingold, as students will call their new instructor, prefers the third-person plural pronoun.)

— Berk Gokmen ’21

How John Legend's Visit Came to Be

Continued from Page 1

company, threw his support behind such an event. (The new building is named after Mr. Colony and his wife, Ann.) “When you visit Mr. Colony’s corporate headquarters, the first thing you see in his lobby are a guitar and amp,” said Mr. Dan Courcey ’86, Choate’s Executive Director of Development and Alumni Relations. “He’s very much about music.”

Last spring, Mr. Courcey organized a group of sixth-formers into an artist-selection committee. The group, Mr. Courcey explained, “looked at things like Gov Ball, Coachella, large-scale concerts where most of the demographics matched the main audience for this.” Cost estimates were gathered, and before long the group had a working list of some two dozen potential artists, including The Killers, Shawn Mendes, and Alicia Keys.

According to Erica Vandenbulcke ’20, a member of the committee, the Dean of Students Office aimed to gather “the opinions of different types of people,” and that “they were ongoing meetings. It wasn’t one pivotal moment. There were multiple meetings.” Sarah McAndrew ’20 said, “We went through each person on the list and we had a discussion about them.” The conversations centered on a small set of questions. Will both faculty and students enjoy the performance? Is the artist well-known and admired? Will such a performance appropriately honor the new building? Of Mr. Legend, McAndrew said, “The students in the room liked him, and they also talked about how their parents liked listening to him, so we thought that he would be good for the whole Choate community.”

When asked about the fee that the School will pay Mr. Legend for his one-hour performance, Mr. Courcey’s office said,

“The cost is confidential but is being provided as a gift to the School by Mr. Colony.” Since securing Mr. Legend, Mr. Courcey has been in charge of a committee tasked with handling the logistics of the concert. Putting on a major concert is “not necessarily a skill set we have here,” he said, so the School has partnered with concert producer Live Nation, who is handling many of the night’s logistics.

“I just hope that students enjoy this and take it with them as they proceed through their Choate years,” Mr. Courcey said. “It’s not every day we open up a facility of this nature. It’s a terrific way to consecrate a stage that will benefit the School for generations.”

Niki Gummadi
may be reached at
ngummadi21@choate.edu



Ms. SMITA SEN

Ms. Smita Sen is a new addition to Choate’s Arts Department, where she teaches new media arts classes, such as photography and graphic design. Before arriving at Choate, Ms. Sen was the Creative Director and Producer of Sen Studio, in New York, where she worked with artists and engineers to create new media installations combining sculpture, technology, and music. Working with Choate’s curious and engaged students has so far been a joyful experience for Ms. Sen. She said, “I think that the fabric of this community is one of positivity, strength, and trust.” Outside of the visual arts studio, she enjoys singing hip-hop and opera.

— Alexis Lien ’23

Hill House Fire Displaces Students and Faculty

By Amanda Li '21
Reporter

On Monday, July 22, at around 5:30 p.m., lightning struck the roof of the south end of Hill House, directly above the apartment of former Hill House adviser Dr. Christopher Hogue. The strike ignited a fire that caused major damage to the Hill House complex.

The Wallingford Fire Department arrived on the scene shortly after the alarm went off at around 6:20 p.m., and with the combined effort of the Wallingford, Meriden, Middletown, and North Haven Fire Departments, the fire was contained by 9:00 p.m., before more extensive damage could occur. Although the fire was successfully extinguished, water from the storm, the firetrucks, the sprinkler system, and a broken pipeline damaged the Hill House attic, basement, and parts of the main floor, including the college counseling offices.

Students living in Hill House while attending Choate Summer Programs had moved out of the building the week before, so no student possessions were damaged.

No permanent damage was inflicted on West Wing and Library. However, both buildings lost power and incurred smoke damage. Fourteen girls and a few summer program interns were living in the affected dorms, and they were relocated to Homestead for the rest of the program.

The next day, because the air quality of the affected dorms was deemed unsafe by the fire department, students and staff were allowed to return to their dorm rooms for a short period of time to pack up and move out before the dorms closed for repair.

"I was allowed to go back in and get my car keys and a couple of other things. I think I grabbed a hard drive," said Dr. Hogue. "After that, I wasn't allowed to go back in. I still haven't gone back in."

The afternoon after the fire, a mass email was sent to all mem-

bers of the Choate community, informing them of the events of the previous night. The extent of the damage was still being assessed, so no changes to plans for housing during the approaching academic year had yet been formalized.

Fortunately, Choate Summer Programs were minimally affected, with the dining hall and SAC reopening on the third day after the storm. "We did not have to relocate any classroom space or anything like that," said Ms. Eera Sharma, Director of Summer Programs. "We didn't have to relocate anything for our final summer event in the Hill House dining hall."

Knowing that the fire would affect the housing of Hill House students during the academic year, Director of Residential Life Mr. Will Morris and Dean of Students Mr. Michael Velez met the night of the fire to discuss long-term and short-term housing options for the displaced students and staff. "Part of the boarding life at Choate is that we try to fill every room we can, so we don't have a whole lot of flexibility, especially with 34 displaced kids," said Dr. Hogue, who helped the deans devise a new housing scheme.

Choate considered creating temporary dorms to remedy housing shortages after hearing about similar strategies from neighboring institutions, such as the Loomis Chaffee School. Although this option was deeply explored, it was ultimately rejected due to time and size constraints. "It turns out that it's very difficult to create a modular residence that has student rooms and faculty apartments for appropriate supervision and that has all of the facilities and hookup and everything," said Mr. Morris.

The administration also considered repurposing and redesigning other buildings on campus, such as the old SAC, but found that they were unable to do so in the six weeks between the fire and the start of the fall term. Additionally, as a short-term solution, the School asked day-student families



Photo courtesy of Deron Chang / The Choate News

After the fire, former Hill House residents were relocated to other dormitories and faculty homes.

about the possibility of hosting boarding students.

Within the first week, it became apparent that the damage done to Hill House would likely keep the space closed for around two years. Quickly, the administration began to look for more permanent solutions to the sudden housing crisis. The ultimate solution proved something of a dormitory chess game: the students who were set to live in the all-gender house were moved to Combination House, opening up 14 spaces in Edsall House. Eight new triples were created by converting doubles into triples in Tenney, Clinton Knight, and Spencer. Pierce, previously a sixth-form girls' dorm, now houses five fifth-form boys. A triple was created in the KEC in a room previously reserved for campus guests. Mr. Stephen and Mrs. Susan Farrell, two longtime faculty members, opened two bedrooms in David House, their faculty residence. Pratt House, in the floors above the Health Center, now houses ten sophomore boys and Mr. Dan Proulx, another former Hill House adviser. All four sixth-formers who were set to prefect in Hill retained their prefectship in Pratt.

The School notified the displaced students of preliminary rooming arrangements by August 24.

The housing arrangements were not easy decisions to make, but the School made sure that all of the students would be living in places that matched Choate's standards of residential life. "None of the spaces that we wound up bringing online represented a compromise in terms of student safety and livability," said Mr. Morris.

Mr. Ian Wollman and Ms. Angela Weston, who were both planning to live in Hill House for the '19-'20 school year, are now living in off-campus housing and advising in Bernhard House and West Wing, respectively. Dr. Hogue now lives on the first floor of Richardson House. Many of the students in Hill House were originally set to live in singles, so Hill House advisers and the deans of the Class of 2021 formed new groups of roommates.

The fire also displaced the college counseling department. After looking at multiple options, Head of School Dr. Alex Curtis and the college counseling team decided to move the college counseling office to Gables House, which is large enough to fit all the members of the

department and could be fully prepared in the few weeks before the start of the school year. Although the new location moves the department away from the Dean's Office, it is much closer to Lanphier Center and student dorms, keeping it amid the frenzy of campus life.

With the school year now firmly underway, most of the relocated students and faculty members say that they have become content with their new living arrangements. "I'm actually very satisfied," said Jayden Khuu '21. "For me, having accessible food options has always been a priority. Now I live in the K.E.C., which also has pretty good food, and I spend most of my day out of my room anyway."

Will Flamm '21, who is currently living with Mr. and Mrs. Farrell, said, "I'm living with a great family that's very kind to me and grants me independence and made an environment for me where I can study and get away from things."

Many members of the Choate community have helped these students and faculty members relocate. Khuu, for one, felt particular gratitude to his form dean, Ms. Dana Brown. "Just her being there gave me a lot of reassurance," Khuu

said. "I knew somebody was looking out for me."

Ms. Marcia Landesman, Director of College Counseling, said it would have been impossible to begin recovering from the fire without the Facilities Department and the school's cleaning service, ABM, which together she called "incredibly helpful, supportive, and responsive during the relocation process."

An instrumental part of campus for decades, Hill House has been a home for generations of students who have created lasting memories and friendships between its walls. "Hill meant a lot more to me than just a dorm," said Wilson Wang '19, a former prefect in Hill House who is now studying bioengineering at UC Berkeley. "It was truly a community and a family. I met some of my best friends there and cultivated great relationships with some of my co-prefects and prefectees."

Hopefully, after around two years of construction, Hill House will reassume its role as an iconic campus complex.

Amanda Li may be reached at ali21@choate.edu

COMMUNITY HELPS FILL THE VOID AFTER MANY POSSESSIONS LOST

By Peter DiNatale '21
Copy Editor

Shortly after lightning struck Hill House this past summer, Choate began an intensive restoration and recovery procedure. There were several issues that the School had to address not only because of the fire but also because of the excessive water damage that affected a majority of the building's files, furniture, electronics, and other items.

The School ensured that its students, faculty, and other community members were safe, and then, Dean of Faculty Ms. Katie Levesque said, it "worked very quickly" to assess the damage and begin the recovery process. Restoration firms were brought to campus the next day, according to Ms. Levesque.

The most affected areas were the faculty housing units, the college counseling offices, and the Dean of Faculty's offices. Dr. Christopher Hogue, a science teacher who lived in Hill House at the time of the fire, lost many of his belongings. "I lost all my furniture, all of my clothes that were not in drawers, half my shoes, belts, ties, all of the clothes you need to look presentable," he said.

In order to save the damaged items, the School hired five fire repair firms. Each firm specializes in a specific type of restoration, including restoration of artwork, paper, furniture, kitchen supplies, electronics, etc. All five firms were on site the morning following the fire.

The companies first sorted through the damaged items to determine their salvageability. The objects that couldn't be restored were thrown away. Those that had the potential to be restored were taken to their firms' facilities. There, the firms will use a variety of techniques in hopes of salvaging them. "The firms that have been engaged are professionals in this field of remediation of property when a disaster occurs, not just a fire," said Mr. Rick Saltz, Choate's interim C.F.O.

I lost all my furniture, all of my clothes that were not in drawers, half my shoes, belts, ties, all of the clothes you need to look presentable.

Dr. Christopher Hogue

The paper and artwork went through a particularly unique recovery process. After the damaged items arrived at the facility, the papers were frozen to lock in place the water they contained, preventing it from doing further damage. Soon, the company will perform a sublimation process to remove the water, and it will fire gamma rays at the papers in order to kill any bacteria they may harbor. "Choate really hired the best when it came to restoring anything that they wanted to restore," said Dr. Hogue.

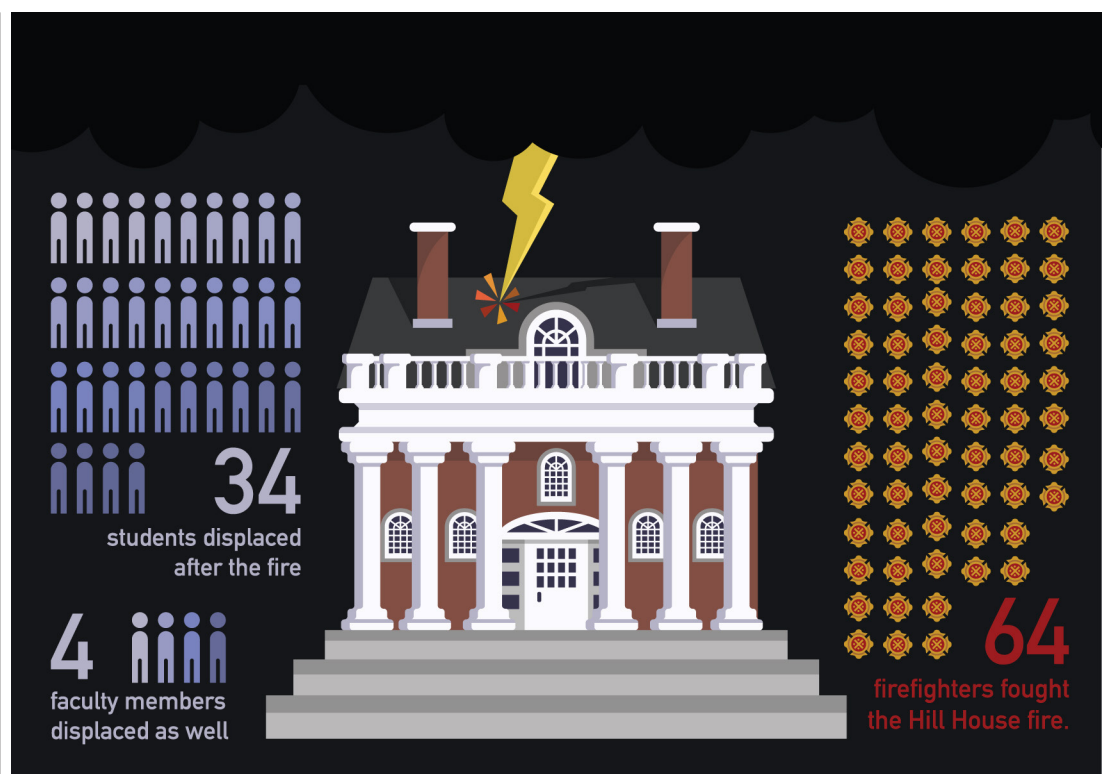
To Ms. Levesque, the process has been eye-opening. "It's amazing how you learn during a crisis like this that there are people who do these things and have expertise in areas that I've never really had to think about," she said. "You're grateful in times like this."

While his property is being restored, Dr. Hogue received donations of furniture, supplies, and small household items from other faculty members. "It was overwhelming at first but not surprising in a community like this. A number of colleagues said, 'Hey, what do you need?' I got couches from the Van Mierlos. I got a bed from Dr. [Heather] York." The School also provided financial assistance to Dr. Hogue to help replace what he lost.

The expenses to cover the loss of materials and the restoration process were all covered by Choate's insurance company, Chubb Insurance. "The expenses for this work is [sic] being handled by the insurance company for now," said Mr. Saltz. "Once everything is done, we will reach a settlement with Chubb Insurance for the rebuilding of Hill House. No one knows this amount yet."

The administration is hoping to have the recovered items back within the next few weeks. The School will then organize those objects in time for the reopening of Hill House, in the fall of 2021.

Peter DiNatale may be reached at pdinatale21@choate.edu



Graphic by Chandler Littleford / The Choate News

Choate Thanks Firefighters with Brunch

By Bianca Rosen '21
Staff Reporter

During the Hill House fire, local fire departments from Wallingford, Meriden, Middletown, and North Haven, all observers agree, acted bravely and effectively to save the heart of Choate's campus. To thank the firemen who saved Hill House, the School hosted a brunch for the firemen, their families, and members of the Choate community.

The brunch, which took place Sunday, September 8, in Hill House Dining Hall, ran from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Members of the Wallingford Fire Department, who attended with their families, were able to share a meal with the School's grateful student body.

When the lightning struck Hill House, besides summer program students, few Choate students were on campus to witness the fire. The brunch was an opportu-

nity to put names and faces to the firemen and acknowledge their actions. "I think being able to see the firemen with their families really makes you remember how these were real people who made a sacrifice to help our community," said Laura Kors '21.

The firemen who attended the brunch heard an enthusiastic welcome from the Choate community. "Brunch was outstanding, beginning with the kind invitation, great food, and, most importantly, the warm reception from everyone," said Chief Richard Heidgerd of the Wallingford Fire Department.

The firemen had the chance to talk to students and get to know more about the community. "During the brunch I felt at home in your home," added Chief Heidgerd. "That is a direct result of the welcoming culture that seems to flourish at Choate. While in the omelet line, a student introduced herself and asked how long

I was with the department. I was impressed by her ability to have a meaningful and mature conversation while making me feel at ease."

A team of faculty members including Ms. Alison Cady, Director of Strategic Planning and Communications, Ms. Brittany Barbaro, Manager of Community Relations, Mr. Edward Garlick, Community Safety Officer and part-time firefighter, and Head of School Dr. Alex Curtis planned the brunch. The team wanted to invite the firefighters' families to campus for a personal event after formally thanking the fire chiefs at Convocation. "I wanted the people that I saw with those packs, carrying seventy pounds of weight and going into a burning building, to have someone look them in the eye and say, 'Thank you,'" said Dr. Curtis.

Bianca Rosen may be reached at brosen21@choate.edu

THE CHOATE NEWS



113TH MASTHEAD

VOL. CXIII
NO. I

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Perspectives on Escalation: *Eliminate the Stigma*



Graphic by Chandler Littleford/The Choate News

On Thursday, September 5, fifth and sixth formers gathered in small groups to watch *Escalation*, a 40-minute film produced by the One Love Foundation that tells the stark, gripping story of an abusive relationship. Founded in honor of Yeardley Love, a 22-year-old college student who was beaten to death by an ex-boyfriend in 2010, the One Love Foundation aims to ensure that no one else will have to endure the horrors that befell Love.

The film begins with an encounter between the two main characters, Paige and Chase. Their relationship progresses quickly — it initially seems healthy but quickly nosedives into abuse. Chase begins to verbally and physically abuse Paige, and though not explicitly depicted, there are undertones of sexual abuse. Here, two students reflect on the movie and its message.

By Natarsha Yan '21

Opinions Staff Writer

The shattering of glass. Blood on the floor. She collapses. He walks away, cold and detached.

As the final scenes of the film blurred across the screen, a heavy silence settled over the room. The intensification of verbal abuse and psychological manipulation to the tragic murder of Paige left an impact on me long after the film ended. I was struck by the precariousness and potential volatility of relationships, and began feeling almost nervous about romantic relationships in general. The film illustrates the delicate balance between a loving relationship and an abusive one.

In the film, what seems to be the start of a sweet and innocent relationship quickly spirals into something sinister. Actions that may seem affectionate become a deadly form of physical and psychological manipulation. And although we, as the audience, are able to quickly identify the warning signs, it is easy to see how Paige and Chase's friends are more inclined to dismiss and downplay the abusive signals. The disparity in reactions between the audience and those involved in the situation demonstrates the inability of most people to perceive the dangers around them. Too often, it's outsiders who have the clearest insight.

I thought the ending of the film, in which image after image of the victims of domestic violence flash across the screen, was especially poignant and powerful. With that sequence, we are reminded once

again that those victims were real people. They were sons and daughters, sisters and brothers — they could be anyone around us. After watching the film, our group was able to have an honest discussion in which we reflected upon the many nuances and central issues presented in the movie. We talked about how prevalent abusive relationships are, and how they affect not just the people in them but also their friends and family. We also discussed how we could individually become more aware of the warning signs that can quickly heighten into full-scale abuse, and how, as a society, we should learn to recognize such dangers, too.

There is still a stigma surrounding issues such as domestic violence, making it difficult for people not only to identify these dangers, but also to seek help when needed. Victims should not feel ashamed to tell people about situations that they have no control over; victim-blaming remains far too prevalent an issue and unless we actively work to change that people will never get the help that they need. Conversations about domestic violence or sexual assault should become commonplace, so that everyone feels comfortable addressing them. I hope that in the future we will be able to talk more plainly about such issues, both as a school and within our home communities. Giving these issues the attention they deserve could very well mean saving a life — or many.

Natarsha Yan is a fifth-former from Shanghai. She may be reached at nyan21@choate.edu

By Alex Ruan '21

Opinions Writer

The film effectively delivers its message, examining the patterns of an abusive relationship. During their second encounter, Chase is seen waiting for Paige holding flowers, presumably on the same day he met her. Though the moment feels romantic at first glance, I soon detected the oddness of the scene. Paige and Chase had met only that morning and barely spoken to one another. In rushing up to her, it seemed as if he was “claiming” her. There are other red flags peppered throughout the movie, including the couple's first sexual encounter, which occurs when they are both intoxicated; Paige seems uncomfortable throughout. These details paint Chase as a controlling and potentially abusive person, but, sadly, these details are easy to miss, as in real life.

The film also shows the importance of bystanders through Paige and Chase's friends, who each react differently to their relationship. Paige's friends pick up on a few worrisome details and begin to question Paige about her relationship. Chase's friends, however, choose to ignore every red flag they see: When they witness Chase screaming at Paige, demanding to know where she is, they laugh it off; when Chase enters a violent fit of rage, they decide to forgive him and forget the incident. By contrasting these groups of friends, the film shows how bystanders should and shouldn't react when they notice suspicious events in a friend's relationship.

Still, the film's production value could be improved. Multiple unrealistic events derailed attention to less important details, detracting from the film's credibility. One notable example occurs when Chase hits Paige with the flat side of a blender, splitting open her forehead in a gush of blood. During the discussion following the movie, many students in my group seemed to fixate on that unrealistic detail — the blunt side of the blender could not have been able to make the cut that was depicted.

More importantly, the way in which the School presented the film hindered its impact. By declaring the outcome and warning students about the upcoming violence, we knew to look for small details that we otherwise could have missed. One of the biggest goals of the activity was to help students understand how easy it would be to miss signs of an unhealthy relationship. Students were actively searching for these signs from the first viewing, making the goal impossible to fulfill. In future showings of the film, it would be more valuable for students if they were not made aware of the outcome and asked to search for signs after an initial viewing.

Escalation opened many eyes to the signs of an unhealthy relationship and ultimately got its message across. Choate's efforts in providing a better understanding of healthy relationships have been effective, and they should continue.

Alex Ruan is a fifth-former from Andover, Mass. He may be reached at aruan21@choate.edu

LET INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MENTORS MENTOR BETTER

By Tony Zhou '21

Opinions Staff Writer

I remember my first day at Choate, of course. Two years ago, I walked into St. John Hall and was immediately greeted by a group of friendly students wearing blue shirts, who I later found out were International Student Mentors. One of them led me to my dorm, helped organize my room, and patiently answered all of my questions. Even though most of the memories from my first month at Choate have since faded, I can readily recall my encounter with the International Student Mentors. Realizing how much they influenced me, I wanted to create similar experiences for new international students — so, last spring, I applied to become an International Student Mentor.

I was accepted, and then, during pre-orientation this fall, I began to recognize some of the program's fallbacks. Despite the abundance of mentors, these students weren't able to provide their mentees with the full extent of their knowledge and resources. St. John Hall was more chaotic than welcoming when new students arrived, as registration for mentors and new students occurred at the same time; mentors and mentees could barely find each other in the crowded building. Even though families were often greeted warmly by all of the mentors, a single mentor took over only one assigned family, preventing further connections between that family and other mentors around campus.

To resolve these issues, the tasks of international mentors should be divided up even further. In contrast to the current situation, in which a single mentor stays with one family for the entire first afternoon, multiple mentors should be

made responsible for one new family simultaneously by assigning mentors to specific locations, such as the library and dorms. Consequently, each mentor would receive a similar workload and contribute to the program equally. Also, new students would get to know more upperclassmen and hear multiple perspectives on campus life.

The two-day pre-orientation program had a full schedule — that is, for the incoming students. Most mentors were not required to attend events beyond registration. During a conversation I had with a couple of new international students following pre-orientation, I learned that many of them wished there were more opportunities to meet and bond with new people. The ice cream party on August 31 certainly created such an opportunity, and adding more purely social activities like this one to the pre-orientation schedule would help decrease new students' stress about being in a foreign, often overwhelmingly large community like Choate.

Still, the international student mentorship program has undoubtedly eased the transition of many new international students. And even though an International Student Mentor's responsibility is to help the new students, the experience has been equally rewarding for me. As I walked down Christian Street explaining my perspectives on different aspects of life at Choate, I realized I was part of a continuing cycle: the cycle of receiving advice from my own mentor, passing on advice to new students, and someday having the same advice passed to future new students and their mentees.

Tony Zhou is a fifth-former from Haining, China. He may be reached at tzhou21@choate.edu

What's to Like — and Not to Like — About School Meeting's Assigned Seats

By Jay Zhou '21

Opinions Writer

I used to text my friends "Wya" back when school meetings were held, at least for us non-third-formers, in the Paul Mellon Arts Center. (For the adults in our community, that's “Where you at?”) Racing from class, I'd hoped that they would save me a seat. Who doesn't want to sit with their friends?

Still, many times the chosen row filled up quickly, and I was forced to sit with people I didn't know particularly well. In those moments, I felt uncomfortable and wished I had arrived earlier.

In my opinion, the new policy of assigned seating during school meeting has not only eliminated the concern of competing for seats, but also accelerated the seating process, allowing the meeting to begin on time.

The new school meeting seat assignments are divided into four sections: third-

formers in the balcony, fourth- and fifth-formers in the back and on the sides of the orchestra, and sixth-formers up front. Within each section, students are arranged in alphabetical order by last name.

Assigned seating eliminates several concerns I've long felt when walking into the PMAC in recent years. My frantic text messages notwithstanding, I have always sensed the need to arrive at school meeting five or even ten minutes early so that I could, without question, sit next to my friends. More than once, I've run into conflict with others saving empty seats for their friends.

In addition, too often the rows filled in only unevenly, with gaps in the middle, so that students not in the initial wave of arrivals would be forced to knock knees or otherwise annoy their classmates as they squeezed into those center seats. Getting the entire student body seated and ready for the meeting to begin took a lot

of time. School meeting consistently ran over.

Though the new system of assigned seating has eliminated many of my concerns, I am nonetheless hesitant to support the change fully. One purpose for establishing assigned seating appears to be to promote community, asking that students interact with those classmates outside of their regular social groups. But assigned seats, which won't change until the beginning of the next academic year, does not exactly achieve this purpose. When school meeting proceeded without assigned seating, there were, in fact, more opportunities for students to meet new people. Sure, I tried desperately to sit with my friends, and yet it was nearly impossible to sit with the same people in the same seat in school meeting after school meeting. Students were, indeed, constantly breaking out of their friend group.

Moreover, for students like me, whose last name falls near the end of the alphabet, assigned seating forces one to sit in the farthest row for an entire school year. Though I often don't mind sitting in the very back, I also wouldn't mind the chance, every so often, to sit near the stage. (Fingers crossed for John Legend.)

To be sure, I'm pleased that the process of taking our seats has been made more efficient, but the School might consider randomizing our seat assignments, and perhaps changing them, say, every term. I acknowledge that the Dean of Students Office might not be thrilled by the prospect of one more arduous task — there are, after all, more than eight hundred names to sort — but such regular regroupings would not only promote fairness but also build community.

Jay Zhou is a fifth-former from Shanghai. He may be reached at jjzhou21@choate.edu



Johnson's Suspension of Parliament Contradicts Democratic Values

By India Lacey '21
Staff Reporter

“Blow for Bojo as bro Jo goes,” proclaimed last Friday’s headline story of London’s *Evening Standard*. This tongue twister perfectly summed up the ridicule of this past week’s Brexit antics.

Boris Johnson, the new Prime Minister of England, surrendered his majority in Parliament after losing the support of 21 members of his own party, as well as losing support from his brother, Jo Johnson, who resigned (inspiring the *Evening Standard*’s wit).

His standing in Parliament began its decline when Johnson asked the Queen to shut down Parliament until the Brexit vote. Despite what he may claim, this is a preemptive move clearly designed to prevent any member from drafting a bill that might stop him getting the Brexit deal he wants.

The highest court in Scotland has established its stance on the situation: Parliament is designed to represent the nation, so Johnson’s moving to block his political opposition (and thus, his accountability) is a clear violation of his allotted powers. The issue will be taken to English courts, which, one hopes, will force Parliament back into session.

However, even if the full force of British democracy is brought back in session, they will struggle to keep Johnson in check. The Labour Party has drafted a bill forcing Johnson to extend the Brexit

deadline (for the third time) if he doesn’t reach an agreement by October 19. Johnson retaliated by claiming that, if the bill passed, he would trigger a general election, hoping to stack Parliament full of pro-Brexiteers who would back his bill.

This has significant cultural impacts on the foundations of democracy. Can a nation be democratic if its leader limits the power of opposing elected officials? Can that same nation be democratic when its leader, unsuccessful in limiting the power of his political opponents, removes them from office entirely, replacing them with those who support him?

Perhaps most significant is that Johnson was elected on the promise to conclude Brexit with a divisive plan that Parliament would readily agree to. He later promised that if Parliament didn’t agree, he would leave the European Union without a formal deal by the end of October, a choice many warn could plunge the country into an economic crisis.

The political left is willing to avoid Johnson’s threat of a No-Deal Brexit at all costs. It’s the reason the Labour party isn’t supporting a general election — they want to ensure that No-Deal can’t happen before they’re possibly forced to leave office.

However, the true threat Johnson poses is the continued shut-down of Parliament. If Johnson’s request is allowed, then the representatives will have no way to check his power. Additional-

ly, the shutdown is timed, so that when they do return to session, the nation will be days away from a Brexit vote, and representatives will inevitably bend to pressure and sign on to Johnson’s plan to avoid economic collapse.

England remains a key player on the global stage, and a prominent Western nation forcing itself into democratic decay has global ramifications. This includes effects as far-reaching as today’s two dominating superpowers: the United States and China. Democracy could lose much of its legitimacy, and power dynamics could shift significantly toward China, which, if it happens too rapidly, could lead to conflict.

Although voters may not have had thoughts of global power dynamics in mind on election day, the fate of the United Kingdom certainly loomed above, and electing a candidate relying on a radical do-or-die policy before he had even assumed office seems rash.

So why did the United Kingdom do it? The nation was in a state of panic; it voted to leave the E.U. well over three years ago, and many capable, moderate politicians have already tried (and failed) to resolve Brexit. So, with seemingly no other option, the nation voted for the radical with a bold promise — a choice the nation is already beginning to regret.

India Lacey is a fifth-former from Washington, D.C. She may be reached at ilacey21@choate.edu

WALMART'S NEW GUN POLICY IS NOT WHAT IT SEEMS

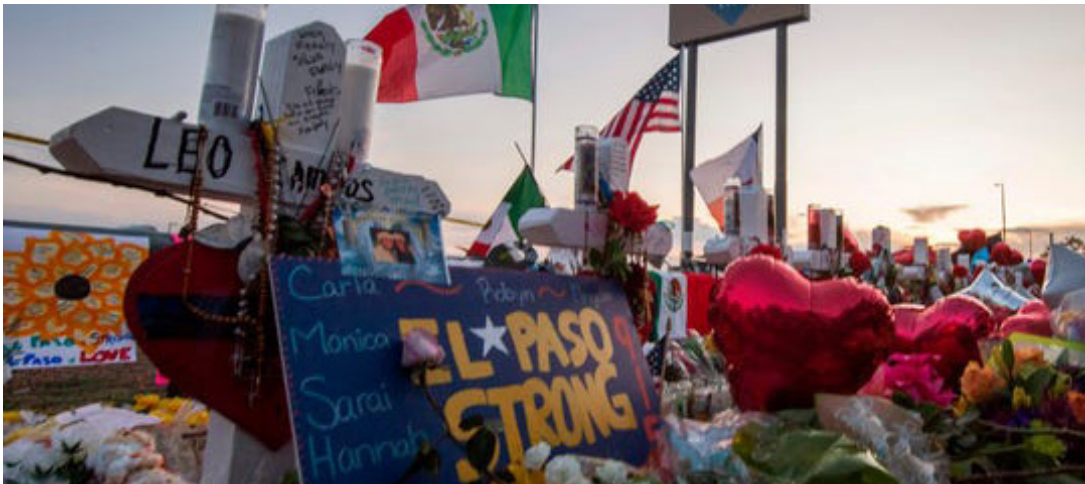


Photo courtesy of USA Today

After the August 6 shooting at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas, people pay their respects outside the store.

By Alex Aronov '22
Opinions Writer

Since the tragic mass shooting at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas, on August 3, the big-box discount retailer has all but exploited the tragedy.

As politicians struggle to create change in gun legislation, various corporations have taken on the responsibility to try to push change toward common sense gun control. Walmart has joined the bandwagon, ending the sale of certain kinds of ammunition, and restricting the practice of open carry in their stores. Despite fanfare from the media and outspoken praise from many politicians, Walmart is not doing much of anything, and it seems that the company may, in the end, benefit from the situation.

Looking at Walmart’s complex and convoluted history with firearms, it’s hard not to question the corporation’s intentions. In 1962, Walmart’s first branch opened in Arizona, selling clothes and toys alongside firearms. For thirty years, everything from a small, handheld pistol to a .50 caliber rifle was readily available for purchase in all of 3,000 Walmart locations.

In 1993, only after bad press and after many other retailers had already gotten rid of their weapon stock, Walmart took handguns off its shelves, but shotguns and rifles were still available to buy. In 2006, Walmart made a more drastic change: they pulled all weapons from two-thirds of their stores, citing the decision as a means to make their stores safer and to address the growing problem of gun violence.

This policy did not last long, though. In 2009, after the recession hit, Walmart returned shotguns and rifles to all stores. Such a decision clearly went against their previous statements and blatantly disregarded the “community safety” they hoped to create. In the years since, even after overall Walmart sales recovered, guns have stayed in stock, with Walmart only insisting after the 2018 Parkland shooting that it had “taken an opportunity to review [its] policy on firearm sales.”

After the shooting in El Paso, Walmart promised a major revision to its firearms policy — but this change is insignificant. In a press conference on September 3, Walmart said it would stop selling 5.56mm

and .223 caliber rounds, as well as end handgun sales in their stores nationwide. In a report, Walmart estimated this change in policy would have dramatic effects on business, stating that the company’s share of ammunition sales in the U.S. would be more than halved.

In reality, this change would only cause a decline of \$200 million in firearm revenue, and when compared to a yearly revenue of \$514 billion, and this 0.03% loss will likely be made up by the positive press Walmart is receiving as a result of the policy shift. The end of handgun sales won’t even affect most Americans. Alaska is the only state where Walmart still sells handguns.

And so this story becomes an old one. Waiting for a super corporation like Walmart to establish common sense gun control will get us nowhere. If we are to really create change, we must advocate for ourselves rather than fall into the hands of big business.

Alex Aronov is a fourth-former from Wilmette, Ill. He may be reached at aronov22@choate.edu

Is the Left Falling Complacent to the Familiarity of Joe Biden?



Photo courtesy of Vox

At the September 15 debate, former Vice President Joe Biden insisted, "I'm for Barack."

By Kate Bailey '21
Copy Editor

The 2020 Democratic primary race is now in full swing, and among the exceptionally large field of presidential hopefuls, one consistently pulls ahead: Joe Biden. The former vice president has a lot going for him in this race — and a lot going against him, if you ask his opponents — but the reason for his overwhelming popularity always goes back to his apparent “electability.”

This term, thrown around by political pundits and casual viewers alike, seems straightforward: it’s a measure of a candidate’s ability to beat incumbent President Donald J. Trump P’oo, a Republican, in the general election. Indeed, many believe that Biden is the only candidate that can defeat Trump. However, electability is not all that it’s said to be. Rather than being a legitimate indicator of electoral success, it’s simply a tactic used to support candidates who seek to maintain the status quo, as Biden aims to. To see success in the 2020 election, Democrats need to rally behind a candidate whom they’re enthusiastic about, not one who fits the conventional definition of “electable.”

Right now, Biden isn’t energizing the democratic base, and, frankly, he’s not trying to. His performance in rallies and debates, including last week’s televised de-

bate featuring all ten major candidates, has been arguably subpar, often falling back on the work of his former boss, President Barack Obama, rather than bringing forth his own ideas for the future. Many question the way he avoids criticism of his controversial decisions as a senator, such as his support for the Iraq War and 1994 crime bill.

So why does this seemingly lacking candidate win every poll by upward of 10 percentage points? His wife, Dr. Jill Biden, put this conundrum well: “Yes, your candidate might be better on, I don’t know, healthcare, than Joe is, but you’ve got to look at who’s going to win this election.” Few people rally behind Biden for his political platform; instead, they’re settling for the candidate that they believe is just vanilla enough to be electable.

However, if “electability” really only concerns who can beat Trump, then why don’t we apply the term to other candidates? Looking at the race from a statistical perspective, it’d be factually incorrect to say Biden is the sole electable candidate. According to polls by The Washington Post and ABC News, in a hypothetical head-to-head matchup with Trump, Biden beats Trump with 54% of the vote — mere percentage points off the scores of other frontrunners, such as Senators Bernie Sanders (53%) and Elizabeth Warren (51%).

Trump is in a vulnerable position right now. That’s something any Democratic candidate could take advantage of in the general

election, not just Biden. A July poll by Public Policy Polling further demonstrated this: soccer megastar Megan Rapinoe beat Trump, 42% to 41%.

So, if other candidates hypothetically perform just as well as Biden, what does “electability” even mean? The truth is that this fantastical X factor of electability is no more than some combination of name recognition, ideological moderation, and historical precedent (that is, old white men).

However, this definition of electability has been proven to be unsuccessful in past elections: candidates who have been talked up as electable during the primaries have lost during the general election. Hillary Clinton, for example, was a secure yet dull candidate that failed to excite her own party. In the end, she lost to Trump, a candidate that fired up the Republican Party. Recent, initially promising candidates like John McCain and John Kerry have met similar fates in the general election.

So, I beg you: champion the candidate that you would actually want to see in the Oval Office, whether it’s for his or her views on the environment or the economy. If that candidate is Biden, then by all means support him. But if not, don’t feel obligated to settle — it’s never successful in the end.

Kate Bailey is a fifth-former from Charlotte, NC. She may be reached at kbailey21@choate.edu

ENTRENCHED VICTIM-BLAMING CULTURE ENABLES SEXUAL PREDATORS

By Stephanie Chen '23
Opinions Writer

In 2016, Larry Nassar was arrested on charges of sexual abuse and possession of child pornography. This was after 30 years of working as the athletics trainer for the US Women’s National Gymnastics Team, 19 as the athletic physician at Michigan State University (MSU), 24 as an alleged sexual abuser, damaging the lives of 150 gymnasts.

But this wasn’t just an individual, stand-alone case of sexual misconduct. This was simply a reflection of the many ways in which our institutions have systematically failed to protect our students.

We live in a society that makes it much more convenient for universities to keep the middle-aged, white molester on the payroll than to report a crime against a young woman and risk tarnishing a carefully crafted reputation.

This is the result of two main factors. First, our society has given too much influence to its powerful members. For centuries, we have been telling children that to speak up against an adult — parent, teacher, school athletic trainer — is to question authority and thus to question the fundamental structures of society. It is for this reason that children are often shocked into silence when they experience something as jarring as sexual abuse, because the very decision to speak up about abuse from a respected authority seems unnatural.

Second, our patriarchal rape culture shames victims and favors perpetrators. If we look at any sexual abuse scandal in recent years, we’ll find that in a large majority of them, be it Jerry Sandusky at Penn State or Harvey Weinstein at Miramax (who has denied the allegations against him), most victims

chose not to immediately report the crime to authorities. It often takes years, and too many victims, to reach the critical mass that encourages victims to step forward and tell their stories. This is because narratives of male sexual entitlement are still pervasive. For the victims, these narratives make it seem as if being raped was their own fault, that they dressed too liberally and were “asking for it.” These narratives make victims feel disgusting and ashamed instead of disgusted and angry.

We live in a society that makes it much more convenient for universities to keep the middle-aged, white molester on the payroll than to report a crime against a young woman.

Not only do victim-blaming accounts of sexual abuse deter victims from speaking up, they also often deter schools from addressing allegations and empower perpetrators. Untrained school administrators’ first reaction to hearing a complaint about sexual assault can be much like the victim’s — they choose to cover up instead of speak up, contributing to the culture of silence.

Fortunately, there is no better place to change society’s mindsets than in schools. Two things must be changed about the way we teach sexual abuse, in both primary education and universities. First, it must be taught that authorities are not always right. We must teach values like respect as something to be given to actions and not to people. Children should respect teachers for the education they are providing, not

simply because their teacher is their teacher.

Second, children must also be taught the full extent of what rape is at a young age. Too many rape victims are children, because without a full sexual education, they are easy to prey on. Children need to be taught that rape can happen anywhere, that rapists can be anyone, and that in a sexual assault case, it is the perpetrator, not the victim, that has committed a shameful crime.

Last, since changing narratives is a long process, schools like Michigan State need to implement better systems and checks against sexual abusers. Even though Nassar was ultimately given a life sentence, and MSU was fined a record \$4.5 million for failure to handle the situation, all these measures were reactive at best. No amount of jail-time or money can take away a traumatic, haunting experience.

Colleges must implement stricter proactive background checks on all job applicants and more effective monitoring systems that require doors to be open and hands to be visible during medical consultations. Furthermore, schools must make it much easier for victims to report a crime. In every college and school, there should be trained committees in charge of handling all sexual abuse cases. These committees should follow protocols that favor the victims and suspect the perpetrators instead of the other way around, because asking a victim brave enough to step forward for “proof of their assault” only furthers rape culture.

Additionally, there must be immediacy in solutions. An accused predator should never be allowed to continue to interact with students.

Stephanie Chen is a third-former from Shanghai. She may be reached at schen23@choate.edu

CHOATIES LOVE UBER — BUT IS THE COMPANY WILLING TO ENFORCE ITS OWN RULES TO KEEP THEM SAFE?

By **Richard Chen '22**
Reporter

Every weekend at Choate, after five long days of quizzes, tests, and sports practices, dozens of students head to restaurants and movie theaters in town to relax. With only a small percentage of day students able to drive and rules against boarding students having cars on campus, the demand for transportation is huge. The main provider for such transportation? A company that hires complete strangers — namely, Uber.

With a net worth of more than \$5 billion, Uber is an entirely consumer-driven service provider that benefits the most from people who don't have cars — the most abundant source of such people being highschool and college students. The only requirements for being an Uber driver are that one must be older than 21 years of age, complete a background check, have a valid driver's license and social security number, and have access to a four door vehicle. With many Choate students using Uber as often as three times a week, it's important to ask whether or not these requirements are sufficient to keep the service safe.

This issue becomes even more apparent in light of the 15-year old girl who, returning from a party in Atlantic Beach, New York, was kidnapped and nearly assaulted by her driver. (She eventually escaped from the car when the driver stopped for gas.) According to Uber's own regulations, "A rider must be at least 18 years of age to have an Uber account and request rides. Anyone under 18 must be accompanied by someone 18 years of age or older on any ride. As a driver-partner, you should decline the ride request if you believe the person requesting the ride is under 18." However, many students have never been asked their age when entering an Uber driver's car. In fact, there is little incentive for drivers to ask what age students are. If the driver declines a ride because of a rider's age, the transaction is cancelled and the driver doesn't make any money.

Some students believe that drivers are suspicious about the age of their riders, but the drivers don't actually cancel the ride or ask to see an ID. "One time me and a group of friends were in an Uber driving back and the woman driving the car told all of us to sit in the back and not beside her," recalled Ryan Lee '22. This, combined with the carefree attitudes of some Choate students, ensures the survival of Uber as a business on Choate's campus.

Uber provides invaluable service to Choate students, and as students have expressed, there is a constant need for its services. "I mostly use Uber to travel back and forth from restaurants and movie theaters on the weekends," said Elton Zheng '22. "Last year during spring term, I also used Uber to travel back and forth between tennis practices off campus."

Access to Uber's services does not seem to be an issue for many students at Choate.



Graphic by Stella Dubin/The Choate News

Choate students, the majority of whom are minors, use Uber even though the company says riders must be older than 18.

With rides further into Wallingford costing as little as seven dollars, this transportation service is the most logical option for students who don't have parents nearby or access to a more expensive private transportation option.

According to Uber's website, "The Uber experience was built with safety in mind. Through incident prevention tools, insurance coverage, and technology that keeps you connected, we're dedicated to helping you move safely and

focus on what matters most." Even though the company claims the app is a secure option for riders, it is not uncommon to hear stories on the news about people being assaulted by Uber drivers. According to CNN, 103 Uber drivers were accused of sexual assault or abuse in 2018.

Taxi cabs, in contrast to Uber, are easier to regulate because the company owns both the vehicle and the gasoline. With Uber, independent drivers own both. Some taxi cabs also have preven-

tative measures such as alarms and alerts that allow the driver and rider to easily report misconduct. By adding more safety precautions like these, Uber may become a better and more accessible option for customers.

Choate's Student Handbook states, "The School discourages the use of Uber and other ride-sharing firms and advises families to check their terms of agreement before arranging rides or allowing their children to use such services." However, the constant need to get somewhere

off campus and into town may override the concern of safety for many students, potentially leading to dangerous situations. Choate students should keep an eye out for malicious behaviour from their drivers, but it is improbable that students will stop using the app. After all, with Uber being such an essential part of a student's daily life, it would be hard to imagine a Choate experience without it.

Richard Chen may be reached at rchen22@choate.edu

Quick Q&A with... Mr. David Loeb

By **Bianca Rosen '21**
Staff Reporter

Mr. David Loeb has worked at Choate for thirty-five years. In the classroom, he navigates the literary world, teaching Introduction to Literature and various senior electives. His passion for teaching makes classes engaging, and his love of the material resonates with his students. Mr. Loeb is also an adviser to fourth- and fifth-form girls in McCook House, and he has lead Girls' Varsity Volleyball to more than one New England Championship.

What was your first job?
I was an artist's assistant. There was a sculptor in town who made his art out of acrylic and aluminum rods, and I would break them into pieces depending on what length he needed for his art.

What is your favorite song?
"Penny Lane" by The Beatles.

What is something you can't live without?
My family, Shakespeare, and my dog, Jeeves.

What do you think is the best dining hall food?
This is going to date me, but they used to make deviled eggs about 20 years ago.

Did you always know you wanted to be a teacher?
No, but everyone around me who knew me knew I was going to be a teacher. I didn't know that, but my family did, apparently. My parents knew I was always going to be in school, living from September to May.

What is your best advice to Choate students?
Don't be afraid to do the things that you love. Being happy is a choice here.

What is your favorite class memory?
There was a time when my seniors surprised me by performing a scene from *Hamlet* in the Chapel. That was pretty neat.

What's your coffee order?
I have never had a cup of coffee in my life. I can't have caffeine.

Imagine me with caffeine!

What language do you wish you could speak?
Ancient Greek, so I could read *The Odyssey* in the original form.

What superpower would you like to have?
I'd like to be able to, instead of sleeping, grade papers at night.

When did you begin playing volleyball?
My senior year of high school, a bunch of guys asked me to start a team with them. There wasn't volleyball in our county, but the girls' coach took a day and taught us the rules. We entered the state tournament as a wild card team with mismatched T-shirts instead of jerseys. I've sort of loved it ever since then.

What word do you always misspell?
I missed "raspberry" in a spelling bee in the seventh grade, and I've never quite gotten over it.

What are some of your pet peeves?
I don't like it when boys in the gym cut across the volleyball court while I'm coaching. Everybody knows that about me. I've been known to go over and pick them up and carry them off the court.

What is your favorite Shakespeare play?
It depends. To watch, to perform, to teach — they are all different. For the sake of argument, I'd probably say *The Tempest*.

What's it like teaching both freshmen and seniors?
The seniors make the freshmen seem very charming, and the freshmen make the seniors seem very grown up. Often, I get to teach somebody on their first day of Choate and on their last day. That's fun — to be there at the beginning and at the end of the journey.

Bianca Rosen may be reached at brosen21@choate.edu

A Tour of Campus

By **Khal Bashawaty '21**

Check our Facebook page /choatenews and our Instagram account @choatenews this afternoon for the answers to this week's crossword!

Down

- “ ____ pinch of salt...” (2 words)
- Rip
- Type of painting
- It has proof
- Sound system
- Most prized possession
- Gumbo ingredient
- Column to the right of halogens
- Go to classes with, as a revisiter
- Pearl Harbor, e.g.
- Some hot drinks
- Military commanders, for short
- Positive votes in Congress
- Defeats, slangily
- Parking section
- Bigger than med.
- Playwright ____ -Manuel Miranda
- That girl
- Winter theatre show, for short
- ____ -Mex cuisine
- Where Odysseus was, to Penelope
- Village People hit
- Wee bit
- Round Table locale
- SEC Rival
- Detectives for hire, for short
- Cash, slangily
- Atrocious
- “That's sick!”
- Indian breads
- Creator of an ancient razor
- When repeated, consoling words
- John Legend's four awards (abbr.)
- Roman emperor
- Fall, e.g
- Opposite of WNW
- Meas. of pressure

Across

- Holder of the earth
- Pro's opposite
- Not firm
- Passed out cards
- Flying takedown, for short
- New employee
- Tango, e.g.
- Sphere
- Statefarm or Nationwide, perhaps
- Passion
- ____-mart
- It can be Special Academic
- Charlie of “Two and a Half Men”
- Online borrowing
- “Mama Said Knock You Out” rapper
- Accompaniments
- Iranian currency
- Allow to fight
- Document showing that Choate owns what is in the circled letters
- Econ. stat
- “Colloquially, ...”
- Latin for “art”
- Suffix with lion
- Common PC file extension
- Roast V.I.Ps
- Word with microwave or worm
- Animal rescue group
- Crazy person
- Playground response to “You are so!”
- Had unpaid bills
- Dollar parts
- To ____ their own
- Matured
- “ ____ Whiz!”
- Recall
- Certain stringed instruments
- Famous Bruin Bobby
- Submarine locator
- Without backup
- Jerry's foe
- Response to “Who's there?”

PRESTO! SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA'S SUMMER TOUR ACROSS ITALY

By Rachel Pittman '22

Copy Editor

On June 11, 2019, the day after the 2018 to 2019 school year came to a close, members of the Choate Symphony Orchestra were buzzing with excitement as they prepared to fly to Italy for a concert tour.

The 11 days of culture, art, and music had been anticipated for nearly a year, after an earlier tour, scheduled for the 2017 to 2018 school year, was cancelled due to funding difficulties.

Co-principal violinist Eliana Kim '20 said, "After [a first] international tour got cancelled, it disappointed and frustrated me a lot, especially because it was one of the main goals of my four-year Choate career. I think this tour definitely made up for that."

Students in Orchestra began to prepare their repertoire last fall, studying masterworks by famous Italian musicians and pieces inspired by Italian culture, including Rossini's *La gazza Ladra*, Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, *Summer Concerto*, Mendelssohn's *Symphony No. 4 Op. 90, IV. Saltarello*, Verdi's *Aida*, *Marcia Trionfale*, Respighi's *Fountains of Rome*, and Tchaikovsky's *Piano Concerto No. 1*.

Ethan Luk '20 said, "I was really surprised by how receptive the audience was in Italy and surprised that they enjoyed our interpretations, because a lot of the pieces are iconic pieces in the Italian classical music canon. To hear approval and getting standing ovations was something really, really humbling and encouraging."

Claire Fu '22 was also touched by the receptive audiences. "Almost every member in the audience saw

our sign, thought it would be worth their time, and came of their own will. From my seat I could see some people smiling or nodding to the music. It was truly a blessing to be able to play for such a musically inclined audience."

Oboe player Supriya Chang '21 said, "Especially in Rome, it made me super proud to be a musician just because the people were so accepting and loving towards us. As soon as we walked out of the venue, the audience who left before us saw us on the street and clapped for us — it was so genuinely heartfelt."

Kim had a particularly unique experience with the audiences. "I went outside to spread the word that Choate Orchestra is going to be performing. I got to perform in the streets to bring in some people. I think that was the most memorable part of the concert itself."

The Orchestra performed in iconic cathedrals in Rome, Florence, and Cremona. "Performing in cathedrals is always a great experience because the acoustics are always phenomenal and you feel this spiritual calm and energy whenever you play in such beautiful locations," said Luk.

Beyond performances, the musicians had the opportunity to experience Italian culture during visits to Rome, Assisi, Siena, Florence, Pisa, Cremona, Milan, and Venice. Italy's rich history in the arts and humanities inspired many of Choate's musicians to better understand the music they were playing.

"Back at Choate, *Fountains of Rome* was just another song we had to play" said Fu. "But after seeing the historical sites of the



Photo courtesy of Cathryn Stout

For eleven days last June, the Choate Orchestra performed in iconic cathedrals in Rome, Florence, and Cremona.

Trevi Fountain and many others, we could truly understand what the composer was trying to convey through his music. I would say our best rendition of that piece was in Rome!"

Experiencing other forms of Italian art provided further inspiration for the members of the orchestra. Chang said, "the Vatican City was the most breathtaking — all the different rooms with the ceilings painted, the maps on the walls, and the sculptures. As well as being able to share our type of art with them, we were able to learn about their culture."

Luk also enjoyed Rome's Vatican. "Overall the entire trip was so culturally enriching. I especially enjoyed visiting the Vatican museums because the work there is divine and otherworldly. The Sistine Chapel you can't see in

Wallingford," he said. "For me, as an artist, I always think that visual art and the humanities feed into my playing. I think each art form inspires the other. Our getting to visit all of these places inspires us to play better."

The musicians even had the opportunity to watch a performance by string group Interpreti Veneziani, who, for their encore, performed the same Vivaldi *Four Seasons*, *Summer Concerto* that Choate's Symphony Orchestra played in its concerts. "It was amazing. The intensity, the dynamic, the chemistry between all of the players — it was such a difference between what we did because they were so much better, but it makes you want to aspire to be at that level," said Luk.

Over the course of the 11 days in Italy, the musicians formed

a much tighter bond as a group. From exploring ancient Roman cities to almost missing a connecting flight in Frankfurt, every moment was one shared together. Fu said, "Now, as some of us graduate and some of us make the decision to leave Orchestra, the group may never get together again, but we all share this one magical experience of seeing, exploring, and witnessing the unique culture of Italy and being a part of that lively culture."

One of Kim's favorite memories is the many delicious Italian meals shared with her musical colleagues, as they allowed her to become closer with those she was already friends with and learn more about those she weren't. "Even before the trip, I knew most of the orchestra people and talked with them a few

times, but I think, during the orchestra trip, I've gotten to know people, underclassman especially, more personally."

After her experiences in Italy with her musical colleagues, Chang said, "Coming back and seeing those people again makes me a lot more excited for this year because I'm closer with the group."

Luk believes an orchestra's solidarity enhances its playing. "I think we should do more of that [socialization] in the regular schedule, too, because there's a lot of chamber and ensemble playing in the orchestra. In order to have a strong ensemble, you must know who you're playing with well in order to develop chemistry."

Rachel Pittman may be reached at rpittman22@choate.edu



Beyond the concert halls, Symphony Orchestra musicians and faculty chaperones enjoyed ample time to explore Italy.



Photos courtesy of Phil Ventre

Lexim Music's One Million Views

By Bianca Rosen '21

Staff Reporter

Lucas Sim '20 released his song "Cliff's Edge" featuring Riha in September of 2018, and it has since appeared on multiple media and musical platforms, including Spotify and YouTube, where it generated more than a million views. Sim created the basic demo, which he later sent to vocalist Riha. Together, they wrote the lyrics and recorded it before distributing the finished product.

Sim is relatively new to music production. He started out by watching YouTube videos on producing and practiced by recreating other artists' songs before working on his own demos. Producing was always in the back of his mind, but the act of creating something seemed daunting. This remained the case until the winter of Sim's sophomore year when something clicked.

Making music is a lot of trial and error, and inspiration often hits when one least expects it. Sim rarely sits down with the intent of "making something" because it feels that act is too full of pressure. Instead, he lets his thoughts flow naturally, aiming to make

the music more organic. "In class, maybe I'll have a random idea," Sim said. "Sometimes, I'll pull out my phone and record something real quick if I'm walking down the path, and then I'll go back to my room and try to play with it."

"It's nice to put on headphones and turn the volume all the way, absolutely blasting it and forgetting about everything else..."

Lucas Sim '20
aka Lexim Music

To get an idea of the kind of sound he's trying to create, Sim starts on the piano. He polishes the music on his computer, with a program called Ableton Live. Using the program, he can draw in different notes, build chords, and add drums. In conjunction with the computer program, Sim also uses an electric and acoustic guitar. From there, he plays around with different patterns, arranging them so they complement the other sounds.

"Cliff's Edge" has a darker theme to it that trademarks

some of Sim's songs. "Whatever mood I'm in, I'll listen to music with the same kind of feeling," Sim said. He makes music as a way to destress and escape from the present. "It's nice to put on headphones and turn the volume all the way up, absolutely blasting it and forgetting about everything else," he said. "That's kind of like the stuff I'm trying to make."

Sim hopes his music can help people through challenging times because that's the kind of influence music has on him. He hopes to relate to his audiences, so his music typically leans to the melancholy. To give this effect, he weaves acoustics into the electronic elements.

Sim hopes to continue producing. At the moment, he's working on five different songs, which he's trying to get featured on Trap Nation, a music channel network. Sim hopes to continue collaborating with other artists on his pieces and has taken to reaching out to them. The artists he's in contact with are people that Sim listened to and was inspired by.

Bianca Rosen may be reached at brosen21@choate.edu

HERE'S A CLUE

By Tony Lee '21

Staff Reporter

A scream echoes through the night. A house buzzing with noise falls silent with a gasp and a cry of horror — there has been a murder! A body lies on the ground, surrounded by six weapons marked by six sets of fingerprints. Who is the murderer? Someone knows. Most do not.

This term's play, *Clue: On Stage*, adapted by David Abbanti, invites the audience to solve a murder mystery unfolding onstage.

Clue, based on the iconic board game, is a goofy comedy mixed with a puzzling mystery case. The play revolves around six eccentric characters, each of which has elusive secrets and dark pasts that mark them as suspects for the murder of businessman Mr. Boddy. The cast ranges from femme fatale Miss Scarlet to egotistic Mr. Plum to religious Mrs. Peacock.

Alongside *Clue*, students will also deliver another performance: *Putnam County Spelling Bee*. "This fall has the spelling bee as the musical, which will kind of replicate *The Wizard of Oz* (last year's play) as this term's more cheery

performance," said Yasemin Cobanoglu '21, who plays the young brothel owner Miss Scarlet. "*Clue* is the play, and while it's very much a comedy, it has a murder involved, so it definitely has a more mature theme and more mature language."

Cobanoglu described her character as a sly seductress that "uses her femme fatale character to her advantage to manipulate others."

The show is heavily defined by the unique characteristics of the six murder suspects. "Each of the six main characters have their signature thing: mine as Miss. Scarlet is smoking a cigarette, Professor Plum's is checking himself out, Colonel Mustard's is being a clumsy old military dude," Cobanoglu said. "Everyone has traits that define them, and we repeat them a lot, so the audience should definitely look out for that."

Kai Joseph '21, who will be playing Colonel Mustard, agreed that each character contributes to the show's overall atmosphere. "Every character is comedic. Everyone has fluid, exaggerated movements and exaggerated voice lines," Joseph said. "Also, the transition segments in between the scenes packed with dialogues contain a

lot of comedy that is only portrayed with actions. I'm pretty excited to see how they pan out."

In particular, Joseph noted that his character, Colonel Mustard, is the comedic relief of the show. "He is a dimwit. As a colonel, he's a proud man and proud of his military status. I'd say he kind of took on the role of a leader figure, even though he's arguably the worst character to be the leader." To Joseph, the irony of the least competent character taking leadership adds to his comedic effect.

As Joseph said, at first glance, *Clue* seems like a simple comedy with a suspenseful twist. But the actions of the six suspects follow a common theme that shows the audience the dangers of acting only in self-interest.

"*Clue* pretty easily explains the principle of selfishness," Joseph says. "Each character acts only selfishly, and it's pretty evident that their selfishness is a major contributor to why the murder happened."

Performances for *Clue: On Stage* will take place on the Paul Mellon Arts Center Main Stage from November 14 to 16.

Tony Lee may be reached at tlee21@choate.edu

FIELD REPORT

Varsity Saturday Games

Field Hockey (0-4)
falls to Tabor, 0-7

Football (0-1)
falls to St. Thomas, 9-34

Boys' Soccer (0-0-2)
ties Brunswick, 2-2

Girls' Soccer (1-0)
beats Exeter, 4-0

Girls' Volleyball (2-0)
beats Kent, 3-0

Water Polo (1-1)
beats Deerfield, 9-8 (OT)

Water Polo (1-1)
falls to Williston, 13-4

J.V. Saturday Games

Boys' Soccer (2-0)
beats Salisbury, 1-0

Girls' Soccer (1-0-1)
ties Exeter, 0-0

Thirds Saturday Games

Boys' Soccer (1-1)
beats Salisbury, 2-0

Girls' Volleyball (1-0)
beats Greenwich, 3-1

Varsity Teams Bring Energy, Enthusiasm to Fall Season

By Allen Zheng '21
Staff Reporter

Girls' Cross Country
After winning the Founders League Championship last season, this year's Girls' Varsity Cross Country team will look to build on last season's success. "We have some strong returners this season, but we are also very lucky to have promising new runners," said Betsy Overstrum '20. "We lost a key group of seniors last year, but there is no doubt that our new runners are going to step up. It certainly is a bubbly group of girls, which makes for a fun environment." This year's team will again be competitive for a Founders League title, and it hopes for high placement at New England's.

Boys' Cross Country
Boys' Varsity Cross Country ended on a disappointing note last season, placing ninth at New England's. However, this year's team is motivated to improve on that result. Despite losing five seniors, Boys' Varsity Cross Country will feature a strong group of new runners. "Since the start of the season, new runners Devin Seli '20 and Tilden Jackson '21 have been great additions to the team," said co-captain Alex Coletti '20. "Both had a great race in New Haven a couple of weeks ago, and I'm looking forward to seeing how they can produce for us during the season."

Varsity Football
After the team's first loss in five years, to St. Thomas More, this year's Varsity Football faces adversity and challenges uncommon in prior years. Still, the team looks to defend its NEPSAC title for a possible sixth time in a row. However, co-captain Cameron Polemeni-Hegarty '20 is unfazed by the added pressure. "My goals for the team this year are to play as a unit so that we can perform to our highest potential," he said. "The win streak has never really been a concern for us. All we have cared about with regards to goals is playing as hard as we can and playing as a team." This year's team will be led by

co-captains Polemeni-Hegarty and Beau Luther '20, who are both projected to have big seasons. Also, quarterback Shane Baldwin '21 will be handed the reins of the offense once again after an incredibly successful sophomore campaign.

Varsity Field Hockey
Despite a difficult season last year, Varsity Field Hockey will try to bounce back this season. Led by co-captains Brooke Wise '20 and Gina Driscoll '20, this year's team has the experience necessary to produce many positive results, and new junior Ashley Lensch '21 will add talent and skill to the team. "Some of our goals for the season are to be a strong competitor against other teams," said Wise. "We're also aiming to have a record of at least .500, especially coming off of a difficult season last year." Varsity Field Hockey certainly has the potential to contend for a spot in the NEPSAC Class A Playoffs this season.

Boys' Varsity Soccer
Despite losing many key pieces to graduation, Boys' Varsity Soccer features a team that is once again primed for a playoff run. With a midfield comprised of Stephen Antogiovanni '20, Kamal Ibrahim '20, and Temi Agunloye '21, Boys' Varsity Soccer will have no trouble controlling the game. New goalkeeper Gunnar Lucuk '22 has also been a welcome addition to the team and made multiple key saves against Brunswick and Buckingham Browne & Nichols in recent weeks. "The team this season is pretty characteristic of Choate — hardworking and smart," said co-captain Sam Curtis '20. "We also have a good mix of personalities on the team that really makes the group special, so I'm looking forward to a fun season with awesome guys."

Girls' Varsity Soccer
After a stellar season last fall, featuring eleven wins and a NEPSAC Class A playoff berth, Girls' Varsity Soccer looks to build upon last year's success. The program returns attackers Abbi Adler '20, Sam Brown '20, Julia Gottschalk '20, and Julianne Sekula '20 who have all

proved to be dangerous in the final third. However, this year's team also added an enormous amount of talent and depth, including postgraduate goalkeeper Taylor Vecchione '20. "We have more depth than I think I've ever seen in my four years at Choate," said captain Cici Curran '20. "Considering the new competition brought in by the new players, I see our team as more competitive and hardworking than ever." Girls' Varsity Soccer has the potential for another playoff run.

Boys' Varsity Water Polo
Boys' Varsity Water Polo has gotten off to a strong start this season, defeating Deerfield in overtime despite losing to them during the previous two seasons. The team also returns a strong, core group of players that includes co-captains Hilal Zoberi '20, George McCabe '20, and Derek Son '20. In his second year, Jack Sun '21 will also likely make a key difference with his goal-scoring ability. "This year we are very motivated," said Son. "Unfortunately, we are on the smaller side, but we make up for it with our speed and shrewdness." Despite only winning four games last season, the boys' early success will give the team momentum for a run in the New England Playoffs.

Girls' Varsity Volleyball
Girls' Varsity Volleyball returns many key players, including co-captains Ally Chadha '20 and Kiki Kim '20. This year's team is also incredibly deep, and all players are likely to contribute throughout the season, especially some new talent that has been added to the team. "Someone to watch on the court is Maddy Estenson '21 in the offense this year," said Kim. "She's a new recruit that we've been excited for since spring term, and she's been looking great in practice." Girls' Varsity Volleyball is in an excellent position to beat Deerfield on Deerfield Day and take home another NEPSAC Class A championship.

Allen Zheng may be reached at azheng21@choate.edu

Sailing Standout Styron Wins Champs



Tommy Styron '20 of Hamden, CT leans back to steer his sailboat.

By Priam Alataris '22 and Sam Anastasio '23
Reporters

Tommy Styron '20, a senior from Hamden, recently won the U19 U.S. Youth Sailing Championships, which took place at Little Egg Harbor Yacht Club in Beach Haven, NJ.

Styron won the event with his partner Hayden Earl, a junior from Middletown, R.I., though the pair have sailed together for only a year. The two sailed together in a youth developmental boat called the "29er," a smaller version form of the boat used in the Olympics, the "49er."

Unlike other sports that have qualifying races and games, Styron and Earl had to apply to participate in the championships. "It was an invitational event, so we had to submit a resume prior to the event with results from previous championships and high-level national championships," said Styron.

The championships spanned four days of constant sailing, requiring Styron and Earl to maintain their intensity and focus. "In these races, there is a series of 30- to 45-minute races," said Styron. "There are about 12 to 18 races over the course of the championships. Whoever has the lowest total score from those races will win the championship."

After both sailors experimented with different partners, the two decided to sail together one day and developed instant chemistry with each other. To prepare for the race, Styron and Earl spent the summer of 2018 together in a boat. "Essentially, we spent a year or so back and forth between training in

the Northeast and Miami every few weekends," said Styron. The two typically sailed out of Stamford, Miami, and wherever the World Championships took place, though they didn't limit their training to the United States. They spent two weeks training in the Netherlands and another two weeks sailing in Argentina, hoping to ready themselves for different waters. This rigorous training program paid off during the sailing regular season, when the duo won 9 of 14 races, with a dozen top-five finishes.

Styron's love for sailing began when he was five years old, at his grandmother's house in Martha's Vineyard. "My grandmother's property and the sailing club are incredibly close to each other and are only separated by a hedge," said Styron, who visited every summer.

Although the sport is an important part of his life, Styron said that apart from the immediate next step, he is unsure of his future with sailing. "Sailing in college is the most obvious future sailing plan for me. I don't know if I will begin an Olympic campaign in the future, but college is the next step for now," he said.

Styron and his teammate plan to compete in the Euro Circuit next summer. Styron is also looking forward to his final season at Choate, this spring when he will hope to lead the team to a successful finish at the Connecticut State Sailing Championships.

Priam Alataris and Sam Anastasio may be reached at palataris22@choate.edu and at sanastasio23@choate.edu

MAGUIRE NORTH: WHERE THE GRASS WASN'T GREENER, AND MUCH WETTER



Photos by Nina Hashmi/The Choate News

The School chose to replace sod with artificial turf because of consistent and severe flooding.

By Rachel Pittman '22
Copy Editor

Until this year, Boys' and Girls' Varsity Soccer played their games on the grass fields known as Maguire Field North and Gunpowder Creek Field. Last year, as well as in previous years, players and coaches were constantly battling the durability of their own field, and each time it rained, the field flooded and took a long time to drain. If teams tried to play through the rain, their cleats tore up the muddy ground. When the field dried again, it was bumpy and uneven. Over the summer, the School addressed this

issue by installing a turf field on Maguire North.

"A lot of water runoff would go into Gunpowder Creek, the Girls' Varsity [Soccer] field, and Wilkins, a practice field by the rink," said Mr. Pat Dennehy, Associate Director of Athletics. "So, we saw an increase in moisture, and we spent [a lot of time] moving fields for practices, canceling practices, shifting games, canceling some games."

While the Administration has contemplated building a new turf field for some years, last year's particularly rainy fall made the project feel more urgent than ever.

The process to install the field was, according to Mr. Roney Eford, Director of Athletics, "a process that involved many planning stages with multiple people. Facilities worked with the project manager on site, daily, to complete each stage of the project."

Mr. Eford added, "It was exciting to see how the turf went from piles of dirt to a finished project in a short time frame."

The turf field includes updated drainage systems that allow water to drain much more quickly than from a traditional grass field. The new field will be restricted to use by Girls' and Boys' Varsity

Soccer, although JV teams may play on it when scheduling allows. "There will be cases where some of our JV teams might play on there given the weather," said Mr. Dennehy, "but we're going to have that as a campus field, just for Choate." (Teams otherwise unconnected to the School often use its other athletic facilities.)

Perhaps unsurprisingly, members of Girls' and Boys' Varsity Soccer find the field much nicer than their previous ones. Most agree that the turf emulates grass well, helping make the transition between the two surfaces easier for the teams.

Girls' Varsity Soccer co-captain CiCi Curran '20 said, "I think it's made our playing quicker and cleaner. As our coach says, there's no excuse for making bad passes or having bad touches on such a perfect surface. It's helped us clean up our play even more, and I think it's helped with confidence."

Boys' Varsity Soccer co-captain Sam Curtis '20 agreed. "I think both the girls and boys team will play a faster, cleaner game," he said. "That's what the turf allows for — quicker, smoother play."

Rachel Pittman may be reached at rpittman22@choate.edu