



THE CHOATE NEWS

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Photo by Arianna Gonzalez-Wagner/The Choate News

The third annual Young Republicans vs. Young Democrats dodgeball game last Friday night was a heated event, as students took sides to show off their athletic prowess and support their political parties.

DESPITE RECENT ATTACKS, PARIS STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM TO RUN AS PLANNED

By **Varshini Kumar '17**
Copy Editor

The Paris terrorist attacks in November that killed 130 people have raised concerns in the student body about the continuation of Choate's winter term abroad program in France. However, Choate's administration has issued the final verdict: the program is scheduled to proceed as planned.

A group of senior officers ultimately made the decision to continue to offer the program, in collaboration with Ms. Sara Boisvert, the

Director of Global Programs, and Ms. Anne Armour, the Director of the France study abroad program.

Ms. Boisvert, in addition to monitoring world events, worked with International SOS (ISOS), an international services provider that offers security assistance, to investigate the risks of traveling to France. She said, "After the attacks in Paris, we carefully reviewed and evaluated the information ISOS provided with regards to the attacks themselves, as well as what the ongoing risks, and potential ad-

ditional threats may be. I also spoke with their Paris bureau directly about the increased risks, if any, for travelers to France. In light of the attacks and the French government's sweeping response, ISOS has not raised their travel risk rating of low for France."

Ms. Armour also believes that the program in France will be safe. She explained, "We discuss security for kids abroad all the time, whether there are crazy things going on in the world or not." The France study abroad participants all attended orienta-

tion meetings that included safety and emergency information. Moreover, the area where the attacks took place are not places at which the study abroad students spend a lot of time.

The students in France would also be under the guidance of faculty who are familiar with Paris. As Ms. Armour said, "We have a lot of faith in our faculty in Paris. These are people who either live in Paris currently or have lived in Paris. They are extremely conscientious."

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FIRE ALARM INTERRUPTS HOLIDAY BALL

By **Saloni Jaiswal '16**
News Editor

During Holiday Ball this past Saturday, December 12, a fire alarm confused many Choate students, who were busy dancing, eating chocolate-covered strawberries, and taking photos with their friends. A fire truck from the Wallingford Fire Department arrived at Hill House within two minutes of triggered alarm.

The haze from the machines travelled through the open dining hall windows and set off the alarm in Hall House.

According to Director of the Student Activities Center (SAC) Mr. Jim Yanelli, the fire alarm was set off in one of the Hill House apartments above the dining hall. In preparation for the dance, the SAC had installed several haze machines, which are similar to fog machines. Haze machines are primarily used for lighting effects at parties and other events. Said Mr. Yanelli, "Whenever we use haze to augment the lighting effects—which is all the time in the SAC and all the time in major dances like Holiday Ball, First Hurrah, and 3/4—we pay to have a fire watch." A "fire watch", as Mr. Yanelli explained, is someone outside of Choate who is responsible

for detecting any fires in a certain, set region. For these large dances, fire alarms are disabled in Hill House Dining Hall. However, the fire alarms in the dorms, specifically Hill House, West Wing, and Hall House, are not disabled.

During the dance, the haze from machines travelled outside of the open windows in the dining hall, rose, and went into the faculty apartments. According to Ms. Emily Lovejoy, the Dean on Duty that night, the haze entered the second floor of Hall, which then set off the fire alarm in the dorm.

According to Mr. Yanelli, there seemed to be no commotion or confusion given the unexpected occurrence. Students promptly followed instructions and left the dining hall, and either congregated outside the front steps of Hill House or the side yard in between the Andrew Mellon Library and the dining hall.

"It took a while for the fire department to identify the source of the problem," said Mr. Yanelli. Some students were confused about the situation and according to Ms. Lovejoy, "There were some initial thoughts that the alarm went off in the dining hall kitchen." Students waited for around twenty minutes outside while firemen from the Wallingford Fire Department inspected the area.

During this time, many Choate students made

See Fire Alarm, Page 3

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN SCHOOL HISTORY, TWO ALUMNI WIN RHODES SCHOLARSHIPS

By **Haley Chang '18**
Staff Reporter

In a competitive national pool of 869 candidates, Choate alumni Hannah Schneider '10 and Russell Bogue '12 were two of the 32 recipients of the prestigious American Rhodes Scholar Class of 2016 scholarships. These scholarships cover all the expenses for two or three years of graduate study at the University of Oxford.

The last time a high school ever had two Rhodes Scholars in the same year was in 2008, when Phillips Academy Andover graduates R. Jisung Park '04 and Abby Seldin '05 received the honor.

Both Bogue and Schneider have big plans for Oxford. Schneider plans to obtain a Master of Philosophy in Music, specializing in composition and conducting. Bogue intends to obtain a Master of Philosophy in Political Theory, where he will continue his studies in comparative constitutionalism and democratic development.

Both Choate alumni de-

cidated to apply to the Rhodes scholarship because of the opportunities it provided. Bogue remarked, "For someone who wants to go into academia, the opportunity to study free-of-charge at a university like Oxford, surrounded by other curious students, is a dream."

Schneider commented, "The Rhodes scholarship provides for two years of graduate study, and a community of innovative thinkers. There's no better place to hone my skills and ideas." She continued, "I currently work at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg on various development projects. I am interested eventually in conducting, however, and in discovering new outlets and audiences for classical music, and to do that, I need space to explore."

The Rhodes scholarship, created in 1902 by Cecil J. Rhodes, a British philanthropist and African colonial pioneer, were intended to be given to people with commendable "character, commitment to others and to the common good, and for their

potential for leadership in whatever domains their careers may lead."

Schneider, a Georgetown graduate who majored in Russian, described the Rhodes application process as, "fairly rigorous, especially if you have a full time job." She added, "Rhodes looks for grit, and I think having designed and carried out a humanitarian project in a terrorist hotspot probably contributed to my case." She did her humanitarian project in the North Caucasus during the spring of her junior year. Schneider raised funds through crowdsourcing and travelled there to record an album. "The North Caucasus is the poorest and most violent region of Russia, and I wanted to see whether I could make connections between musicians and promoters to expand opportunities for artists in the region."

Schneider has always been interested in music. She grew up in Russia, but spent her freshman and sophomore

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SCHOOL LAUNCHES INITIATIVE TO PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH



Photo by Arianna Gonzalez-Wagner/The Choate News

A meeting last week marked the first step in a new Mental Health Campaign, that aims to promote more open conversation about mental health on campus.

By **Alyssa Shin '18**
Staff Reporter

While Choate has encouraged discussions about socioeconomic status, sexual identity, and racial diversity, it has not yet held an open discussion about mental health—until Tuesday, December 8. Peer

Educators hosted an informational session for student leaders about mental health, as part of a project called the Mental Health Campaign that the Counseling Office and several students are spearheading.

This year, the Counseling Office and representatives from the Peer Educa-

tors and the Assessment Team created a subgroup to address mental health. The group planned to kick-start the Mental Health Campaign with an informative session about mental health. The inspiration for this session came from a TED Talk

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Now in its 109th year, The Choate News is written, edited and designed by students to cover events at the school and to offer a forum for opinions of significant interest to the Choate Rosemary Hall community. The Choate News is published weekly on most Fridays while school is in session.



Read it then recycle it

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DIVERSITY CONFERENCE PROMOTES CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING AMONG STUDENTS AND FACULTY



Photo courtesy of Hakeem Angulu

Several students and faculty members were selected to attend the Student Diversity Leadership Conference, in which they learned about cultural identifiers, participated in discussions, and met with thousands of other students from independent schools across America.

By **Grayce Gibbs '18**
Reporter

A group of Choate students and faculty members travelled to Tampa, Florida, not to soak up the sun, but rather to discuss important issues about race and gender, religion, socioeconomic status, as well as other diversity identifiers. Students and faculty participated in the Student Diversity Leadership Conference (SDLC), a multicultural and multi-racial gathering of student leaders from independent schools across the United States that was held from December 3 to 5.

According to the conference's webpage, "participants will develop cross-cultural communication skills, better understand the nature and development of effective strategies for social justice, practice expression through the arts, and learn networking principles."

Among many applicants, six students were chosen to go: Hakeem Angulu '16, Eli Bickford '16, Larisa Owusu '17, Danielle Young '17, Chloe Khosrowshahi '18, and Mpilo Norris '18. To apply to go to SDLC, students wrote a short essay explaining why they wanted to attend the conference and how they would use the knowledge gained there to help the Choate community. Angulu primarily chose to go to the conference "to hear others' stories, because being someone who is outside of what the society declares as the "norm" in an indepen-

dent school is rare. And it comes with a whole set of unique experiences."

The first two days of the conference were focused on discussing issues around the core cultural identifiers, which included race and ethnicity, ability, religion, gender, and sexuality. The conference began with an opening speaker, Mae C. Jemison, the first woman of color to travel to space. Following this, the 1,600 student attendees were split up into "family groups," which consisted of around forty to sixty people. The family groups were intended to facilitate dialogue and sharing. These groups were the "home base" of the conference, where students returned for activities and discussion in-between conference talks. In these family groups, two facilitators—college students or adults who may have previously attended SDLC—led discussions about the identifiers, such as ability, race, gender, sexual orientation, and religion. The facilitators also defined these identifiers for the students. Students participated in affinity groups; for example, there was a queer affinity group, African-American affinity group, multicultural affinity group, and white affinity group.

The conference also featured a variety of keynote speakers. Howard Stevenson, a professor of Africana Studies at the University of Pennsylvania was a keynote speaker. According to attendee Eli Bickford '16, "Stevenson talked about racism in this country and

how we are constantly saying things like 'let's move past racism,' but the only way to actually do that is to confront it head on. It was very powerful and moving."

Another speaker at the conference was Rodney Glasgow, an activist for equality and diversity who will be coming to Choate this winter for Diversity Day. Glasgow headed and coordinated this year's conference. He is also the founder as well as co-chair of the Student Diversity Leadership Conference.

SDLC is run by the National Association for Independent Schools (NAIS), and is held in conjunction with the People of Color Conference (PoCC), which is for faculty and administrators. Faculty members

"One of the biggest identifiers is ability, and I think we needed to talk about that more at the conference."

Eli Bickford '16

James Stanley, Tyren Bynum, Isabel Aguirre-Kelly, and Eera Sharma attended this conference. According to PoCC's website, "PoCC is meant to equip educators at every level, from teachers to trustees, with knowledge, skills, and experiences to improve and enhance the interracial, interethnic, and intercultural climate in their schools." The PoCC conference is organized similarly to SDLC; the con-

ference sorts the attendees into smaller groups to help foster discussion.

According to Mr. Bynum, "The People of Color Conference is an opportunity to meet with colleagues who are trying to incorporate more diversity and inclusion within curriculums. We look at the administrative structures within institutions to see how we can make them more inclusive. We work to support students of all the various diversities that we bring into our institutions to make sure that everybody is feeling comfortable."

During the last portion of the conference, which took place on Saturday morning, students presented the changes they hoped to specifically implement at Choate to the faculty members. The students wished in particular to incorporate inclusion in school statements, especially for people of queer identities. Another hope was to have faculty trained in diversity.

One other important change the group wants is to include gender-neutral bathrooms in every building. Angulu noted that it's "not something to freak out about — it's the simple fact that an easily-accessible gender neutral bathroom in every building will help people who don't identify with the binary feel more comfortable."

The students and faculty members enjoyed the conference. When asked if there was anything he would change about the conference, Bickford replied, "I don't feel like

we talked about ability enough. There was a ton of talk about race and gender, a lot about sexual orientation, age, and family struc-

"I encourage all faculty of color, students of color, and allies of all backgrounds to experience this conference."

Mrs. Eera Sharma

ture. But one of the biggest identifiers is ability, and I think we needed to talk about that more." Additionally he felt that "it was so tailored towards what to do in your schools, I would like to have more information on what to do in the world."

According to Mrs. Eera Sharma, "This was my tenth year attending the NAIS-PoCC conference, and every year, I take away something different. It is always a wonderful feeling to be surrounded by like-minded people who understand the challenges that educators of color face at traditional boarding schools. I encourage all faculty of color, students of color, and allies of all backgrounds to experience this conference. It is impossible to put into words how meaningful this conference is."

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MENTAL HEALTH CAMPAIGN BEGINS

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by high school student Kevin Bree called "Confessions of a Depressed Comic," in which he describes his experience with depression and challenges others to support those suffering from depression.

Said Bree in his TED talk, "We need to stop the ignorance, stop the intolerance, stop the stigma, and stop the silence, and we need to take away the taboos, take a look at the truth, and start talking, because the only way we're going to beat a problem that people are battling alone is by standing strong together, by standing strong together."

The meeting's objective was to educate student leaders about mental health and inspire them to fight generalizations and stigma about mental health at Choate. Another objective was to remind the student leaders about the support systems for mental health already in place at the Health Center and the counseling office. The counseling office hopes that by educating students about mental health, students will feel more com-

"It's important for prefects to be proactive about how they handle mental health."

Jack Tenney '16

fortable to ask for help.

Mrs. Charlotte Davidson, Director of Counseling Services, remarked, "Here in the Health Center and counseling office, we know that people struggle with difficulty approaching counseling for a whole bunch of different reasons." However, she said, "Human beings need support. One of the best ways we do that is through our relationships with one another."

Jack Tenney '16, Head Prefect, thought that the meeting was a good idea. "I think it's really important for prefects to be very proactive about how they handle mental health because depression and mental health is something that can be bottled up a lot."

The student leaders shared their opinions and furthered their understanding of mental health through a discussion and Q&A session at the meeting. Jasmine Kim '16, a Nichols prefect, remarked, "I realized that depression is such an under-discussed topic, and that it's important to be a supportive community for those suffering from it. I agree that the topic may seem a little intimidating, but we can understand it much better just from listening to those people who have been through depression."

However, some students believe that there are still steps to be taken in order to foster more open conversations about mental health on campus. Noted Zemia Edmondson '16, "I wished that the counselors at the meeting were more receptive to the students' concerns about medical leave. It seemed that they brushed off the fear that many students had regarding medical leave and also didn't have a solution on how to alleviate that fear."

Last week's meeting was only the first step in the ongoing effort to diminish and eventually eliminate the stigma surrounding mental health on Choate campus.

"From the moment a student enters Choate, we want them to learn what resources are available for them in case they need help. We mention these resources in Sophomore Seminar and when working with students in Assessment Team and the prefects. We think students need to know what these resources are, because you need to know how to take care of yourself and when to go seek help," said Mrs. Davidson.

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BOGUE, SCHNEIDER TO ATTEND OXFORD

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years of high school in the States being homeschooled so that she could dedicate enough time to practice violin. She was attracted to the Arts Concentration Program at Choate, and enrolled in Choate as a new fifth former. "I was challenged by Mr. Ventre when he gave me a leadership position in Chamber Orchestra. I also played in various smaller ensembles, and had a few hours a day to practice."

She reflected on her time at Choate, "It was in the interactions with my teachers, particularly with English teachers like Mr. David Loeb and Mrs. Nancy Miller, that I began to gain confidence, both in my academic ability and in my validity to reach out and get to know other students."

Mr. Loeb, who taught Schneider '10 for two years, commented, "Hannah was just so smart; she had a mind. She was this kind of student that a teacher would prep a little harder for, because you knew you had to keep up with her. She was somebody who loved being at Choate because she wanted to be surrounded by smart people. She got a thrill out of that."

She addressed current Choate students, "Don't wait to ask yourself the important questions. If you



This is the first time two Choate alumni (Russell Bogue '12 and Hannah Schneider '10) have been named Rhodes Scholars in the same year.

don't fervently and actively seek the answers to these questions, you'll get swept away in the current of what other people think is important, whether that is grades, money, and such."

Schneider also advised students to take risks, "I took a lot of risks—a gap year, a gap semester, a major that wasn't as sexy as economics or political science, but I made these choices because I reset the metrics of success. That's what gave me the freedom to do what I did. I wasn't

gunning for the Rhodes; if I had been, perhaps I wouldn't have taken so many risks, and perhaps, ironically, I wouldn't have won."

Bogue, a senior at the University of Virginia majoring in politics, also felt that his experience at Choate was transformative. He recalled, "It was at Choate that I learned that politics and political thinking could be both imaginative and pragmatic—that I could harness my creativity to think critically about substantive

political questions with tangible impacts on individual lives. Choate also fostered an intrinsic love of learning for the sake of learning, which has impacted by desire to go back into academia after graduate studies."

He advised the student body of Choate, "Invest in people. I would especially encourage students to cultivate relationships with the teachers at Choate. One of my eight recommenders for the Rhodes was Dr. Katharine Jewett, who was

my French teacher and one of my mentors at Choate. I never thought when I graduated from Choate that I would be going back to my teachers there for recommendations during my fourth year in college, but I think that's testament to the quality of instruction at Choate and the ways in which students and teachers can develop lasting bonds."

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Photos courtesy of Choate

FAREWELL TO MAILROOM ICON: BILL MURPHY



Photo by Arianna Gonzalez-Wagner/The Choate News

For five years, Mr. Bill Murphy has been the face of the mailroom, handing out mail packages and welcoming students and faculty with a warm smile.

By **Bryce Wachtell '17**
Social Media Editor

Every time students and faculty visit the mailroom to pick up a package or a letter, the kind and cheerful mailroom supervisor Mr. Bill Murphy is at the mailroom window to greet them. After working at Choate for five years, Bill will be retiring at the end of December. Devoted to his work and the people at Choate, Bill has made an impact on the community. He somehow manages to efficiently distribute mail packages to students and faculty, while remembering everyone's names, holding a series of brief conversations, and making everyone feel special.

For instance, on one somber Wednesday afternoon, an hour before the mailroom was due to close, a nervous senior came to the window and told Bill that she had received an e-mail. Bill reached behind the shelves, brought a thick-looking envelope to the girl, pointed to the return address

and asking if the name typed in black was a college she was interested in attending.

Saying yes, she smiled and nodded before quietly taking the package. Bill seemed to know that in just a few minutes, she would likely be in her room, on the phone with her parents, shrieking with excitement.

"I've been so lucky to meet so many kids from all over the world and spend that two minutes of time with them."

Mr. Bill Murphy

Bill explained that he always treats acceptance letters with special care. He said, "A lot of kids don't pick up the mail, so when we receive the larger ones—which, generally speaking, are the acceptance letters—we don't jam them into one of the tiny mailboxes. These kids work hard for four years! I should make sure their acceptance letters

are not torn, so we usually go through trying to see if we have any."

Really, Bill makes an extra effort to ensure every package is handled properly, from its arrival at Choate as early as 6:00 a.m. to whenever a student picks it up (hours, maybe days, later).

When asked about his ability to recognize names and faces, Bill explained, "It occurred to me how happy students were when I recognized them. The kids seemed to really appreciate it."

Students seem to be grateful for Bill's interest in the students and their lives. Camila Borjesson '17 commented, "He is very fun, and he always knows the name of every student who goes to the mailroom to pick up his or her mail. He always asks me how I'm doing. Bill and I have these really long conversations every time I stop by. I'll see him every once in a while, and we'll just talk because he's so nice."

Others echoed similar sentiments. Lucas Ferrer '17

expressed, "Life here is really busy, and it can feel impersonal at times. Bill makes the connection feel personal. It's just nice to have someone like that on campus." Darby Sasaki '17 added, "He puts in a genuine effort to get to know the students when he really doesn't need to."

Bill will spend his last few days before winter break saying goodbye to Choate and Wallingford. He noted that his retirement now was mainly a financial decision, "This was planned from the very start five years ago. It more has to do with the end of the normal fiscal year and just coincidentally ties into the winter weather." Bill hopes to improve his golf game as he bounces between Naples, FL, and Cape Cod with his wife.

The search for a new mailroom supervisor is currently underway. No final decision has been made yet.

When asked about his time at Choate, Bill seemed to get a little sentimental, saying, "I've been so lucky to have the opportunity to meet so many kids from all over the world and spend that two minutes of time with them. They really enjoy coming to the mailroom. They really get into it. I'm probably the least threatening guy on campus because I'm not here to teach you or judge you or grade you. I'm just here as Santa Claus."

Josie Battle '17 was disappointed when she heard of Bill's retirement, saying, "Choate won't be the same without him." Jacob Meyers '17 seemed to feel the same way, explaining that "Bill adds so much character to this campus. Everybody who's been here knows him and everybody has to go through Bill at some point. There's something unifying about the fact that we all have Bill."

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Ms. Catherine Adams

Joining the PMAC as a new arts teacher this term is Ms. Catherine Adams, who is teaching two sections of Drawing.

Adams attended Tyler School of Art at Temple University in Philadelphia, PA, and holds a BFA with a concentration in Metals and Jewelry. After she graduated from college, not only did she make costumes for theater productions and do makeup for stage performances, but she also served as an art gallery assistant, photographer's assistant, and jewelry studio owner. However, according to Adams, "What I

have confirmed as my favorite and most satisfying job is teaching."

"My intention of teaching is for each of my students to recognize the development of their drawing skills through new methods, practice, and exploration. My hope is for this learning to occur without competition or pressure, but through the desire to see and make observations more accurately," said Adams. She emphasized that she always tells her students that "drawing is the evidence of seeing, a record." Choate students' ability to adapt to her teaching style surprises her, and she feels thankful toward them.

Moreover, she noticed that "Choate students are bright and willing to experiment." She appreciates the friendships she's already formed with many students, and loves her new relationships with the other art teachers at Choate.

—Kevin Chyun '18

FRANCE STUDY ABROAD TO CONTINUE

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With concerns about safety addressed, Ms. Armour contacted participants' host families to ask if they would still feel comfortable taking in Choate students. She said, "We had to see if our faculty in France was okay, if the families who had signed on to be host families were still willing to participate, and they were. We knew we had everything in place to continue if the parents were willing to continue."

More than simply determining the feasibility of continuation, Ms. Armour ensured that the participants of the program wouldn't have to sacrifice their enjoyment in the name of safety. Ms. Armour reached out to Ms. Deborah Palmer, one of the faculty members who will be teaching in France, to confirm that most museums and monuments were open and that the transportation systems were still working.

"We have to make sure we are offering these kids the program they signed up for and that we have been in the habit of giving over the years. If they can't go to those museums, monuments, and use Paris as their classroom, there is no point in going," Ms. Armour commented.

There was also a large demand from parents for the continuation of the study abroad program. Ms. Armour recalled, "The morning after the attacks, I already received messages from parents saying, 'We hope you'll go anyway.' I never received any messages from the parents saying we must not go. I was happily surprised." She continued, "I think it's these kinds of programs that can prevent this from happening in the future, because we can learn how to know each other and appreciate each other from these programs."

However, as Dean of Students Mr. James Stanley stated, "We had to ask about if this was the right decision for our students. The ultimate decision was to leave the decision in the hands of the families."

Parents were given three options: have their child continue to participate in the program as planned, withdraw from the program and study at Choate for winter term, or postpone the final decision until winter break, in which case the student would be required to come to classes during December.

Two of the ten France study abroad students have decided to choose the third option, and the other eight will participate in the program as scheduled. In regards to the housing situation for these two students, Mr. Stanley stated, "We had the capacity to appropriately house every kid. There would have been complications with roommates and other things, but if something happens and the program is cancelled, we can house them." He continued, "When students decide to study abroad, their housing situation remains uncertain. There is juggling that happens."

The recent attacks did not influence Sarah Platt '18, who is still going to classes during December but will most likely continue with the program. "Before any of the Paris attacks, I was going to stay during December. I'd already planned to go to all my classes." She continued, "When I found out about the Paris attacks, I wasn't scared at all. I never once questioned whether or not I was going. Paris is so safe right now because everyone is under such high alert."

She was optimistic about studying abroad, "We have an independent project that we do, and most of us are thinking of doing our project on something related to recent terrorist attacks."

Kate Moore '17, another student who opted to continue in going to classes during December, now lives in a senior dorm. She also is not worried about the safety of Paris. She explained, "My mom was really worried because she thought the program would be cancelled, hence why I am here. That really worried me. I think it will be safe when I go—logically it should be the safest place on Earth. However, I think this may make it less fun, because they won't be as lenient."

Ana Nenadic '16 was also concerned that the program would be cancelled because of the attacks. She said, "I was very relieved to find out that we are still able to go abroad as planned. Security measures in all of Europe are very high right now. Paris is thoroughly monitored. I hope that Choate will not be silent on the issues of terrorism and security. These are extremely important topics now in Europe."

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FIRE ALARM CLEARS DANCE FLOOR

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the most of the situation and did not leave the ball. Though there were some concerns that students may leave the event, instead, some students had their own version of Holiday Ball outside, given the ideal weather conditions.

According to Uzo Biosah '16, "The situation was ideal, and we made the most of it. I ran to my dorm to grab my speaker and brought it back. I cranked up the volume and we had a good time. And yes, the party went on. Honestly, I had

just as much fun outside."

Mr. Yanelli explained, "I think it would've been more of a problem had the weather been less pleasant." Two years ago, it was snowing the night of Holiday Ball. Had that been the same case this year, the situation would have been much more difficult to handle, since students would have to be escorted a warmer place or even wait out in the snow, according to Mr. Yanelli.

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Photo courtesy of Devon Bernsley

The Wallingford Fire Department came to Holiday Ball last Saturday to investigate the source of the fire alarm.

HOVERBOARDS SURGE ON CAMPUS

By **Mehreen Pasha '18**
Reporter

A new gadget has taken the world by storm and is slowly making its way on Choate campus. Some faculty members and students may have spotted it being used near Memorial (Mem) House or other locations around the school. This device is not something that you can hold in your hand or wear on your wrist, analogous to the other popular devices of this decade. Rather, it's put under your feet and used to practically "hover" over the ground. You guessed it: the hoverboard is the new rage that's caught the attention of children and adults worldwide. Whether it's posting videos with them on YouTube or simply riding down the street with friends, it's evident that they are quickly gaining popularity and are devices that will stay.

Upon first glance, a hoverboard is similar to a skateboard or a Segway without handlebars. As put by Kristen Altman '18, "They look like something straight out of the future."

Essentially, hover-

boards are self-balancing scooters that have two independently controlled wheels. The body of the device is reminiscent of an hourglass shape. According to David Pierce of Wired, one can maneuver the hoverboard by applying pressure on two footpads located on either side of the device.

Though they can be quite pricey, ranging anywhere from \$300-\$1800, their simple mechanism, myriad of color combinations, and overall sleek design make them hard to pass up. Additionally, they aren't geared towards any select age range. As stated by Saleha Farooqui '18, "They're enjoyable for pretty much everyone, aside from the fact that older people are a little more apprehensive about falling."

So what can one do with hoverboards, you ask? Well, one can do just about anything, from cruising around the house or on campus to riding around town. They, undoubtedly, make getting from one place to another abundantly more eventful, despite their mere six to twelve miles per hour speed. According to Farooqui, "The best feature is the fact that you can just lean and the hoverboard will go

wherever you want. They require so little effort."

Nonetheless, this is not to say that one won't acquire their fair share of bruises and scratches if necessary precautions aren't taken. Potential danger is intrinsic within any device such as the hoverboard. For Altman, "At the same time, while they are very cool in terms of presentation, I'm not very coordinated and I'd be afraid of falling. I'd definitely need some kind of safety equipment."

Jack Tenney '16, a prefect in Mem, also noticed the rise of hoverboards on campus. He said, "Hoverboards have taken over Mem. They're really fun, and you look like you're floating when you ride one. The only problem is they're easy to fall off of, and they make a huge ruckus in the halls."

That being said, as hoverboards gain popularity, it is inevitable that some form of safety precaution will be implemented. Mr. Gordon Armour, a faculty member who has seen the hoverboard being used by some students in front of Mem, joked, "It looks like death on wheels, frankly." He added, "While I don't think faculty members have

spoken too much about hoverboards and any safety measures that may be taken in the future, I do think you should be wearing a helmet when you're on one of those." It is quite probable that hoverboards will fall under the umbrella of the helmet rule. For the time being, however, no rules have been issued regarding hoverboards.

Regarding the safety of hoverboards, Ryan Musto '16, another prefect in Mem, said, "My freshmen prefectees are daredevils if I've ever seen one. Certainly there's a risk involved in using hoverboards, but you've got to respect what they're trying to do."

As the holiday season quickly approaches, hoverboards will undoubtedly be topping many wish lists. However, it's crucial to keep in mind that while riding around on these futuristic-looking gadgets is quite enjoyable, it might be a good idea to put on a helmet, at least while you're getting used to it. Better to have a safe holiday than to be pressing an ice pack to your head.

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THE CHOATE NEWS

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About Us

Now in its 109th year, *The Choate News* is written, edited, and published to cover events at the school and to offer a forum for opinions of significant interest to the Choate Rosemary Hall community. *The Choate News* is published weekly on most Fridays while school is in session. The paper's offices are located in the Library. Members of *The Choate News* editorial board can be contacted at thechoatenews@choate.edu or by telephone at (203) 697-2070.

IS MY POLITICAL VOICE TOO LOUD?

By **Esul Burton '16**
Senior Writer

After last week's Choate talk by Henry Marshall '16 about the suppression of conservative viewpoints on campus, I remember walking out of the PMAC and grabbing a friend. He happened to be a conservative. "Do you feel like I shut you down?" I asked.

If you've ever had a conversation with me, you probably know that I'm a raging liberal, and an outspoken one at that.

On any ideological spectrum test I've taken, I've scored to the left of the Green Party: I'm a socialist; I think marijuana should be legalized; I make the conscious choice to say "Black Lives Matter," not "All Lives Matter"; I believe the justice system, like many other institutions in this nation, is racist and broken; I'm an advocate for affirmative action; I'm pro-choice; I support stringent gun control policies; and, perhaps most controversially, I believe that political correctness and freedom of speech aren't mutually exclusive. This list of liberal stances

is endless, and I've only become more radical as I've gone through Choate. But, unlike Marshall, my political beliefs are not ostracized at Choate. In many ways, I consider Choate a safe space where I have the privilege of knowing that most of my peers, and even some of my teachers, will affirm what I say on a daily basis. I've gotten into countless debates with people on Facebook, in the dining hall, in the classroom, or in the common room.

I wonder if I'm doing more to hurt discussion than to foster it. I wonder if I am more dismissive than I am curious.

Although I generally leave these discussions thinking of them as rather lively debates, I've realized that this might not be the case for the people on the other side.

I do believe in freedom of

speech, as shocking as that might sound for people whom I have disagreed with in the past, but I don't believe that this freedom is hurt when someone disagrees or voices criticism. I've operated on the assumption that my criticisms show that I am engaged because I've taken the time to analyze the other side's arguments and raise questions for both myself and the person I'm conversing with.

As surprising as it might be, I do take the time to reevaluate my own beliefs and I do have my moments of crisis when realize that I may be valuing the wrong things or supporting the wrong policies or people. Over time, my opinions have become more nuanced, and I hope that it is because I have been witness to arguments from across the entire political spectrum.

Still, I wonder if my love for analytical debate and discourse hurts my ability to listen. I wonder if I am only reading the articles that support my beliefs rather than actively finding information that counters them. I wonder if I'm doing more to damage discussion than foster it. I wonder if I

am more dismissive than I am curious.

Most opinion pieces end with some sort of conclusions. You might have expected something easily consumable, like "I am an understanding liberal," or "I believe that the obligation to listen is not absolute," or "there's nothing wrong with the state of discourse on campus."

Unfortunately, I can't give you a conclusion today. I'm not certain that I am an understanding liberal. I haven't thought long enough to form a nuanced opinion on when or why we should listen. I do think the state of discourse on our campus could be better, but as a liberal, I've had mostly positive experiences. All I have to offer you is a question – the same question I asked my friend last week: do you feel like I shut you down?

I want to say that I don't. I want to say that I am open, curious, critical, and reflective. But this isn't my question to answer.

Esul Burton is a sixth former from Seoul, South Korea. She may be reached at eburton16@choate.edu.

NEED FOR EMPATHY AS COLLEGE DECISIONS RELEASED

By **Bryce Wachtell '17**
Social Media Editor

It's the season for freezing faces, excessive pie-eating, crackling fires, and unwarranted caroling. But, as usual, our annual holiday cheer is accompanied by the college decision season, which brings both gleaming smiles and tear-filled hugs. Some treat the process well, making it constructive, supportive, and relaxed, while others turn it into a combative and aggressive topic. As a student body, we need to come to a consensus on how we should treat college decisions.

As a sophomore, I saw friends, peers, and prefects go through the college process. Now, as junior, I am watching some of my best friends, who are just a year older than me, go through the same thing. Tensions and emotions run high during this time. In many ways, I still feel removed from the culture of it all, but I've seen the effect that it has on people close to me for several years.

Our perspectives are fundamentally misguided at Choate. We may think college is the defining factor in determining our capacity for success in the future. In reality, where we attend college is just a small drop in the larger bucket that is our lives. Unfortunately, this obsession with acceptance into a Forbes Top 20 School has become our reality.

Broadcasting an acceptance establishes a destructive hierarchy of success based on admission.

In dealing with that reality, it's time for us to step up and establish some ground rules for dealing with the feeling and emotions students have when receiving news that they believe is life-altering.

I am an adamant advocate for basic empathy. This is a common-sense idea, but people diverge from it

all the time. Log on to Facebook on any major college decision day and see what I am referring to.

Social media posts are seen by everyone and reinforce two very destructive things. The first is obvious: they make people who don't get into prestigious dream schools feel horrible. Broadcasting acceptances establishes a destructive hierarchy of intelligence and success based on admission that doesn't reflect Choate's values and only makes those who find themselves at the bottom feel worthless.

The second and most damaging thing that posting on social media does is demonstrate to younger students that college is a huge factor in determining social worth for others. When one gets into a great school, he or she is praised tremendously online. Yet, everyone desires that same praise, and by glorifying college acceptances online, we place an unnecessary and unavoidable pressure on students as they go through the college process.

Getting into a great college is in many ways a feat, and you should shout it from the rooftops, but be careful. The first 24 hours after college decisions are released are riddled with emotional instability and serious introspection. Wait a week or two before posting something. Test the waters of how others have done. Keep in mind who might see your celebration. Does that status really require eleven exclamation points and a photo of your future campus?

Empathy for others in the college process goes far beyond social media too. Far too often, I overhear or am part of conversations that turn into interrogations. "Where did you apply?" "Where did you get in?" "She just got in because she's a legacy." "I think he only got it because he's black." "I haven't heard of that school!" Pride is understandable and natural, but overzealous and public narcissism often leads to the destruction of others. The dream of college builds

up for over four years, and for a whole class of individuals on a small campus, that dream can be fulfilled or destroyed with the simultaneous click of 200 buttons to refresh an inbox or sign into an application account.

The college process is a *It's time to establish some ground rules for dealing with the feeling and emotions students have when they receive news they believe to be life-altering.*

mine-field of mixed emotions, fears, tensions, and excitement. In my minimal experience, I've seen that the key to navigating it is communication and empathy.

Ask if you can help. Ask if you can provide something. Ask if you want to share your experiences. Ask how someone is feeling. And most importantly, ask if someone wants to be left alone.

Above all, Choate is a family. Let's be there for each other when we need to scream with excitement, dance around the room, and cry out of utter ecstasy. But let's also be there for each other when we need to extend a collective shoulder to cry on, provide a conversation that doesn't revolve around college, or eat a meal without bringing up futures.

On campus, news both bad and good has come recently, and more is on its way. Have some empathy in the next few months. Make this stressful and difficult time easier for your peers. Stay positive, constructive, happy, and supportive—and most importantly, stay sane. Encourage each other, and have some empathy by looking out for the person next to you.

Bryce Wachtell is a fifth former from Boise, Idaho, and is the Social Media Editor for *The Choate News*. He may be reached at bwachtell17@choate.edu.

WHAT'S THE GOAL OF COMMUNICATIONS?

POINT

THE REVAMPED OFFICE ACTS IN STUDENTS' BEST INTERESTS

By **Lucas Ferrer '17**
Copy Editor

Recently, there's been great discourse over the power of the Communications Department. Every year, new policies regarding the school's image and how students can represent the school and their clubs on social media are enacted. These policies, which regulate how students use the school's crest and seal and require students to hand over their club's social media accounts, are often met with accusations of tyranny. Some claim that the Communications Department is turning our great academic institution into nothing more than a corporation.

However, by viewing Communications as a "big brother" looking over our lives at Choate, we run the risk of getting lost inside our Choate bubble and losing sight of the beneficial work Communications does for the school and its students.

While it may be hard for some to swallow, Choate, in actuality, operates very much

like a corporation. In order for the school to find success, Choate must be able to recruit the best prospective students and produce the finest graduates that it can, whilst avoiding scandals that may tarnish the school's reputation.

So how does Choate maintain this track of recruiting and producing the best? Good public relations. It's not the '70s anymore. Information spreads quickly on the web. If a student were to post something offensive, derogatory, or ignorant, on a social media account that bore the crest, seal, or name of the school, it would become public very quickly and could easily reflect poorly upon the school.

Furthermore, by regulating our actions in the name of Choate online, Communications is protecting us—the student body. We all plan to apply to college in the near future. However, it's important for us to note that the college application process isn't as easy as it used to be. With the current state of college admissions, applying from a respected high school can be a critical advantage in the pro-

cess. By protecting the name of the school, Communications is ensuring that we, in the college process and beyond, will have the name of a distinguished school on our résumés.

Would it be nice to have autonomy over our club Facebook pages? Would it be easier to design team gear without going through the Communications Department? Should Communications be more transparent in its actions and rules? Do we really need a 50-page style guide on how to appropriately use the school seal? Yes, yes, and yes, and, well, probably not. But, in today's age of quickly disseminating information, should the school, and its students, take the risk, however small, and potentially harm the school's name over a few small luxuries? I think not. Let's stop calling Communications totalitarian and start looking at the big picture.

Lucas Ferrer is a fifth former from New York, NY and is a Copy Editor for *The Choate News*. He may be reached at lferrer17@choate.edu.

COUNTERPOINT

WE NEED LESS MARKETING, MORE TRUST AND TRANSPARENCY

By **Truelian Lee '17**
Copy Editor

Earlier this year, when Communications told club leaders that they had to hand over social media passwords belonging to their clubs and that the office aimed to transfer all club social media to a Choate internal server, the room erupted. The announcement, and the ensuing student reactions, revealed a stark lack of trust and transparency.

This year, Communications has tried to articulate a vision of the school that seeks to polish the Choate image. One plan Communications had was to transfer all club social media to the Choate student portal. The explanation for this change was vague, cushioned with needless jargon—the office referenced "social analytics" as if those words would clear up any confusion students may have had. Students left the meeting confused about Communications's intentions behind suddenly regulating club life.

Since then, Communications has failed to clearly articulate its vision of these new social media pages. As a result, many

students are under the false impression that those club social media pages Communications was referencing to were the Office 365 groups.

Well, I hate to break it to you, but the Groups Dashboard that Communications was talking about is actually a portal that can be accessed from the red banner at the bottom of the web page. It's not the Office 365 groups. And the confusion over what the Communications Office really intended to do reflected the lack of communication by the Communications Office. Ironic, isn't it?

Not only has the Communications Office been remiss in handling this issue, but it has also implemented other policies in the school without due explanation. One such policy, concerning the use of the school seal and crest, still stumps me and many other students I've talked to. Athletic teams have to go through a tedious process to request the school seal on team apparel. Some teams do without – Boys' Crew, for instance, uses The Choate School logo instead. But why do students have to either go through such

a process or exploit a loophole? Questions like these, and more, just haven't been adequately answered by Communications.

Now, it is understandable that the Communications Office wants to maintain a certain image, whether it is to woo applicants or impress alumni. I am not against the idea of Communications itself. However, as a Choate student concerned about her school community, I want to know why the Communications Office has decided to implement these changes, and I want Communications to tell me the reason without all the needless jargon, without all the delicate deflections and polished phrases.

The Choate News has run articles about the transparency of Student Council – let's now look also at the transparency of some of the other organizations on campus, like Communications.

Truelian Lee is a fifth former from Ridgefield, CT, and is a Copy Editor for *The Choate News*. She may be reached at tlee17@choate.edu.

TODAY IN HISTORY: PRESIDENT OBAMA ANNOUNCES NORMALIZATION OF U.S.-CUBAN RELATIONS (2014)

ISLAMOPHOBIA ROOTED IN MISUNDERSTANDING

By Dylan Stafford '16
Staff Writer

In the days and weeks following the attacks in Paris and San Bernardino, we have witnessed the extraordinary rise of Islamophobia in our public discourse. Donald Trump has stirred enormous controversy over his calls to shut down mosques, create a registry of Muslim citizens, and prevent any Muslims from entering the country. All constitutional and ethical failings aside, he has convinced swaths of Americans that we should be afraid of our Muslim brothers and sisters. In so doing, he's stoked a groundswell of fear and has tapped into the nativism that has poisoned America so many times before. As a result, Americans are more panic-stricken and Islamophobic than they have been since 9/11.

Last Tuesday, a Somali restaurant owned by a Muslim family in North Dakota was set ablaze in an act of arson. Just days before, someone had written "go home" and "SS" (referencing the Nazi S.S. during the Holocaust) across their windows. A few weeks ago, a Muslim store owner in Queens was beaten by a man who shouted, "I kill Muslims." Nearby, in the Bronx, a sixth grade girl was put in a chokehold by fellow classmates who demanded she take off her hijab, calling her "ISIS".

Just after the Paris attacks, a Virginia engineer presenting plans for a new mosque in front of a zoning committee was met with incredible bigotry. Speaking at the public hearing, one man shouted to much applause, "Nobody wants your evil cult in this town. ... Because you are terrorists. Every one of you are terrorists. I don't care what you say. I don't care what you think. ... Every Muslim is a terrorist, period. Shut your mouth!"

What is most concerning, however, is the fact that these events are not occurring in isolation. They are happening with increasing frequency and are emblematic of the greater fear that has arisen in many Americans.

A *New York Times/CBS News* poll conducted on December 4 revealed that 19% of Americans believe terrorism is the largest threat to our nation, a plurality of those surveyed. Not only was that number 14% higher than just a month before, it is the highest it has been since the attacks on September 11. In fall, the Public Religion Research Institute

found that 56% of Americans believe that Islam is "at odds with American values and way of life." In 2001, only 47% of Americans agreed with that statement. Meanwhile, 57% of Americans and 83% of Republicans agreed with Ben Carson's sentiment that Muslims should be barred from the presidency.

We have let the unknown cloud our judgment and poison our national conversations.

According to the *New York Times*, in the week after the Paris attacks Islamophobic searches on Google occurred at ten times the rate they did than just the week before. The top search with the word "Muslim" in it was "kill Muslims," and it was searched with the same frequency as the term "migraine symptoms."

According to FBI data, anti-Muslim hate crimes are steadily accounting for a larger percentage of all hate crimes committed in the United States. Hate crimes perpetrated with an anti-Muslim intent are now five times more common than they were before 9/11.

Yet, this degree of fear and anti-Muslim sentiment is not a natural outgrowth of any terrorist attack on American soil. It is stoked on and legitimized by leaders, if we are to call them that, who preach intolerance and use it to further their political goals. While Donald Trump is the exemplar of this type of demagoguery, he is not alone in his rhetoric. Marco Rubio recently asked, "Where is there widespread evidence that we have a problem in America with discrimination against Muslims?" To which I'd ask, where isn't there evidence that we have a widespread problem with discrimination against Muslims?

Mr. Rubio need not look further than Nevada assemblywoman Michele Fiore who declared, "I am not okay with Syrian refugees. I'm not okay with terrorists. I'm okay with putting them down, blacking them out, just put a piece of brass in their nocular [sic] cavity and end their miserable life."

The political rhetoric surrounding terrorism and Islam in this country has never been as toxic as it is today. In the months following 9/11, President George Bush was quick to point out that "Islam, as prac-

ticed by the vast majority of people, is a peaceful religion, a religion that respects others. Ours is a country based upon tolerance and we welcome people of all faiths in America." Bush said this precisely because he understood how terrorists want us to respond to the horrific tragedies they perpetrate. They want us to boil over with irrational fear and marginalize Muslims in the United States and abroad so that their propaganda stays relevant and potent. They depend on marginalized Muslims, brushed aside by fear-driven Westerners, to keep up their recruiting. Indeed, ISIS must be thrilled with Trump's latest comments.

To his credit, Bush did a good job of emphasizing the fact that Islam was not to blame for 9/11. In the years after the attacks, America, for the most part, continued to embrace its Muslim population and stray away from persecuting Muslims. Consequently, the U.S. has been able to keep radicalism at bay to an extent that has not been achieved in France and in Europe more broadly. The best way to prevent homegrown extremism is to put an end to hateful rhetoric. To stop radicalization, every Muslim in America should feel that this nation is as much their home to succeed and feel safe as it is everyone else's.

Terrorists, by definition, seek to achieve their goals by capitalizing on the fears of the public. According to *CNN*, less than 400 people have died in all types of terrorist attacks on American soil since 9/11. That includes attacks like the Planned Parenthood shooting that had no relationship to jihadism. To put that in perspective, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration reports that 349 construction workers died from falling on the job in 2014 alone. Every week, more than 600 Americans die from gun violence.

The unfortunate reality is that it remains much easier to succumb to our fears, caving in to what we believe may be true, than it is to confront the truth. In recent years, politicians and media outlets alike, have inculcated in Americans the belief that terrorism is our greatest threat. And they do so rationally; media outlets benefit from doomsday news reports as much as politicians benefit from fears about national

security. Trump is just the latest, boldest iteration of this tactic. He has capitalized on many Americans' emotions and forgone all scraps of decency – and dignity – when it comes to talking about our country's problems.

Throughout our history as a nation, we have let a fear of the unknown and the misunderstood cloud our judgment and poison our national conversations. As we move for-

ward, we ought to think rationally and reflect on our most American principle "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness."

Dylan Stafford is a sixth former from Albuquerque, New Mexico. He may be reached at dstafford16@choate.edu.



Illustration by Anika Zetterberg/The Choate News

FOREIGN
DESK

Taliban Firefight Near the Spanish Embassy in Kabul

Seven Taliban militants attacked a guest-house in the embassy district of Kabul and were met by both Afghan and Spanish forces. The fighting took place close to the Spanish embassy, and some reports suggested the embassy was under attack. Spain's Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy denied this. The fighting left two buildings on fire, one Spanish officer dead, and others severely injured.

North Korea Claims Access to H-bomb

While the world faces threats of terrorism, North Korea has claimed that they have a hydrogen bomb. Outsiders, however, are skeptical about such claims, saying that the country's advance in nuclear technology is unlikely, considering most experts viewed North Korea as lacking the necessary material means.

COP 21 Scores a Major Victory

This past weekend, the fight against climate change won a major victory at the 21st Conference of Parties (COP21) in Paris, France. The climate agreement, which was reached through the consensus of 196 countries present at the conference, was hailed as a step in the right direction by many of the world's leaders.

Geneva Remains on High Alert in Face of Terrorism

Swiss authorities have recently apprehended two Syrian individuals that may be linked to November's attacks in Paris. The men were arrested for the possession of bomb-making material. In an unrelated event, the Swiss also apprehended a man who may be a right-wing Nazi sympathizer with a large cache of weapons. Terrorism in Geneva has "gone from a vague threat to a precise threat," according to a Swiss security official.

Saudi Arabia Elects First Women to Office

Over the weekend, Saudi Arabia held its first elections that were open to women, resulting in the election of 17 women to public office. While the fight for women's equality isn't over, this is a significant shift in the role of women in Saudi culture.

Fire Rages in Russian Hospital

A fire broke out in the psychiatric ward of a Russian hospital in the southwest region of Voronezh. The fire killed 23 people and injured 23 people. Russian authorities are investigating the cause of the blaze. This fire is yet another example of poor utility services in the Russian Federation.

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THE TIME IS NOW: REAFFIRM AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

By Hakeem Angulu '16
Staff Writer

As Lyndon B. Johnson once said, "You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say you are free to compete with all the others, and still just believe that you have been completely fair."

Think of a race. Some participants have been given everything they need. They have trained in well-equipped facilities, they have efficient diets and nutritional coaches, the path ahead of them is clear of debris, and their running shoes are straight from Nike's labs. Other participants have less. Some of them have never received any training. Others can only afford to eat fast food on a regular basis. In addition, ahead of them lie obstacles of all shapes and sizes. When the race begins, who is most likely to win?

If America is to live by its long professed ideal of meritocracy, then we need to make this race more fair. To do this, either you remove the advantages and disadvantages each runner has, or you give the disadvantaged runners a head start. The problem is, this situation becomes a lot less simple when instead of a race, you have the journey to financial stability and happiness. Then, your runners are the members of thousands of

nuanced groups with millions of different combinations and experiences. Removing the advantages and disadvantages takes time, so although that is the end goal, the short term requires a head start: affirmative action.

Once again quoting President Johnson, giving freedom to traditionally oppressed groups is not enough. To be a responsible government, it must examine the past and how that affects a present group's situation. While blacks were enslaved and Native Americans were massacred and forcefully assimilated, white families were establishing industries and working for pay. While it is true that not every white family owned a plantation or a factory, they simply did not live under the same legal restrictions that blacks and Native Americans faced.

150 years ago, when slavery was abolished in the United States of America, free black men faced a plethora of new issues. Although over 200,000 black soldiers (about 10% of the army) fought to maintain the Union, only a few years passed before the government reneged on promises of reparations for 200 years of slavery and brutality. Give it a few more years and northern entrepreneurs used unfair systems to take land from freedmen. A few years after that, the Jim Crow laws were enacted. And although many of these system-

atic institutions have since been destroyed by civil rights activists, the fact still remains that minority families were unable to form the same financial and social foundations as those of the majority. A lot of this is expressed through the infamous term: "white privilege." Similar facts are present when comparing the sexes. Education and training were traditionally much more widely available to males than to females. More drastic measures were also taken to exclude people who did not belong to a "traditional sex," and those who were not cisgender. Another infamous term to express this thought is: "male privilege."

If America is to live by its long professed ideals, then we need to make this fair.

Affirmative action is meant to destroy both tangible and intangible barriers to success. It is very different from discriminating based on a cultural identifier, because it is only meant to level the playing field. It is also based on many more identifiers than race. In fact, many affirmative action programs started with increased opportunities for women. The National Conference of State Legislatures defines affirma-

tive action as "policies by which an institution or organization actively engages in efforts to improve opportunities for historically excluded and underrepresented groups in American society."

We hear about affirmative action very often in discourse today. This is in part because of the college admission season and the current supreme court case, *Fisher v. University of Texas*. Abigail Fisher alleged that she was discriminated against, based on her white race, by the University of Texas when they rejected her. The case is already ridiculous because it has been determined that even if race were not a factor, Fisher's credentials were too poor for admission to the university.

What made it more ridiculous was when Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia said, "There are those who contend that it does not benefit African-Americans to get them into the University of Texas where they do not do well, as opposed to having them go to a less-advanced school, a slower-track school where they do well." Michelle Obama has come out to say that she was probably helped by affirmative action. Did her identity as an African-American woman prevent her from doing well? What about Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, who said that she was definitely helped by affirmative action? Did her identity as a Hispanic-American

woman prevent her from doing well? What about me? As a black Jamaican, am I somehow less able to perform well at top universities, or at Choate?

Scalia's reasoning comes from ignorance and research that was both terribly conducted and disproven on the "mismatch theory," which states that minorities do not belong in institutions that are "more advanced than them." Statistics show that when candidates get a boost because of affirmative action, it is very minor. Maybe you will edge out a candidate who scored 30 points higher than you on the SAT, or whose GPA is a quarter point more impressive. But, one will not be put into a school where they cannot perform. It is time we drop the farce, and face the reality that minority students deserve as "advanced" of an education as their white counterparts.

Until we destroy barriers that systematically cause minorities and women to be in a disadvantaged position when applying for a job or to a university, we need affirmative action, not to increase superficial diversity numbers, but to give those who have been silenced and disregarded for centuries a fighting chance.

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ORIGINS OF TIZ THE SEASON

The Marquis of Holiday Cheer elaborates on donut holes, pencils, and kindness

By **Amy Hagan-Brown '18**
Reporter

The three weeks between Thanksgiving and winter break are the hardest weeks you'll experience as a Choate student. The days seem to last forever, sundown sneaks up on you by 4:00 p.m., and diving head first into a New England winter from your stay in sunny California can be shocking. But Tiz the Season makes up for all of that. The annual celebration at Hill House with hot chocolate, music, and good cheer is a great way to prepare yourself for the holidays. This year, the creator himself, Mr. Marq Tisdale, was gracious enough to inform me of the origins of this special event.

Mr. Tisdale is a teacher in the math department and has been teaching at Choate for 12 years. He comes from Plattsburg, NY, close to the Canadian border. You can find him teaching pre-calculus and calculus classes in Lanphier or helping direct the spring musical in the PMAC.

AMY: Why did you start Tiz the Season?

TISDALE: Seven years ago when I started it, I noticed there was this two and a half or three weeks between Thanksgiving and the holiday break. In my first few years here, I'd noticed it was a super stressful time for the students, teachers, and administration—everybody, even thought it was

a new term, seemed very on edge, frazzled, and stressed. So I asked the Dean of Students then, Mr. John Ford, if I could put on some sort of party or event during a Wednesday with no meeting period. It's about just going and hanging out with your friends for 45 minutes, not having to think about papers or assessments, and just being a kid and enjoying the hot chocolate and the music that's playing. That's sort of why it began: I wanted to come up with a way that helped the entire school sort of exhale and be calm.

A: I definitely liked it last year.

T: Thank you, I appreciate you going. I think it's great—students are invited, staff are invited, grounds crew are invited, everybody is invited. It's really great to have everyone in one area to show that we're all on the same page. Everybody's there having fun, just enjoying the season and enjoying each other.

A: How do you choose the goodie selection?

T: Every year it changes slightly. This first year I did this it was all about hot cocoa and donut holes. I actually went to Dunkin' Donuts and brought 80 boxes of munchkins as the donut holes. The year after that Aramark was nice enough to say, "Hey, we make donut holes!" and I said, "Okay!" Every year I wanted to

change something. One year it was cookies, another Hershey's kisses, or candy canes—just holiday festive items like that. Last year for the first time my wife helped me to create our own addition to it. We made these things called pretzel buttons, and last year they were gone in about 10 minutes. We only made 1,300 of them, so this year we're going to double it and make 2,500 of the pretzel buttons to make sure everyone gets some. I don't have any set menu, but I try to make something different in hopes that people will like something there.

A: Why the pencils?

T: Two years ago was when I introduced the pencils. I wanted to try in my own, small way to send a message. The whole reason for Tiz the Season is to be a stress reliever, but the other part of this is to be a little lesson: it's not hard to do nice things for other people. It's not that you have to throw a party, but hold a door for somebody or compliment them. The little things you do that are nice make the world a better place. The pencil two years ago said, "Do something nice for somebody today, Tiz the Season 2013". So everybody got one of those pencils, and the hope was they're using it and going, "Oh yeah, I remember that." I feel that anytime people can do anything, small or big, for somebody else, it has this effect that causes a circle



Photo by Arianna Gonzalez-Wagner/The Choate News

of goodness to become bigger and bigger. And in that way I hope to make our little section of the world better. Spread the cheer, spread the love!

A: What are your favorite holiday movies?

T: My go-to Thanksgiving movie is *Planes, Trains, and Automobiles*. It's hilarious, it has a really really good message to it, and it makes me cry every single time. *A Christmas Story* is one of my all-time favorites. And I love old cartoon-y type things such as "Rudolph," "Frosty the Snowman," and "Santa Claus is Coming to Town," because that's what I remember as a kid. My absolute favorite holiday movie is *It's a Wonderful Life*. Every single time I watch that it just makes me happy.

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TRADITIONS OF WINTER BREAK

By **Jessica Shi '17**
Staff Reporter

That time of year has come again: the carols in the stores are getting old, SAGE is offering its daily latkes, and you just remembered you never got your mother anything for Christmas. In other words, the holidays are here. Some look forward to winter break months in advance, while others view it as just a chance to take a break from school. Choate students and faculty shared the ways they tend to celebrate (or not celebrate) their time off:

"My family always makes a fresh batch of cookies. When those are done, we set out Santa's plate (even though my brother and I are both old), and then we make pillow forts in the living room and watch movies until we fall asleep."
—Katrina Gonzalez '17

"Normally my grandma makes pizza; she somehow finds a way to mess it up every single year."
—Hannah Price '18

"I celebrate the twelfth day of Christmas, which is basically Three Kings Day. It's a Hispanic tradition, and you celebrate it by putting shoes outside your door. So I've never gotten anything from Santa, but I get triple the presents (because it's three kings)."
—Elena Turner '17

"I'm Jewish, and on Christmas Eve, my family typically goes out to get Chinese food and watch movies. That's a typical tradition for many Jewish families, and it's always a funny one."
—Gabby Dyrek '16

"My kids write letters to Santa Claus. This year, my

daughter wants to put her letter in the fire. She thinks that's going to get it to the North Pole faster, or more efficiently. Apparently the fire is Christmas's Internet."
—Dr. Matt Bardoe

"I just play video games and sleep and eat a lot of food. That's pretty much it."
—Ausar Mundra '17

"At night, my family and I drive around the neighborhood whilst listening to Christmas music to hunt down the most decorated houses."
—Kristen Andonie '17

"Being an international student, it's kind of different, especially since I'm from a Muslim country and so we don't celebrate Christmas. Winter break is going to be a good time to spend time with my family, take a break from Choate, and try to get over jet lag."
—Abdulla Husain '17

"In Bulgaria, for us, Christmas Eve was the big night. My whole family would get together at our house, and we would set up this giant table, and there would be an enormous feast. We would give gifts on New Year's, not on Christmas, and it was usually a new article of clothing, for good luck."
—Ms. Kolina Koleva

"You essentially have a big family dinner (The Feast of the Seven Fishes) with only vegetarian options and fish. Even if you're like me, and you don't believe in the religious side of it, it's an excuse to eat a lot of Italian food."
—Nick Petrocelli '16

"What do I do on Christmas day? Sleep."
—Kanon Kihara '17



THE VIEW FROM MY BEDROOM WINDOW

Saturday, 1:32 p.m.
Goodbye, sleep-ins. Goodbye, sleep. Hello, bulldozers. The unthinkable has occurred. Construction has started.

Grace Tully '16
Bungalow 202

HISTORY OF HOLIDAY SPECIALS

By **Riley Choi '18**
Reporter

On Thursday, December 17, Choate will hold its annual Holiday Program in the Main Theater of the Paul Mellon Arts Center. Sing-along carols, dance performances, and festive hats abound at the only special program of the year that does not require special academic dress.

1963

The year Rosemary Hall and The Choate School perform their first choral concert together.

This fun and light-hearted event, however, was very different back in 1911, when Rosemary Hall and The Choate School had not yet combined. One of the annual holiday traditions of Rosemary Hall was the Nativity Play in December, which il-

lustrated the story of Jesus's birth. The student playing the role of Mary remained a secret until the day of the performance, and the same script, costumes, and set-up were used annually. Another Rosemary Hall tradition was "Wassailing," also known as caroling, which began in 1893. "Wassails"—a spiced cider—and sweets were served before students sang at nearby houses.

At The Choate School, the community held a Christmas Vesper service: students sang in the chapel and listened to an abridged version of "The Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens, recited by the Headmaster. In 1963, Rosemary Hall and The Choate School choirs performed a concert together in Greenwich and Wallingford. These developed into our current traditions of tonight's Holiday Program and Lessons and Car-

ols, the annual choir concert and service that took place on Sunday, December 13.

Many people are involved in organizing the program. Reverend Ally Brundige oversees the planning, Ms. Alysoun Kegel organizes the a cappella group performances, Mr. Stephen Glassman gathers short video clips and sing-along, Mr. Brad Seymour and Mr. Paul Bozzi direct and control sound in the Main Theater, and students assist and work with the faculty to ensure that the program runs smoothly. The exact details of the program are kept a surprise for the night, but Reverend Brundige assured the program will feature "a wonderful line up of spoken pieces, dance, musical ensembles, and a cappella groups."

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HUMANITIES OFFERS FREE VERSE

By **Kristen Altman '18**
Reporter

A mysterious collection of free poetry has appeared on the second floor of the Humanities building. The collection lies just outside of faculty office HB 219, where a sign beckons students to "Grab life by the Poem." Below sits a pile of poems, which are free to read and take as wished.

The offerings are comprised of well-known poetry. Poems include Robert Frost's "My November Guest," which discusses beauty and sorrow, as well as Sharon Olds's "On the Subway," which concerns racial privilege, although the collection changes daily as students and faculty take the poems. "I think it's a fun way to share different poems," commented Maya Scandinaro '18, "but it would be nice if students could add their poetry to it, too."

Because of its location,

the collection can be difficult to discover. "I never got to the second floor, so I didn't even notice it," said Saleha Farooqui '18. More unassuming than the poetry's decentralized location, however, is its physical state: the stack of poems sits on a spare box by the corner of the hall. "It kind of looks like it was put out for recycling and someone forgot to take it," continued Farooqui.

Similar to its discrete location and changing content, the distributor of the poems is shrouded in mystery. Mehreen Pasha '18 said, "It's more the poems themselves that matter. I don't think the person who's distributing matters as much as the way it impacts the community."

The mysterious curator of these poems is English teacher Mr. Trevor Peard. He explained his charitable contribution: "I realized that there must be Choate

students out there dying for poems, and I realized they must need found poems." Mr. Peard continued, "I kept putting poems above the copy machine in humanities, and finally I ran out of space." Thus, the poems made a move to the hallway.

Mr. Peard receives a daily poem by email from the Poetry Foundation. "Some of them I really like," said Mr. Peard, "so I copy them into a page and put four of them in the hallway every so often." He hopes some community members can find meaning in the accessible poetry.

As for continuing the collection, however, there is no definite timeline. "It certainly won't last forever," stated Mr. Peard, "But as long as the poems keep disappearing, I'll keep putting them out there."

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CHOATE CHOWS DOWN ON SURF AND TURF

By **Rachel Hird '17**
Staff Reporter

Last Tuesday, the Choate community was treated to a luxurious lobster tail and filet mignon dinner. Three years ago, the event was a huge hit, and this year was no different. A whopping 1,400 community members lined up to savor the salty taste of success. The dinner was a celebration of Choate accomplishments in the arts and athletics, but many considered it a way to foster a sense of community as well.

Accommodating 1,400 people in two hours in a 500-person-maximum dining hall was a little tricky. However, the huge crowd "felt like a community more than usual," said Julie Tamura '16.

How many pieces of lobster and filet mignon did the diners actually stuff their faces with? According to Food Service Director Mr. Bryan Davis, the Choate community ate 1,150 lobster tails and 1,600 filet mignons, not to mention 200 lbs of potatoes, 250 lbs of pasta, and 1,600 desserts. SAGE couldn't disclose the exact price of the meal.

On Monday, fear about the inevitable lines was wide-

The Choate community consumed:

- 1,150 lobster tails
- 1,600 filet mignons
- 200 lbs of potatoes
- 250 lbs of pasta
- 1,600 desserts

spread. The dinner kicked off with a sudden wave of 475 ravenous community members, so SAGE had to restrict entry to keep the food area organized. Sofia Esquibies '17 commented, "I applaud them for how well they were able to handle that. It was crazy." Still, according to Mr. Davis, if the school repeats the event, SAGE is thinking of admitting people at different times by last name.

Staff members had been prepping for Tuesday's meal since the Friday before, when the lobster tails arrived and began thawing. The tails were boiled and manually cut open, bringing the total time spent purely on lobster preparation to twenty hours. It was perhaps even more difficult to cut all the filets, sear them nicely on



Photo Courtesy of Dr. Curtis

For Tuesday's feast, lobster preparation alone took 20 hours.

both sides, and then bake them just right. You can't afford to overcook expensive food, so it was a very "high-steaks" situation. In fact, SAGE pulled in a few more employees and extended work hours for others to ensure the preparations ran smoothly.

While met with general approval, the dinner fostered some skepticism. Despite the offer of large portobello mushrooms with cheese and peppers, Elena Turner '17 felt that the physical setup of the event was slightly exclusionary to vegetarians and vegans, explaining, "It was really weird how you had to go out of your way to get the vegetarian option." Many students expressed criticism of the extravagance of the event. Turner suggested, "Why use all of this food and money for one special occasion when you can do something to actually improve Choate life instead?" Students remarked that they would prefer extra money going towards upgrading dining hall food on regular days, or donated to a charity. Williams thought the money could have improved campus appliances, which elicited a chorus of "yeah's" from nearby students and sparked a tangent about Choate's shortage of washing machines and colored printers.

Students also protested the environmental effects of the dinner, since the livestock industry's water consumption and air pollution statistics are so disturbing. "Although we did a good job in sports, that doesn't mean we should go hurt the environment. We could find much more sustainable ways to treat ourselves," said Sam Madden '17. Mr. Davis said that the steak for the event came from Dole and Bailey Inc., which is certified for organic and humane handling as well as animal welfare-approved. The lobster was wild-caught in Canada.

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Photo by Elle Rinaldi/The Choate News

Last Sunday, members of the Choate community gathered to celebrate the holidays.

LESSONS AND CAROLS FILLED CHAPEL WITH HOLIDAY CHEER

The nearly decade-old tradition featured hymns and selected Bible verses

By **Namsai Sethpornpong '17**
Staff Reporter

On Sunday evening, members of the Choate and Wallingford communities gathered in the Seymour St. John Chapel to observe the annual school tradition of Lessons and Carols. This performance can be traced back to 1933, when the Choate School held a Christmas Vesper program that did not include any lessons. In 1963, prior to the merger of Rosemary Hall and The Choate School, the students of both would participate in a joint choral concert entitled "Festival of Lessons & Carols," and this was the precursor to the current observation of Lessons and Carols.

This year, the choir, donned in new blue robes to represent the liturgical season of advent, opened the event with a procession led by soprano Annika Chiang-Boeckmann '19. The

chorus then performed a series of hymns ranging from "Ave Maria" to "Go Tell it On the Mountain" and "Silent Night." Between these hymns were lessons—selected texts from the Bible—read by members of the Choate community.

On the Christian roots of the tradition, Reverend Ally Brundige said, "I think the event's integrity as a Christian service is important. We want everyone to know that this is what he or she will encounter when they come. But we are hoping to open this up to everyone who wishes to take part in any aspect of the service. Lessons and Carols doesn't lose its Christian spirit, and we hope to lift up our tradition while encouraging everyone to come experience it with us."

On her arrangement of the African American soul song, "Go Tell it On the Mountain," Ms. Alysoun Kegel, Choate's choral director, remarks, "I drew from the James Baldwin

novel of the same name. To me, this song represents the religious mysticism, ecstasy, as well as revolution of human society based on the birth of Christ. The idea is that the birth of Jesus is revolutionary because it is the first time in which God became a human being."

Reverend Brundige's homily, which followed Ms. Kegel's arrangement, touched the topics of racism and slavery, not only because the song "Go Tell it On the Mountain" has roots in African American soul, but also because the season of advent centers around the idea of reflection and moving past one's sins in order to create change. "This season that speaks of God's presence among us calls us to examine how we are living up to our calling as God's beloved children and where we have fallen short," Reverend Brundige said. "We do this so that we can repent and change things. The news have been replete with xenophobia and

persistent racial injustice in our courts and in our nations, and it's our job to speak out against injustice."

Overall, Reverend Brundige said of the event, "It's one of the few times that we open this chapel to the community that extends outside of Choate—I felt the presence of togetherness. The choir, as always, sang beautifully and profoundly and moved me in their songs and words, and I think those who came felt moved. I'm very happy that we were able to come together in this way and provide joy and light and wisdom in the midst of this season."

Alyssa Shin '18, a student who attended the event, said, "I loved the sense of sacred time that I felt at Lessons and Carols. It helps make Choate feel like home, and it's nice to know that there are these kinds of events offered to us here."

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ZETTERBERG: ARTS CON'S RAY OF LIGHT

By **Sophie Hare '18**
Staff Reporter

Most Choate students have either seen Anika Zetterberg's '16 drawings hung in various places around campus or have engaged in lively debates with Zetterberg in class. However, not many have seen the deep and raw passion that Zetterberg unleashes on her sketchpad. A devoted artist since middle school, Zetterberg has brought unique dedication and love to the Visual Arts Concentration studio since her arrival at Choate as a new sophomore. "Art is a way for me to relax," she explained.

"Anika approaches her work with grace, skill, and commitment."

Grace Tully '16

Zetterberg's curiosity and love for art was sparked at a young age: her grandmother was a painter. "When I first saw her paintings," Zetterberg recalled, "I knew that I wanted to do something similar. She so far away; art was our way to connect." Caitlin Chiochio '16, a Visual Arts Con peer whom Anika met at The Foote School, noted that she has always known Zetterberg is creative, and was not surprised when she decided to pursue art.

Upon arriving at Choate, Zetterberg, currently only one of four Visual Arts Con seniors, took sophomore year to, in her words, "figure things out and get accustomed to a new campus and way of thinking" before diving into her specialized program. However, her talent was noticed by Ms. Kalya Yannatos, Director of Arts, before she officially joined the program. "I remember seeing her in a core concepts class up on the third floor before I really knew who she was," Ms. Yannatos reflected. "I could see her artistic soul at play...I remember thinking, 'There is a girl that this program would serve.'" Grace Tully '16 expressed her admiration for her classmate, noting that Zetterberg approaches her work "with grace, skill, and commitment."

Zetterberg most enjoys drawing people. In one of her most fascinating explorations, she acquired X-rays of hands from her father, who is a radiologist, and, based on their skeletal structure, composed the hands in their complete form. "I was essentially working from the inside out; it was quite strange but also quite interesting," she recalled.

Zetterberg's dedication does not go unnoticed. Ms. Yannatos stressed that she is inspired daily by "Anika's intense commitment and willingness to work through hard times and trust that when she is in the dark, there is light at the end of the tunnel. During these moments in the artistic process, you can feel stuck, but she has the dedication to push through and make it out."

Deemed "the mother hen of the Visual Arts Con Students" by Mr. Robert Mellon, her fall term artistic adviser, Zetterberg has become a true leader in the Arts Concentration community. Ms. Yannatos, in turn, noted that she is "a team player and leader." Mr. Mellon also joked, "It's pretty neat that Anika is the one who brings snacks."

As for outside the classroom, Chiochio admires "the positive energy that Anika brings to class and her ability to make everyone laugh" and Tully notes that Zetterberg is "always the first to offer help." Despite not being in any clubs, Zetterberg often lends her artistic hand to her club leader friends by creating posters and visuals, and is currently drawing cartoons for *The Choate News*.

Zetterberg, a truly friendly and sunny person, lends her profound side to to her art, with evident results. Ms. Yannatos shared that "her work isn't light and fluffy," though Zetterberg certainly is.



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PARIS PEACE SYMBOL SPREADS SUPPORT

By **Camila Borjesson '17**
Staff Reporter

For many students, living at Choate can make it difficult to stay well-informed. However, like millions worldwide, students at Choate retain close relationships through social media. Older generations may condemn this dependence on technology, but there are situations in which certain information, such as a powerful image, can travel faster than journalistic news.

On November 13, the day of the devastating Paris terrorist attacks, images suddenly began being posted with a symbol that social media users would soon recognize well: painted on a blank background, a uniform brushstroke made a circular peace sign with the Eiffel Tower making up its middle portion and legs. Upon reading the caption, "Peace for Paris," people began to understand: something terrible had happened in Paris, and the classic peace sign had been redesigned to represent support for its victims.

Not only did this symbol represent the event, but it served to inform people who may not have been reading the news. Less than 24 hours after its first appearance, this

peace sign had made its way to millions of news feeds and then into the streets as signs, t-shirts, graffiti, and posters.

We owe the creation of this symbolic creation to Jean Jullien, a 32-year-old French graphic designer. The artist claimed that, upon hearing the news, his heartfelt reaction was to spontaneously draw an emblem of peace and solidarity, which he hoped would unite people in mourning. The graphics behind the symbol are minimalistic in style yet universal in meaning.

"Words sometimes can be difficult to translate," Jullien admitted to CNN. Although not everyone has the same level of artistic ability, most recognize the value of an influential image. Art in this form is not merely art, but a vehicle for social activism. It can unite people and raise awareness for a cause.



Photo by Jean Jullien / Instagram

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LOMAX TRIBUTE PERFORMANCE CONCLUDES CHOATE'S 125TH IN THE ARTS

By **Hannah Lemmons '16**
Senior Reporter

Choate alumni musicians celebrated the arts on the PMAC stage on Friday night in a performance commemorating the life of influential folk singer Alan Lomax '30. The tribute concert also marked a grand finale for the school's 125th anniversary celebration.

Grammy award nominee Tift Merritt '93 headlined the event, joined by performers including Ian Underwood '57, former woodwind and keyboards player for Frank Zappa and The Mothers of Invention, keyboardist and songwriter Robert Kilgore '76, and recent Choate alumnus Kohl Weisman '15.

The group performed songs mostly from classic rock, jazz, and folk genres, from lonesome solo guitar ballads to hearty band numbers like "Jesus On the Mainline," a traditional gospel. In addition to playing original music (as Merritt did), many of the numbers honored Lomax with renditions of songs compiled by him, such as Weisman's "Wild Ripplin' Waters" a western folk song that Lomax himself performed.

Many consider Lomax to be the father of American folk music: he spent most of

his life traveling the United States and parts of Europe recording and cataloging folk songs, amassing a collection that represented a fundamental aspect of classic folk culture. Lomax's recordings not only expanded the folk music documented in the Library of Congress, but were also featured on national radio that exposed the public to legendary artists like Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, and Lead Belly. According to Ms. Kalya Yannatos, Director of the Arts, Lomax was chosen as the subject of the tribute for his commitment to cultural equity. "The whole idea of cultural equity seemed an important theme to galvanize around ... one that would provide a sense of purpose to the

evening beyond just gathering talented musical alumni."

Ms. Yannatos also explained that arranging the performance was a long and difficult process; the Arts Department worked hard reaching out to alums, emailing back and forth, and ruminating on the creative concept for months in advance.

"As in any collaborative, creative process, it was not easy ... until the day of the concert it was hard to know if it would actually come together, being that many of the alums hadn't actually met or played together before, or hadn't seen each other in 40 or so years. It was a real leap of faith, but in the end, I think it was worth it," said Ms. Yannatos.



Photo by Ross Mortenson

The tribute featured performances by distinguished alumni.

The stage was electric, with the performers feeding off one another and exchanging non-spoken cues in a manner that did not reflect the short time they had actually been playing together. Although all were from very different backgrounds, each alum used his or her unique musical experience to make every song distinctive. Weisman explained that the age difference did not impact the band's level of comfort.

"Those guys have outstanding professional credentials, but they were also just super pleasant guys, and we became a strong unit pretty quickly. Playing with Ian Underwood, who played with Frank Zappa for years in the 60s and 70s, was especially surreal—at first intimidating—but Ian is such a sweet person that we became comfortable very quickly," said Weisman.

On the whole, students and faculty had a very positive reaction to the event. As for the performers? They seemed to have a pretty good time too.

"We were just playing out of love for the music and enjoying the time back at Choate. All in all, the dynamic of the alumni band was amazing; we were having a blast," said Weisman.

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JV BOYS' HOCKEY START STRONG, BESTING LOOMIS 19-0

By Emilia Furlo '17
Staff Reporter

We're a few games into the season, and Boys' JV Hockey has yet to disappoint their fans with a loss this year. Sharp, focused, and better-looking than ever, this team has come onto the ice with a new mentality (and a new coach) this winter.

The JV Wild Boars were put to an immediate test when they looked at the game schedule for this year. Their first match was a December 5th scrimmage against long-standing rival, Loomis Chaffee. Not only has this team proved to be a fair rival for the Choate boys over the years, but something else, something bigger, was at stake in a few months: the Grimm Cup.

The coveted Grimm Cup is unique to the rivalry between Choate and Loomis as only these two teams are eligible to win the trophy. This year, the boys instilled fear into the Pelicans in their Grimm Cup-preview scrimmage, humbly shutting out their opponents 19-0. Needless to say, this game was not a bad start for the team.

The following Wednesday, the veteran-heavy squad refocused and were able to yet again secure another win for Choate against Westminster, winning 4-2. After a few days of signing autographs, the team then travelled up to Massachusetts for the next stop on their New England tour: Deerfield Academy. The JV Wild Boars bested the Doors 5-3.

So, you must be wondering... How do they do it? Well, sitting down with JV hockey veteran Jack Shultz '16, I got an inside look on their key to success. First off, this is a close-knit team. Several 4-year veterans such as Jack Tenney '16, Brendan



Photo courtesy of Ross Mortensen

Harrison Lapides '16, above, is one of six seniors playing on the undefeated JV Boys' Hockey team this winter.

Ferguson '16, Mason Proper '16, Jared Milazzo '16, Harrison Lapides '16, and Jack Shultz '16 himself have really set the tone for this year's team and paved the way for the rest to follow.

Contrasting these old war-horses is the fresh face of the Boys' JV Hockey team: Coach Jesse Minneman. New to the team but practiced in the sport, Coach Minneman has been at the front of the battle leading these Wild Boars to victory. In his first year working with the group, he has already offered fresh ideas and new perspectives on and off the ice. However, besides the natural chemistry found on

the team, Shultz let me in on another key component of the boys' success: their pre-game ritual.

While most teams come to the locker room an hour before a match, Shultz assured me that this team arrives three hours early before every home game to guarantee that the team they will have enough time to complete their pre-game warm-up. "First," Shultz started, "we get completely dressed in our gear. Then, we lie down on the benches while Coach Minneman reads us one of our favorite bedtime stories. Once we're all asleep, we all begin to imagine the game we're

about to have. We also try to picture the insane goals we're about to score."

Intrigued, I urged Shultz to continue. He remarked that after the boys all wake up from their nap, they take off all of their gear and find their hockey sticks. For good luck, they tape and re-tape their sticks.

It might seem crazy, but this team will continue to ride the backs of its senior members and practice its pregame rituals until the Grimm Cup is claimed for the second year in a row.

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ON THE MAT WITH MATT CUOMO '19

By Jack Tenney '16
Sports Editor

season to not move up too far. Now, for Choate, I wrestle in the 113 lb. weight class.

Matt Cuomo '19, a freshman boarding student from North Haven, may look harmless, but his record on the wrestling mat begs to differ. In his first season with the Choate Wrestling team, Cuomo is off to a 7-0 start, aligning himself well with the road to New England's Sports Editor Jack Tenney '16 sat down with Cuomo to find out more about the wrestling room's 113-pound prodigy.

Jack Tenney '16: How long have you been wrestling? Why did you start?

Matt Cuomo '19: I first started wrestling three years ago because my brother and dad were both pretty awesome wrestlers. I thought it looked like a lot of fun, and it's since turned into one of my passions.

JT: When did you realize you had serious potential as a wrestler?

MC: Well, right when I started wrestling, I really was not good, but I enjoyed it, so I stuck by it. Then, when I was in 8th grade, I started to win a lot more matches, and I eventually made my high school team at Hamden Hall.

JT: How did you decide to come wrestle at Choate?

MC: My brother, Chris, persuaded me to come, and I wrestled against Choate last year, so that got my attention, too.

JT: What weight class are you in?

MC: Last year, I was in the 106 lb. weight class, and I worked pretty hard this off-

JT: How difficult is it to achieve your target weight and keep it there all season?

MC: It's really, really tough. I weighed about 125 lb. at the beginning of the fall, so I had to start cutting weight pretty early on. It wasn't too bad, but I definitely have to watch what I eat during the season. I pig out in the offseason, though!

JT: What are you most looking forward to in your first season with Choate wrestling?

MC: My main focus is definitely New England's. That's what we work for all season; it's the culmination of all our effort. Besides that, I really enjoyed beating my old school, Hamden Hall.

JT: If you, as a wrestler, were an animal, what would you be?

Interjection from roommate and fellow wrestler Ruben Kaplan '19: He's a lion, because he's calm, but also kind of a beast!

Although Cuomo is yet to yield a single loss, the wrestling team still hasn't achieved optimal success, with a record of 2-3. A crucial win against Brunswick, behind Cuomo, would get the season right back on track. One thing is for sure, though: as long as Cuomo continues to bring his lion-like tenacity to the mats every day, New England competitors have much to fear in Memorial House's fiercest freshman.

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GIRLS' BASKETBALL TOPS K.O., STILL LOOKS TO IMPROVE

By Jackson Elkins '18
Staff Reporter

After a dominating win over Greenwich Academy on Wednesday, Girls' Varsity Basketball was looking to continue their early success against Founder's League opponent Kingswood-Oxford. Still early in the new winter season, and with only one game to their name, the girls were looking to establish themselves and their identity in a very winnable game. However, with a multitude of new players in a new system of play, the Wild Boars struggled to find their groove for much of the game. Coach Aliya Cox described the game in its entirety as "ugly" and commented on the implementation of challenging defensive principles with the team, saying, "Sometimes when you do that, you get it wrong a lot of times while you try to make improvements. The intent behind a lot of what we did in the game was generally really

"We won the game, but we have plenty to work on."

Aliya Cox
Head Coach

good, but it just didn't work out as well." And yet, despite all of the ugliness described by their coach, the



Photo courtesy of Ian Morris

Girls' Varsity Basketball captain Gabrielle Brooks '16 loads up for a deep shot against Kingswood Oxford. The Wild Boars went on to win 53-40.

Wild Boars were still able to pull out a gritty 53-40 win. Coach Cox, on the topic of the win, said, "We were lucky to hit some shots and get some easy baskets early in the game and early in the second half, which is why we won the game. We still have plenty to work on."

The Wild Boars also relied heavily on their veteran leadership against KO, with co-captain Gabrielle Brooks '16 helping on both ends of the court. Coach Cox had high praise for the team

leader, even though the rust among the team was still quite evident, saying, "She hit shots, she had really solid defense, and I think that she's the most experienced with our principles on defense, so she was able to make a lot of really nice stops [on defense]. Offensively, she was pretty tenacious on the boards, and in the lane." Coach also commented on Brooks' ability to find the basket, "She had some really easy looks, and she had some really tough

looks that not many other players could finish."

Senior team member Annabelle Nemeth '16 was impressed with the team's persistence. She said, "We got into some foul trouble early on that changed the momentum, but we didn't let that stop us, and I thought we did a good job of keeping a level head and maintaining our composure throughout the game."

While there were positives to draw from the game, no team can become

successful without analyzing their mistakes, and Coach Cox wants to do just that. When asked what the game means going forward, she replied, "We have a lot of work to do still, even though we got the win. But we won a game that we feel like we should've won, so that's always a really good thing, especially going into this week." The squad has four games before Winter Break, starting with Wiliston on Wednesday, then Kent on Thursday, rounded

out by Pomfret and Brewster on Friday. Obviously, four games in one week for any team on campus is grueling, particularly in basketball. Coach Cox, in order to prepare for such a stretch, said, "We have a tough practice tomorrow, just getting up and down the floor, and continuing to work on some of those defensive principles." With a 2-0 start to their season and a firm belief that defense wins championships, the outlook is bright for the Cox faithful.

"We kept a level head and held our composure throughout the game."

Annabelle Nemeth '16

Looking forward, the Wild Boars have a difficult stretch of games, including key January tilts against Loomis Chaffee and Exeter. But for now, the team shifts their focus to December's main event: the New England Basketball Classic, beginning on December 18th. If the girls can nail down Coach Cox's fundamentals, they are poised for success in the crucial tournament and beyond.

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Boys' Hockey	3
Deerfield	4
Girls' Hockey	2
Nobles	5

VARSITY WEEKLY SCOREBOARD

Wrestling	20	Boys' Squash	7	Boys' Squash	2	Girls' Squash	5
Belmont Hill	58	Loomis Chaffee	0	Tabor	5	Taff	2

Boys' Basketball	52
Kent	63
Girls' Basketball	53
Kingswood Ox.	40