

Netting Installed in Several Campus Buildings

MICHEAL KAWOOYA

Last Spring, the campus community tragically lost Lucas Lee '25 to suicide. Since then, safety netting has been installed in the stairwells of Gelb Science Center (Gelb) and Pan Athletic Center (Pan), and will be installed in the Phelps Stadium tower, the Oliver Wendell Holmes Library (OWHL) front stairwell, and an outdoor section of the Snyder Center (Snyder), according to Head of School Raynard Kington.

Kington declined a request for an interview, but sent an email statement on behalf of the Senior Administrative Council. Kington contextualized the change and expressed regret for the lack of advanced communication to the Andover community.

“Working with experts in building safety over the past several months, we reviewed our facilities to determine whether any changes would enhance community safety. As a result, we have implemented several new safety measures, including the installation of netting in places such as Gelb and Pan stairwells,” Kington wrote in an email to The Phillipian. “We intended to install the netting before the start of the school year, but supply chain difficulties made that impossible.”

Kington continued, “I am sorry that we did not communicate in advance about these changes. Please trust that these projects were ini-

tiated with the safety of our campus community foremost in mind.”

Evan DeMayo '26 acknowledged the netting's purpose while recognizing its emotional impact.

“The intent behind the netting is pretty clear. [It's] to protect the student body. Although, the emotional weight is harder to ignore. For many, seeing nets [in] spaces where we study, where we live and gather, transforms familiar places into reminders of vulnerability and tragedy,” said DeMayo.

According to the Harvard Means Project, suicide rates decline when lethal means are made less available. Ellen Utley, MD, Senior Clinical Advisor at Jed Foundation (JED), noted the role netting has in protecting those who are most vulnerable.

“It is important to see the netting as a message of hope. When we take measures to protect the most vulnerable in our communities, we're raising the collective commitment to care and compassion in all of us. We would not ask a person with a cast on their leg to walk without crutches. Similarly, we are not asking a person who is struggling with thoughts of suicide to avoid tragedy on their own,” wrote Utley.

Utley continued, “The only way to prevent suicide is to

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PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY K.MA/THE PHILLIPIAN

DANIEL LIU & MADELYN SOONG

Grasshopper, Andover's largest annual performing arts showcase, will once again return to Tang Theater this Family Weekend and adopt its traditional four-show format in Tang Theatre. The Theatre & Dance administration has cancelled their plan to hold a Grasshopper show in the Cochran Chapel during All-School Meeting (ASM).

The shift back to Tang Theatre restores a familiar setup for students and faculty after months of discussion. Initially proposed to improve accessibility and explore future alternatives during Tang's Theatre construction next year, the ASM performance for Grasshopper aimed to give the show a wider audience during the school day.

Kareem Lewis, Instructor in the Theater and Dance Depart-

ment, helped oversee Grasshopper's planning and the discussion around its new ASM format. Lewis explained the reasoning behind the switch back to hosting Grasshopper in Tang Theater.

“The challenges came down to logistics and fairness. The Chapel already had programs scheduled, which meant not all acts could be included, raising concerns about equity and optics. Once those surfaced, it became clear that the classic format would better serve the students and the spirit of Grasshopper this year,” said Lewis.

Ashiq Kibria '26, a Grasshopper theatre producer, expects the return to Tang Theatre to pose no problems. All acts that were previously excluded under past policies would still be included in the final Tang Theatre shows. Since bands and other affected performers had been part of the audition process since it began in early September, the change in venue will not affect the final lineup.

“[After learning about the change to an ASM show,] we were

trying to ask students what we could do... We really wanted to make sure all groups who wanted to be in [Grasshopper] could audition first and then figured we'd find a solution,” said Kibria. “By the time we found out that there'd no longer be an ASM show, we had not cut a band yet, so there were no issues related to that [and] now everything's good.”

For Bruce Ru '28, another theatre producer, the decision to cancel the ASM show came as a relief. With a record of 24 acts signing up this year — compared to 17 last year — the return to Tang Theatre allowed every performer to be well-prepared under the consistent staging conditions.

“Performers who are used to the Tang configuration will now have a chance to showcase their perfected acts in a venue that's

Continued on A5, Column 1

A-Peel to Community: Dorms Take Annual Fall Apple Picking Trip

KRISTEN MA

Students and faculty from various underclassmen dormitories took a dorm-sponsored field trip to the Boston Hill Farm last Sunday. An annual tradition, the excursion featured apple picking and shopping at farm stands, allowing students to socialize with peers and house counselors outside of a dorm setting.

The outing gathered students from Johnson, Taylor, Chase, Isham, and Double Brick House, dorms all located in West Quad North (WQN) and West Quad South (WQS). Rebecca Bowers, Teaching Fellow in Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science and House Counselor in Johnson, took part in organizing the event. She emphasized moments of compassion and inclusivity throughout the trip.

“Johnson and Taylor [students] may not have known each other super well, but people made new friends. There were a couple of moments where people were just being really inclusive, saying, ‘Hey, wanna come?’ which was really sweet,” said Bowers.

Bowers continued, “I hope students came away with a deeper sense of connection with new people in the dorm. Sometimes being outside the dorm space helps you make connections that you can then bring back to campus.”

Anaya Sharma '29 described the outing as a break from academics and a chance to strengthen dorm connections. Sharma shared that the experience helped her grow closer to her dorm community and spend time with people she doesn't often see during the busy school week.

“I went on the apple-picking trip mainly because I wanted to have fun with my friends and spend time off-campus... I met a guy from Taylor who was super nice, and I talked to my Prefects a lot more, which was really fun. We all hung out when we were getting food at the market. They had mac and cheese, ribs, and apple cider doughnuts, which were amazing,” said Sharma.

Shiloh Robinson '27, a Prefect and three-year resident



A. BAETEN-RUFFO/THE PHILLIPIAN

Enjoying the sunny weather, Jane Zhu '28 picked a bag full of apples.

in Johnson, appreciated the opportunity to meet new students as an upperclassman. Robinson reflected on the trip as a bonding experience.

“[Johnson's] done apple picking all my first two years, so it was a lot of fun. I got to hang out with a lot of my prefectees and meet a couple of guys from Taylor. Getting to hang out with people you don't normally spend time with is always fun,” said Robinson.

Jacob Montanaro, a teaching fellow in Physical Education and Lifetime Wellness and a House Counselor in Taylor, noted that the joint event was a first-time experience for Taylor residents.

“The boys from our dorm who went were all new to the dorm. Everyone went apple picking together, and there was a lot of photo-taking. People were shopping at the farm stand, getting apple cider donuts or apple cider, as well as the apples we picked. It was cool to see them not just interacting with [students] living in Taylor, but getting to see them outside of campus spaces, making connections and friends with girls in Johnson,” said Montanaro.

While students from various dorms attended, Taylor resident Jason Cai '28 observed that participation levels were uneven. Cai ex-

pressed how he wished there was a greater turnout from his dorm in comparison to Johnson.

“Events like these can really allow dorms to spend time together more, but oftentimes they need participation from both dorms in equal amounts to really be effective. This apple picking trip only had four people from Taylor go and twenty-something from Johnson, which is a bit biased towards one side,” said Cai.

Montanaro emphasized the importance of organizing similar dorm-connecting events in the future in hopes of connecting residential clusters.

“I would like to continue these events, whether it's just our dorm organizing an event. It's great to invite other dorms to build connections with dorms, whether it's in West Quad South or just across campus. The more the merrier. It should be an opportunity for people to meet as many people as they can while they're here... The more opportunities we create for students to meet, connect, and explore together, the stronger our community becomes,” said Montanaro.

Underclassmen Alarm Clocks Yet to Arrive

STAFF REPORT

The alarm clocks Andover promised by the Cluster Deans to underclassmen have not arrived yet, despite being expected to arrive a couple weeks after the start of the school year. The alarm clocks are intended to replace the need to use phones as alarms, as lowerclassmen are now required

to turn in their phones at 11 p.m. on school nights. Dorm leaders reported being unsure as to their arrival timeline.

Despite it being midterm, alarm clocks have not yet reached certain dorms such as Fuess House, America House, and Double Brick. Owen Huang '27, a Prefect in America House, explained the general situation.

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E. YANG/THE PHILLIPIAN

Many students have not yet received alarm clocks. In some dorms, Dorm Leaders are expected to wake up lowerclassmen at 7:00 AM.

Students Comment on Success of Peer Tutoring Program

ANDY GAO & KONNOR FORTINI

Andover's Peer Tutoring program, operated by the Academic Skills Center, provides students with the opportunity to both tutor and request a tutor for STEM and language classes. Based on feedback given by students during interviews, it seems as if the program has found significant success and popularity amongst the student body.

Students can request a peer tutor or apply to be one through the Academic Skills Center in Pearson.

The program's structure allows students from a variety of academic backgrounds

to take part in tutoring their peers.

According to Randall Correa, the Head Coordinator of the Peer Tutoring Program, “some subjects might receive little attention” while others like Physics and Biology have lately been in high demand. He emphasized that the program doesn't favor a specific type of student in their tutee selection.

“With recruiting, oftentimes people think that they have to be like a straight 6 student, and that's not necessarily the case. We do look for tutors that sometimes struggled at the beginning of the

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Commentary, A2

A Science of Empathy: Remembering Dr. Jane Goodall

As a scientist, primatologist, and anthropologist, Dr. Jane Goodall's legacy must urge us seworked for a more compassionate science, aiming to deviate from cold apathy in science.

Eighth Page, A8

No more Phatties

Maybe the new DoorDash policy is taking some cues out of Hegseth's book? Secretaries, watch out!

Sports, B1

Blazing Across the Heat

Incredible all around performances from boys cross country.

Arts, B6

Sweater Weather

Read about the variety of sweaters Andover students are warming up in as the cool Fall weather settles in.

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Editorial

What’s Up?

“Hello, how are you doing?” from the security guard in Gelb. “Good morning!” from the smiling man standing at the crosswalk. “How are you?” from the staff in Susie’s, smiling behind the counter. These gestures, however small, however expected of polite company, brighten everyone’s day a little bit. No matter how frantic or busy our days may be, there is always time to wave and ask, “Hello, how are you?” to those we meet. After all, people at Andover aren’t strangers but peers, mentors, and friends.

Simply put, common courtesies feel good. The genuineness behind every spontaneous greeting makes people feel seen, especially on a campus as big as Andover. Whether you know the person or not, common courtesies bind the Andover community together, the same way the individual strands of spider silk strengthen the web. Yet, people are often afraid to say “hi” to one another, uncertain about what type or degree of greeting your relationship warrants. Especially if the other party is not someone in your close social circles, common courtesies quickly become replaced by a nod, a polite smile, a slight wave, or nothing at all. While the distinction between a verbal greeting and a nod seems minor, these substitutions encourage a culture that slowly distances us from one another.

Instead of wrestling with the complex mental calculus of, “What’s the ideal distance for acknowledging someone’s presence on the paths?”, why not turn common courtesies into an instinct? What we don’t realize is that the dilemma of common courtesy is mutual. All it takes is for one person to establish a precedent. Trust in the kindness of our community and step out of your social comfort zone.

Our community is made up of more than students. Common courtesies are small ways through which we can recognize all the people who make up our community. Trudging through the routine of classes, homework, and extracurriculars, we’re easily consumed by our own problems. Even mundane acts like waving at the cars that yield to let you pass allow us to connect with the world beyond Andover.

While we might feel awkward greeting other students, greeting faculty can feel even more daunting. We tend to overlook how teachers exist outside the bubble of History textbook readings, six-level questions, conferences, and desperate emails hastily signed with “Sent from my iPhone.” We might feel like just another check mark in the attendance book. Our relationship with faculty becomes confined to the bounds of the classroom. Faculty members are an integral part of the Andover community. Taking two minutes out of our days for spontaneous conversations can make the difference between a campus of parallel paths — people passing by each other, but never intersecting — or a web where students and faculty alike engage with one another.

Because despite what the term might suggest, “common” courtesies are fizzling out. That’s why intentional, unexpected gestures from the crosswalk traffic director — so cheery at 8:30 in the morning — feel special.

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A Science Of Empathy: Remembering Dr. Jane Goodall

There are invisible strings that connect this world. As described by Dr. Jane Goodall, a scientific mind transcending her time, these strings take place between all living things, both humans and nature. A scientist, primatologist, and anthropologist, Dr. Goodall revolutionized our understanding of primates through her research on chimpanzees. But transcending her scientific success was her relentless vision for a sustainable future and empathetic view of science. She valued the harmony among every tree, human, insect, and bird; fought with her entire life to deliver her vision to the world; and urged humanity to find purpose and recognize its importance. And then the world lost her on October 4th. By writing this, I hope to reflect on the strings that she left behind for us, so that her wish can be kept posthumously: for people to finally recognize the larger purpose in their worlds and say, “I did make a difference.”

As a scientist, Dr. Goodall advocated for empathy. It contrasted with the precise and logical nature of her career in science, which often disregards “emotions” to focus on

the numerical data. Scientific topics have now become more precise as more and more studies are published, and it has become more difficult to focus on factors that cannot be expressed with numbers. Dr. Goodall breaks this paradigm by demonstrating how empathy is an integral part of science: “I’ve always felt that you don’t have to be completely detached, emotionally uninvolved to make precise observations. There’s nothing wrong with feeling great empathy for your subjects.” But this message isn’t limited to the capacity of scientific inquiry. Rather, it should be expanded to all forms of inquiry, and this marrying of logic and empathy would deepen mankind’s understanding of the world.

As a primatologist, Goodall’s message encouraged respect. She firmly believed that respecting all aspects of life, not just humans, accomplishes global climate consciousness

and collaboration. Dr. Goodall often criticized mankind’s indifference towards nature: “Here we are, the most clever species ever to have lived. So how can we destroy the only planet we have?” She championed that it was not the generic campaigns for recycling and energy reduction that would save our planet, but people’s hearts and attitudes towards the wilderness. In finding purpose inside the larger context of the world, humans could most properly recognize the individual contribution it will take to save the planet. In the recognition that humans aren’t alone in their inhabitation of Earth, people can develop a sense of connection with these invisible threads. Through these connections, fighting against the destruction of this planet will no longer be about “me” or “them” but for “us.” Not just for humans but for all the living things we share our only home with.

And as an anthropologist,

Dr. Goodall fought for peace. She urged humans to form deeper connections not only with nature and with themselves, and to be selective in these bonds. In a world made so easy to connect and meet new faces, this interconnectedness brought unprecedented conflict and tension. Peace of mind within individuals and in relationships was the best and most positive way for humans to coexist.

Not only does Dr. Goodall’s message shine a light on the dark sides and caution the world of impending mayhem, it also teaches communities how to live in peace and love in and for each other. Andover, a school with many invisible strings that are brought together physically and emotionally, can learn from her words. As a community, being empathetic even in difficult times requires all members to perceive each other with respect and dignity, acknowledging that personal emotions

should not be the basis for destroying others’ feelings. Additionally, interconnectedness is only an advantage of fostering community when there is a mutual respect for one another. Treating the school’s resources and other students with respect sets a baseline for conduct. After all, similarly to our planet, this is our only Andover, and we shouldn’t destroy it. Finally, peace applies to both in relationships and in oneself. By being nice to oneself, students here can inherently find it easier to keep the peace with one another.

In 2016, Dr. Goodall spoke to Andover: “It’s been an amazing journey, this life of mine. This planet has filled me with the wonder of all living things, great and small. We cannot ignore this earth that surrounds us, that feeds us, shelters us, replenishes our bodies and our souls, and stretches our imaginations; where animals, plants, air, water, all care for us. We are all interconnected — people, animals, our environment. When nature suffers, we suffer. And when nature flourishes, we all flourish. I do believe in the possibility of a world where we can live in harmony with nature, but only if every one of us does our part to make that world a reality. So that when you look back at your journey, your life, you can truly say: ‘I did make a difference.’”

It’s so important to see these invisible strings. Because in what isn’t seen lies everything needed to be known.

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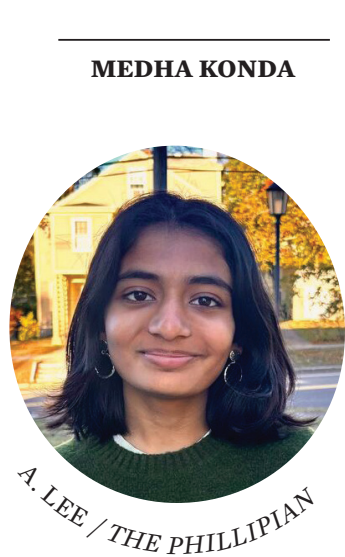
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CORRECTIONS:
Wylie Roossien '26 is a Co-Captain for Girls Soccer.

The Phillipian regrets these errors.

Notes on Finding a Niche



A recurrent reminder circles through the heads of the new students at Andover — that the school chose them. Since the day you received your acceptance, thoughts of how spending days at school would be went through your mind. Experiencing the fireside munches with burnt marshmallows and boundless laughter, the first chills of New England, and being surrounded by the most talented students from across the globe; that is what you signed up for after all. You were chosen, but so was a tri-varsity athlete, a world-qualifying debater, and the bubbly, sociable person who knows everyone on campus. It can be overwhelming at first, and maybe you’ll feel slightly inadequate upon hearing their nuanced hobbies and numerous accolades. However, once the first few weeks pass by, you’ll be able to understand that you can’t possibly expect to be in multi-variable calculus, Fidelio, and a starter on Varsity squash all at once. Perhaps, as time goes on, you can develop your talents and call one of those subjects your niche. Yet, if this

is the explanation for these thoughts of mine, what is that specialty that I have — the one that Andover supposedly chose me for?

Even among the limited pool of teenagers attending my small-town private school, I came to understand that I was quite ordinary. I am a musician, but not one who plays with an orchestra behind them. Somehow, I came to be a writer, but I couldn’t show you awards on a shelf in my room. I’m not terrible at math, I care for the environment, and I could spend hours watching explainer journalism videos, but none of these could solely define me on a resume. A niche, that area one excels in, is what I was looking for. Consequently, I couldn’t find a rationale for my being here. In a place full of students, ones who stood out for their unique capabilities, where is the room for kids with interests they aren’t unbeatable at? Why do I feel out of place when they chose me? Was I an average kid meant to round out a class of inventors and Math Olympians?

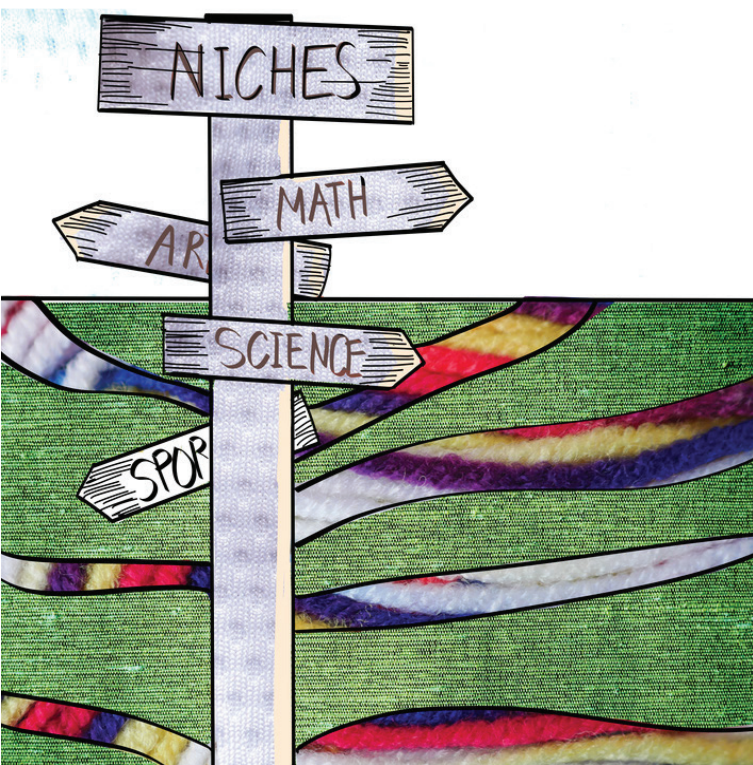
Not having [a niche] made me feel like an outcast — not by alienation from others, but by excessively scrutinizing myself.

In my nearly one month at Andover, I’ve found that there is an expectation to counter shortcomings with your talents. If you let slip you’re

in the lowest math level, it is usually followed up by a sentence mentioning what you were “recruited” for, be it sports, arts, or your unique fascination with philosophy. Rather than recounting your fumbles in the last JV3 soccer game, it would be best to follow up with a personal anecdote about your experience at a national competition last summer. In these moments, I fumble for a way to explain being in 200 and 300-level courses and to give a plausible explanation for why I won’t be able to max out a curriculum by the time I graduate.

I once shared a conversation with a friend at Andover about feeling painfully typical in a sea of gifted peers at school, but to my disappointment, she expressed that she felt everyone has something they’re good at. My dormmates gave a similar response, or rather, suggested what they thought my niche might be. To have a niche is treated as the cat or dog person question — there isn’t a category for someone who likes different or multiple animals. Such a question and the niche both framed answers in neat, square shapes. This little pocket I now desired to put myself in complicated the journey I had been dreaming of for so long. I was letting my Andover experience, one I worked hard to earn, be defined by my inability to fit one box entirely.

That is the ever-elusive niche. A niche, in my mind, was a talent you had that nobody else could best you in. It was quite likely to stem from the instrument you played since you were three or the joy you had when participating in your first science fair. Not having one made me feel



DASHA GOMEZ/ THE PHILLIPIAN

like an outcast — not by alienation from others, but by excessively scrutinizing myself. In truth, there is no expectation to be irreplaceably good on the soccer team or to hide your shortcomings with your strengths.

To all the Juniors — or anyone who can’t fit themselves into a singular niche — know you can go beyond excelling in only one facet of your identity. Sometimes, we might feel pushed into a corner by the talent and passion constantly radiating from our peers, forcing us to wonder why we’re here. While Merriam-Webster defines a niche as “a situation or activity for which a person or thing is best suited,” it leaves out a crucial point: that a niche often caters to a single part of your identity. Consider your talents to be part of a whole, much like how we as humans function as a whole and not one brain, heart, or eye. With

this in mind, you’ll likely find your niche at Andover, if you do not have one already. To those who have one, I offer the same advice: to recall that your niche doesn’t bar you from learning something else. Passions can be found, lost, rediscovered, or put on pause. Maybe a passion for the environment turns into starting protests in the city, or watching motion graphic animations leads to a YouTube channel. It doesn’t always have to be something you loved before Andover; it could be something you never thought you’d try. Perhaps you’ll find yourself a bit like me — neither a dog or cat person like the question asks, but a little bit of both.

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Nobody’s Talking About Democrats’ Real Immigration Problem



I vividly remember the day after the 2016 presidential election. At eight years old, I understood little of the policy disagreements that separated the candidates, but the sensational personality of our next president and the campaign issue he made his greatest weapon had crept into my third-grade classroom and my imagination. I remember the gravity of realizing that the consequences of Donald Trump’s anti-immigration rhetoric could reach people in my community, and the momentary fear as my parents explained that even I would have to be more careful. Above all, though, I remember feeling that one defeat hadn’t changed the unity in my city’s support for all immigrants. While Trump’s talking points on immigration have remained largely the same, Democrats have swung to the right on immigration messaging in the last few years, supporting hawkish border rhetoric that hasn’t seemed to gain Democrats’ support. Democratic leadership has made a critical mistake in acceding to right-wing immigration messaging, and the party’s path back to the White House runs through reclaiming pro-immigration positions.

Firstly, pro-immigration positions are a potent motivator for the Democratic base. Immigration has been synonymous with Trump’s political victories — in his own words, it “wasn’t even a

subject” before he ran for president, but has remained a dominant issue for the last ten years. It’s worth noting, however, that Democrats only lost the popular vote to Trump in the election where they sounded the most Republican on immigration. In last year’s election, urban areas represented the parts of the country where Kamala Harris lost the most votes relative to Hillary Clinton and Joe Biden. While Democrats actually performed better in many more moderate, suburban areas in 2024 than in previous elections (think Colorado Springs, Atlanta, or Virginia Beach), deep-blue urban areas like Los Angeles, Detroit, and especially New York City saw precipitous drops in the number of Democrats who showed up to vote. Voters’ willingness to turn out often has a greater impact on election results than voter persuasion, and it did not help Vice President Harris last year that adopting more right-wing positions on immigration (and other issues) decreased progressive voters’ enthusiasm. Reaching out to moderate voters is undoubtedly important, but maintaining energy among the party’s base of support is more so. Embracing right-wing rhetoric on immigration will only further alienate these voters, amplifying existing misgivings about supporting a party with increasingly moderate positions.

On the other hand, pro-immigration positions don’t have to be toxic to moderate voters. A Pew survey conducted in March (notably taken at a time when Trump’s immigration policy was more popular than it is now) found that less than a third of Americans support deporting all illegal immigrants. Per a more recent July Gallup poll, a record 79 percent of Americans view immigration as positive for the country. In the last year alone, the number of Americans favoring a decrease in immigration has



CARINA PAIK/ THE PHILLIPIAN

collapsed from 55 percent to 30 percent, approval of continuing construction on the US-Mexico border wall has fallen from 53 percent to 45 percent, and support for a pathway to citizenship for illegal immigrants has increased from 70 percent to 78 percent. Despite widespread conjecture around Hispanic voters’ turn to the right in the 2024 election’s aftermath, these trends are similarly clear among Latino voters, with a staggering 91 percent favoring a pathway to citizenship. The statistics tell a clear story: supporting immigration can be a winning position, and Republicans’ oppositional positioning has only become less popular since winning a governing trifecta. Thusly, the previous driving force behind immigration’s perceived unpopularity was the disproportionate amount of time Republicans spent attacking it — especially compared to Democrats’ reluctance to defend it. Now that Republicans are in power, right-wing media are no longer as interested in criticizing the government’s handling of immigration, and so opposition has

fallen, opening an opportunity for Democrats to shape discourse by reclaiming stronger pro-immigration positions. Democrats will not win back moderates and minority voters by abandoning a perfectly workable position on immigration and continuing to accept a fundamentally unpopular right-wing narrative. Deficiencies in Democrats’ pro-immigration messaging cannot be remedied by indecisively moderating through unnecessary policy decisions, and Democrats must see that in order to win back the White House.

There is no “moving on” from immigration discourse. Most polling aggregators agree that immigration is President Trump’s most popular campaign issue, and Republicans have been deriding illegal immigration since the 1980s at the latest. The right-wing media machine has seized immigration as its most popular talking point, and it’s beyond naïve for Democrats to assume this will stop because the party has taken harder stances against immigration. Illegal immigration is not the universally unpopular is-

sue Republicans are treating it as in government, and Democrats have a generational opportunity to win back immigration discourse with the Trump administration’s increasingly unpopular and extreme enforcement efforts. There is only one stance on immigration that can revitalize Democrats’ disillusioned progressive base and return moderate voters to the fold: embracing unapologetically pro-immigration positions and decisively pro-immigration rhetoric that speaks to the millions of Americans who did not vote for Kamala Harris and who oppose the Trump administration’s current immigration enforcement. Supporting immigration is not a death sentence to Democrats — but until the party realizes its mistake of assuming it is, they will continue to bleed base support and appear untrustworthy to swing voters.

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Your Math Course Number Is Not Your IQ

KONNOR FORTINI



“What math are you in?” Every Andover student has been asked this question before. These words are spoken casually, but they often imply a clear message: this student’s value is determined not by their character or broader academic strengths, but by the number attached to their math course. Say “MTH660” and suddenly you’re Einstein reincarnated. Say “MTH300” and people assume you’re struggling with long division. This campus culture, which quantifies students’ intelligence based on their math placement, is both misleading and destructive to the student body. It is often not admiration for hard work that prompts this person, but rather the idea that math placement correlates with intelligence. This presumption serves a twofold purpose: it not only creates a harmful culture by belittling lower-leveled math students and diminishes the merits of humanities courses as well, but also reduces students in higher math classes to their ability to “do math” and diminishes the merits of humanities courses as well. However, many overlook the fact that math placement reveals far less about intelligence than it does about student back-

ground and access. Something relatively unique to math, compared to subjects like English and Science, is that it is cumulative; every level of math is necessary to prepare the student for the next. Thus, a student’s placement in the mathematics sequence reflects a variety of factors, such as prior exposure to advanced material, access to tutoring, or the curricular pace of one’s previous school, rather than innate intellectual capacity. The ability to afford private instruction, attend well-funded schools, or have parents who can provide academic support can all influence where a student begins, long before they even step foot on campus. By no means, however, does intelligence definitively equate to wealth; brilliance and insight are distributed far more evenly than opportunity has ever been; yet, typically progression through the math sequence directly correlates with affluence or accessibility. If one did not have access to even Algebra 1 before coming to Andover, they will likely be placed in MTH225. This certainly does not mean that they are unintelligent or that they are inferior to someone who places in MTH380. All it signifies is that mathematics, more than many other disciplines, exposes the inequities of prior academic opportunity. Still, the distinctions between math levels often become a proxy for intelligence, overshadowing the diverse strengths students bring to the table. Not only does this culture influence how others perceive these students, but also how these students perceive themselves. Students who genuinely enjoy math but begin in lower levels often feel discouraged from joining math-related clubs or

pursuing opportunities like the Math Team because they believe they do not “belong.” Over time, this quiet discouragement can erode confidence and limit participation, pushing talented and curious students away from a subject they might otherwise love. The long-term impact is a self-perpetuating cycle: fewer passionate students continue in math, and the misconception that only those in the highest courses are truly “math people” becomes even more entrenched.

The Andover community must strive to decenter math courses as a hallmark of intelligence.

Additionally, a student in MTH225 may demonstrate exceptional insight in writing, leadership, or the arts, but the moment math placement is revealed, those strengths are too often overlooked. The ability to write your thoughts in a presentable manner, conduct research, or think critically about complex ideas is no less demanding and no less essential a skill than the ability to manipulate numerical formulas. We place such a large emphasis on math level as a measure of academic success that we forget the value of these skills. The reality is that mathematical advancement has been disproportionately elevated as the primary marker of academic excellence, despite its limited applicability and unequal accessibility. To reduce a student’s potential to the number attached to their math course is to misinterpret



ANGELA GUO / THE PHILLIPIAN

the purpose of education. Education is not meant to sort students by speed or rank them by perceived intellectual hierarchy, but to cultivate the ability to think deeply, question assumptions, and connect ideas across disciplines, whether using math or not. The Andover community must strive to decenter math courses as a hallmark of intelligence. Math placement may indicate the sequence of courses a student has taken, but it does not define their capacity to think critically, to create, or to lead. Inspired to write this piece after overhearing a group of freshmen casually remark that someone in an advanced course “must be a genius,” it became clear to me how automatic and unchallenged this belief is on our campus. Phillips Academy’s 1778 constitution charges us with learning “the great end and real business of living,”

and the school’s academic vision affirms that a liberal education prepares students “to lead lives characterized by learning and understanding, responsibility and freedom.” If Andover is truly committed to cultivating individuals of learning through a liberal education, then we must resist the urge to equate course numbers with intellect. Intelligence is not measured by the speed at which one progresses through mathematics, but by the curiosity, persistence, and imagination one brings to every field of study. Until we begin to recognize this, we risk reducing the vast complexity of human ability to a single number on a schedule.

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Halloween Hot Takes

"If you don't dress up because you think it's embarrassing, you're a loser."
- Muz Reza '27

"Haunted houses are just anxiety simulators."
- Annabelle Wu '26

"If you take more than one candy from the take-one-bowl, that's weird."
- Matthew Shampine PG '26

"Halloween is honestly on the same level as April Fool's Day, but I hold April Fool's Day higher than most people do."
- Kayla Lyons '28

"Candy corn should be illegal."
- Carlos Castro '27

"Boys should dress more promiscuously at Halloween."
- Minnie Kim '27

"Halloween is an excuse for CIA agents or their minions to dress up and stalk people without being recognized. Notice how there are always people arrested for inebriation after Halloween. Well, they have actually been bugged with brain chips implanted in the candy."
- Alessandra Woo '27

"Putting up Halloween decorations in the first week of October is way too early."
- Marian Alabreeq '26

"The Nightmare Before Christmas isn't a Halloween movie."
- Kaela Cruz '29

"Only people over 12 years old should be allowed to trick-or-treat."
- Elisa Feygin '28

GRAPHIC BY A. HONG/THE PHILLIPIAN

Students and Faculty Share Opinions on Shift Back to Tang Theater

Continued from A1, Column 5

better suited for it. Logistically, it's going to be much easier because we now have one venue instead of two. We have extra time and space for sound checks, and we don't have to account for the period between second-period classes. Some acts, like Photon, can't be fully realized in the chapel, especially because of the lighting limitations," said Ru.

Some performers expressed no strong preference between the two venues but viewed the change as a positive for the show overall. Ethan Liu '26, a member of student-run band Goose&Moose, did not take issue with the ASM show, but was joyful that Grasshopper would stay in Tang Theatre, echoing sentiments about familiarity and time.

"All the performers feel a huge sense of relief," said Liu. "[For some students], the ASM show created a lot of pressure, it felt like we were doing five different shows in three nights, and then having to switch everything up for one night. That made us really nervous. The stage is different, the audience is different, and in the chapel it just didn't feel the same. The energy with the crowd wasn't as close. So yeah, we're all just relieved."

For Liu, Grasshopper represents more than just a showcase of talent, but rather a moment of unity for the entire Andover community.

"Grasshopper brings everyone closer, no matter what role you play, audience member, performer, whatever. Last year, when Goose&Moose did 'Walking on Sunshine,' that was the song stuck in everyone's head while they left the theater, and even for days and weeks after. Cheering for your friends, hooting and hollering from the crowd, that kind of thing really brings people together. It's a much-needed event in the fall," said Liu.

Since news of the change spread across campus, Kibria noted a sense of relief and joy among the whole student body, especially the Seniors who would have missed the Senior and Faculty Night showing.

"A lot of people disliked the ASM show in general, and now that it's gone I've heard a lot of praise," Kibria said. "Campus

mood has been a lot lighter, especially as there's a Senior and Faculty Night, as now that we're on the normal schedule we're having a Senior and Faculty Night because we have time for it, which really boosted campus spirits."

Chair in Theatre and Dance Robert Lazar explained the thought process behind the ASM show, intending to make Grasshopper accessible to all students. Lazar stressed that both the initial and subsequent updates to the show were made with the best intentions to improve the show for everyone involved.

"These decisions are not made lightly and we always look at, before any decision is made, what the objectives [are]. For example, having the ASM show, it wasn't just, 'Let's have an ASM show.' We've heard for years that students want more access. 'How do we get it?' Every decision we make is predicated on 'How do we move things forward?' It's super complex and there are a lot of moving parts and pieces, but I think it's important for people to realize that we look at what's going to be the best decision. Sometimes you nail it and sometimes you [say], 'We missed the mark a little bit. How do we improve it for next year?'" said Lazar.

Despite all the changes and various campus reactions in the past month surrounding this year's Grasshopper, most are simply excited to see the show that has lit up Andover every year since 1990.

"It's important not to forget the reason we do Grasshopper, or performances in general," said Liu. "It's not just a chance to get on stage or audition. It's a space to show the best version of ourselves. It's a place where it's all positive, no competition, just celebrating each other's unique talents. There's no other space quite like it."

With the show's return to Tang Theatre and enthusiasm building across campus, Grasshopper continues to stand as a defining moment of community at Andover.

"[Tang Theatre] is designed for performance, so it supports the work students have created at the highest level. Most importantly, it preserves Grasshopper's identity as a full, shared celebration, a moment when the whole campus comes together around creativity and expression," said Lewis.

Alarm Clock Delay Disrupts Lowerclasmen Morning Routines

Continued from A1, Column 5

"[Lowerclassmen are] still supposed to get alarm clocks from the school, so they can use that to wake them up in the morning. Those are apparently delayed in shipping, for a variety of reasons. They were supposed to be here at the start of the school year. They were not. They're still not here," said Huang.

The underclassmen dorms that are still waiting for them had to adapt to the situation. At the beginning of the year, many dorms had Prefects knock on doors to wake their prefectees up at a set time. Clara Cho '29, a resident of Double Brick, described the Prefect-alarm system. She noted that the practice of Prefects knocking on doors is less common now than it was at the start of the school year.

"Honestly, for me and my roommate, [being woken up by our prefects] was okay because we both had our own alarm clocks. We set them to 6:55, which was five minutes before our prefects came in. I honestly was on the better end of it, but some of my friends were very alarmingly woken up by our Prefects slamming on our doors," said Cho.

While this system has been effective for now, some Prefects report that this added responsibility to wake their prefectees up for classes can be a source of stress. Mwaita Nyakujarah '27, a prefect in Double Brick, explained the benefits and downsides of this solution.

"It's made the prefectees build a stronger dependency on the Prefect, because we're also the first people they see every day. Double Brick specifically has implemented a system where every morning, one of the Prefects goes in to wake up the rest of the dorm. While this has been an opportunity to connect, it's also a bit frustrating for Prefects ourselves to have this unforeseen added responsibility," said Nyakujarah.

Many students have also ordered their own alarm clocks or shifted to using their tablets or laptops instead. To Huang, the fact

that many students have needed to turn to other devices with screens runs antithetical to the intention of the phone policy that spurred the need for alarm clocks in the first place.

"My interpretation of the cell phone policy, at least how it applies in dorms, is that it's to encourage people to kind of be off devices late at night, not only at 11 p.m. when they're supposed to be turned in but also potentially earlier on, to try and build better habits around cellphone use in particular. Because a lot of people have said, 'Oh there's no alarm clocks, so I can just set an alarm up on my iPad or on my laptop,' that's encouraging them to be on their laptops immediately after they turn in their phone, which in my opinion has not defeated, but diluted the point of intentionally turning in your cellular device," said Huang.

Katie Sueling '27, a Prefect in Double Brick, noted that the need for students to use their own devices or spend money on their own alarm clocks results in systemic disparities in the ability of different students to adapt to this situation.

"Because some people don't have an iPad, it really shows discrepancies between who's going to have multiple devices and who has been relying on the alarm clock. It's kind of unfair to people who are relying on Andover for an alarm clock," said Sueling.

Overall, students expressed a wish for greater transparency from the school. Huang acknowledged the delivery issues and subsequent delays with the alarms were not the school's fault, but noted he'd appreciate more substantive communication.

"It's kind of tough, because [Andover] did order the alarm clocks intending to have them here at the start of the school year, but I think better communication about that [would be good]. We had the class meeting, we had the cluster meetings, and if there was more of a mention of specifically the alarm clocks then, or maybe at student leadership training, because we have it every Wednesday night, if it was made clear what the schedule is on that, on what the plan is for that, that would be helpful," said Huang.

Administration Conveys Commitment to Addressing Student Support

Continued from A1, Column 5

remove the means for taking one's life — which is what netting, safe storage of medications, and other efforts accomplish. The other critical thing, which is JED's work with Andover, is to infuse and nurture a campus-wide culture of care and compassion. More than any other factor, a sense of community and belonging is where the healing

and thriving as a community begins."

Some community members have expressed that the netting should serve as just one part of a larger discussion on student support. Susan Esty, Assistant Head of School for Residential Life and Dean of Students, mentioned the administration's commitment to launching broader efforts to address student support.

"We are committed to communicating more frequently with students as we look to

enhance community connections, student supports, and practices that ensure student safety. The netting in Gelb is only one part of a larger effort that we will continue across the school year. We plan to invite students to share their thoughts about what else we can be doing sometime in the near future," wrote Esty in an email to *The Phillipian*.

Peer Tutors Are Available Across Many Subjects

Continued from A1, Column 5

course but were able to get a good grade afterwards, because those are the tutors that know what to look for. They know what issues to tackle," said Correa.

As a new freshman, Devin Akyali '29 was encouraged by his sister — a Lower — to sign up for a peer tutor before academic challenges escalate. Through the help of his peer-tutor, he's noticed improvements in his performance in Bio 100, a course which he's characterized as having a "huge volume of information."

"I definitely feel more confident approaching the material, because I already have a good base understanding of it. It's really good for that," said Akyali. "He [the peer tutor] used the stuff he learned last year, the notes, and he just basically made sure like I didn't have any gaps in my knowledge and I had a complete understanding which is great."

Crispin Black '28 is the peer tutor for Akyali '29. He explained that his motivation to join the program came from his own experience struggling in the class last year. After improving his understanding, he decided to help others facing the same challenges.

"I was kind of struggling

in bio last year in the fall, and then I decided once I picked it up and I understood it more in the winter and spring, I decided that I should help other people who might have been struggling with it in the fall, like I did," said Black. "Andover can be a very challenging school, so if you need help, then peer tutoring is definitely a place you can get it."

Math Study Center peer tutor Bruce Ru '28 described tutoring as a two-way learning process, emphasizing that explaining material to others deepens his own understanding and helps promote good study habits.

"Being a math peer tutor is a learning experience for both the tutor and the tutee," said Ru. "The only way to be able to explain something well and concisely is by knowing a lot about it. It helps me understand what my strengths and weaknesses are as a mathematician, so that is kind of my personal motivation."

He continued, "My main value isn't so much that I can provide people with the path to an answer, but good study habits, and how to effectively utilize the resources given to you as part of your course."

Similarly, Spanish peer tutor Ronal Dominguez '28 pointed out how his experience in tutoring improved his own understanding of the language. Through tutoring, he saw Spanish as flexible and

heavily conversation-based as opposed to a rigid subject.

"What people in the Spanish department emphasize is that you have to learn it because it's a living language," said Dominguez. "[Peer tutoring] transformed the way that I usually see language, as kind of like this axiomatic way of teaching language," said Dominguez.

Correa spoke on how the best part about peer tutoring is seeing how students acknowledge when they need help and the generosity of their peers.

"I think it's really beautiful to see someone that wants to be in a leadership type role or be in a role that wants to help someone and then to see someone that's asking for help. I think it's really beautiful to be that convener, the person that brings people together. I also think it's really nice to see people [who] maybe do need help with something, but they're struggling to get that assistance or are a little shy or nervous. To be able to help them get out of their shell and be like, 'yes, I do need help with chem, I do need help with math,' and being able to connect them with someone that's able to offer that assistance to them, is really cool," said Correa.

Professor Jen Manion Traces Gender Nonconformity Across American History



C. ZHOU/THE PHILLIPIAN

Professor Jen Manion (right) engaged their audience while speaking about queer history.

NICCOLO LEE-SUK

As part of the "Why History Matters" speaker series, Jen Manion — Professor of History and Political Economy and Department Chair of Sexuality, Women's and Gender Studies at Amherst College — visited Andover to talk about the history of queerness in Early America on October 8.

Throughout their talk, Manion explored gender nonconformity and its evolution throughout early American history. They began by introducing definitions in queer theory, emphasizing the scope of queer identity beyond simple classification. They explained how certain historical records can provide valuable insight into sexuality and gender in modern history.

"Queerness is a space of possibility that's resisting simple categorization," said Manion. "These definitions are so important for my work

today. When we try to say and answer the question, 'Where are queer and trans people in early America?', these are the definitions that I'm building and that I'm inviting you to sit with. These are expansive, broad concepts. I promise you, if you work with 18th century records as opposed to 19th century records, you are never going to get the answer to the question of how someone identifies."

Elliot Chai '28, an attendee, appreciated Manion's use of numerous stories and terms in queer history to supplement their message. He explained how they helped him further understand the history of the LGBTQ+ community and its present-day implications.

"I understood more about specific cases and stories about [LGBTQ] individuals in the U.S. and different experiences they had," said Chai. "[The term] 'female husbands' stood out to me because it was mentioned a lot in the talk and the main focus was mostly females who transitioned to

male. We're at a stage where there are a lot more LGBTQ rights. History can help inform us on future policies and how we should treat those policies moving forward."

The talk was followed by a Q&A panel for students to ask questions to Manion. Isabelle Welenc '28, who asked a question about the coexistence of Indigenous perspectives, made a connection between Manion's answer and her own understanding of Native American history.

"I asked about Indigenous perspectives and how they coexist with this society that we're talking about. They mentioned that a lot of these female sailors and 'female husbands' came from Eastern Europe, which I thought was really interesting. But they mentioned that [in] what we did know about Native Americans, gender was very mis-

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10 Questions with Thomas Kane

REPORTING BY ADELYNE LIU & JOHN KIM

Thomas Kane is an Instructor in English, complement house counselor in Fuess House, and coach of Boys JV Basketball. Previously, Kane has taught at Harvard, the University of Virginia, and Washington & Lee University. Additionally, he has published papers on historical figures such as Tupac Shakur and Martin Luther King Jr. In his free time, Kane enjoys participating in activities that inspire him to learn, including reading, writing, and housework.

What made you decide to teach English?

I did a lot of summer jobs where I figured out I didn't want to do things. I went to Wall Street one summer, and I shadowed a lawyer at one point, and I figured out those were things that I didn't want to do. I like ideas and turns out I like kids too. I like the sort of wackiness of kids and helping them grow into being full-on humanoids... I'm a real slow reader, and I wasn't really a reader as a kid but I had in my high school English classes books like 'A Clockwork Orange' or 'One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest'. [Later, I read] '1984', and that's when I actually started to really appreciate books. That's sort of where it started. [Books] provoked my thinking in a way that wasn't just about homework. It was actually about trying to understand the wider world, how complicated it is and how power works and how injustice happens and what might be done about it. Those were things that provoked my thinking, particularly in high school.

How do you approach teaching complex texts and what do you hope students take from your class?

I hope they take from my class the ability to think critically, to not accept things as they are and be skeptical in a good way. That is to ask good questions and try to find out what's operating beneath the surface. With the seniors, they get the real authentic primary source, but then I usually use texts that they can appreciate or understand. So last week we did Freud's 'Notion of the Uncanny'. The students had to read Freud. It's a complicated text, but then I used Bruce Lee's 'Game of Death' to make it make sense to the students. I tend to use different kinds of texts to open up the very difficult stuff.

You've received the UChicago Outstanding Educator Award a few times. What did this mean to you?

It's a student remembering me, so it's actually a particularly personal kind of thing. A particular student will write an essay about a teacher who was influential to them in high school, and it's very gratifying to be recognized that way. Teachers in general don't get a lot of recognition. They usually go to work and do their thing. So it's very, very gratifying to be recognized, particularly by a former student... It's the fact that a student named me, that's what I find most rewarding about that.



E. LIU/THE PHILLIPIAN

What do you enjoy most about coaching JV Basketball, and how is it different from teaching in a classroom setting?

It's just fun. I like being with kids and getting to know them. The coaching part brings out a competitive element that is a lot of fun. You're playing somebody else, and you're trying to win, so kids forge bonds. When you're on a term, it's an experience you don't have in other kinds of ways. In classes, the scheduling officer put you in there. In teams, you all opt in and you all want to win. There's a strong bond that kids have on teams that I love to foster that... [In sports,] you take the gradebook out. That makes a big difference when you're talking to kids. The gradebook is a big lens between a student and a teacher at Andover.

What do you enjoy most about being a house counselor complement in Fuess and what have you gained from that experience?

I enjoy getting to know a coherent set of kids. I lived in Stearns for 12 years, and I enjoyed the dorm. It's where kids let

down their guard. It's probably the best classroom on campus, the most learning may happen in the dorm. Helping kids with life skills and other sorts of things such as living in community, getting to know people who are really different from you, and appreciating that... If there's something going on on campus, if there's a '6-7' thing going on, it's going to show up in the dorm. It's a window into the real life of kids... It can be lots of fun. It can be challenging at times. Sometimes people make decisions that are a bit regrettable, but those are actually learning opportunities, so not really moments to punish people. That's why I enjoy it.

What's the biggest difference between teaching at universities and at a high school?

The biggest difference is developmental. What a kid can do in ninth grade is probably a lot different than a kid who's a Junior or Senior in college, hopefully. Figuring out how to craft lessons and scaffold skills is very different. At the university level, the professor is authoritative and professional. It's more about lecturing than it is about the dialogue.

[In high schools], I do more teaching. That is, I set things up in a very deliberate way. Whereas when I was teaching college, I would assume that the students had done the work and we would be halfway down the road at the beginning of a class so that I was enriching what they'd already done, whereas this is setting up the dominoes before we knock them over.

What advice would you give to students pursuing a humanities-related subject in the future?

Read. There's really no substitute for it, and it's a challenge at this moment in history because there's so many seductive things that are not reading. So much streaming, so many phones, so many screens. There's lots of cool toys out there and we should definitely be playing with them but there's no substitute for the actual old-fashioned act of reading.

What is your favorite genre of music?

I'd say 'Y'allternative' is what I call it. It's alternative but I kind of like southern [music] too, so Uncle Tupelo, Sunvolt, Wilco, in that vein, that's probably my favorite. I listen to tons of music, and I listen to any music, really. I make playlists all the time, and I make playlists that are vibey. I like to mix things up and have different things next to each other. Particularly when they surprise me or [when] I share these playlists with friends and family. If it surprises you that there's a juxtaposition or something between songs in a playlist, that to me is a lot of fun.

What kind of hobbies do you have?

I write, which isn't very exciting. I have played music. I haven't in a while. I just pulled my guitar out of the closet, so hopefully I'll get back to that a little bit. We have a house and I do a lot of stuff there. I do plumbing. My grandfather was a plumber. I get his tools. I do house stuff, and basically anything where I'm learning something. There's a lot of stuff I don't know when it comes to a house, [like] electricity and plumbing. These are things that I really have no clue about. If I can learn something and then do something, it's really satisfying to watch it be completed.

You wrote your dissertation on 'automortography.' What prompted your interest in it?

I wanted to write a dissertation that I wouldn't get bored with. A lot of my peers were doing things that were the next step in a particular kind of research. I wanted a question that I couldn't answer. I was thinking about Tupac Shakur's death. I was in New York when he was shot and killed and watched the public memorialization of that. I'd always been kind of curious about Raymond Carver's last story called 'Errand' where he writes about the deathbed scene of Anton Chekhov, who was a Russian writer who influenced him. Trying to think about how those two things had any kind of similarity and they did, and that's really where I started. Then I coined the term 'automortography' pretty late in the process. It wasn't something I had at the beginning. It was something that I named as I did some years of research on all sorts of different figures, including Martin Luther King Jr.

Students Asked Questions During Q&A Panel

Continued from A5, Column 5

construed because a lot of the reports were by colonizers during a period of fighting. I thought that was interesting because you have to take that into account, and if you don't, it can really affect what you know," said Welenc.

Recognizing the importance of acknowledging the history of queerness and its role in larger histories, she highlighted the talk's role in bringing attention to queer perspectives in history.

"It is good to know that queer people have existed for a really long time. A lot of people I know, especially people who take the stance of, 'Oh, it's a sin', and [are] very focused on that ideology, don't take that into account the fact that this has existed for a really long time. Now we just have more words to describe the experience. It's just good to know this is an important part of history that affected society and culture, and I don't think anyone talks about it," said Welenc.

Satabisha Sarkar '27, another attendee, elaborated on how the history of LBGTQ+ people can help contextualize modern concepts of identity. She noted her takeaways from the talk, including the importance of understanding the context behind sources used for historical analysis.

"There's so many affinity spaces on campus for us as students to explore our identities and find community, and an aspect of finding our identity is knowing that people like us

have existed before. Not only is it creating a space in the present and in the future for queer and trans people, it's acknowledging that they have existed before us," said Sarkar. "I really liked the approach that Dr. Manion had in making sure we all know how our information is framed. We're not just getting diary entries. We're getting legal documents from the perspective of someone who already has a bias."

Sykes Hosts Wellness Fair to Promote Proactive Approaches to Wellbeing

ADELYNE LIU
& RIAANA BAJAJ

Last Friday, the Rebecca M. Sykes Wellness Center (Sykes) hosted its annual Wellness Fair outside Paresky Commons (Paresky), aiming to familiarize students with the support accessible to them on campus. The fair featured trivia games, wellness products, and offered snacks to highlight the importance of proactive self-care, offering students an interactive way to engage with the mental and physical health resources provided by Sykes.

The fair is coordinated yearly toward the beginning of Fall Term. Melissa Peters, Sykes Program Coordinator, explained how events like the Wellness Fair are significant to bridging the gap between students, faculty, and the resources available at Sykes.

"It's important for faculty at Sykes to venture out onto campus and for students that may not have yet come through our doors to just reinforce things that were explained throughout orientation, just to make sure students don't have any other questions. I have some more signage around UWill, because that is our free online platform for teletherapy. That's available to every Andover student and they offer a vast amount of resources for students," said Peters.

Eileen Zhu '29 highlighted the variety of resources offered by Sykes to support students' mental and physical

health. She noted resources beyond the school were introduced at the fair, which eased the accessibility of obtaining mental health support after hours.

"There was a huge variety of activities and there are different products that help you with stress and anxiety. It was just a really great way to introduce people to Sykes and what they do and how they help students... Something that definitely caught my eye was the UWill free teletherapy sessions. It was really interesting because I've never been introduced to something like this before, but it was really cool that every student gets free therapy sessions through the telephone. It's such a great resource for people who are struggling with mental health or who just want to talk to someone," said Zhu.

The Wellness Fair was beyond just informational. Jenna Corsi, Registered Dietitian at Sykes, emphasized the community building aspect of these fairs. She noted that the fair's aim was to remind students that wellness requires students to be proactive.

"We're promoting wellness and helping [students] see that there are resources for them to prioritize their wellness, whether that's their nutrition, their healthy habits, their sleep, their mental well-being. We're just putting it out into the focus of their mind so they can see that it's a priority to them. Those little things may seem small but they can make a difference in someone's day or their sleep," said Corsi.

Through interacting with

Sykes faculty at the fair, Natalie Giancola '28 discovered new programs introduced by Sykes this year. She mentioned that the fair allocated complimentary products that guide students toward healthier habits.

"When I was doing the trivia, one of the Sykes faculty told me that they were doing a therapy dog session program during the term, and that was something I didn't know. It was good to have these free products because it also engaged the students more and also it was really helpful to teach students to be more mindful about their wellbeing. For example, if I got a sleep mask, I probably would be encouraged to care more about my sleep, and then with the hand sanitizer more about cleanliness," said Giancola.

Peters also highlighted that the measurement for success at events like these aren't simply about turnout or numbers. She emphasized that meaningful engagement and connection with students are the most valuable.

"We're hoping that students can take care of themselves and not wait until it's really bad before they come see us... Many kids come by, and to me, success is if one student made a connection. Maybe someone had a question, maybe they didn't know how to do something, but they were unsure. If we can help a handful of students at once, that's great. We're looking to be in touch with as many students as we can," said Peters.

Ned Blackhawk Explores Unsung Indigenous Americans Figures at ASM

NICCOLO LEE-SUK
& SOPHIA FANG

To celebrate Indigenous Peoples' Day, Andover invited Ned Blackhawk, a historian and Professor of History at Yale University, to speak about Native American history during last week's All-School Meeting (ASM). Blackhawk's speech was followed by a Q&A lunch in the Underwood Room and a lecture on practices for studying indigenous history during seventh period.

Blackhawk's speech centered on Chapter 11 of his book, *The Rediscovery of America*, which won the National Book Award in 2023. Titled "Indigenous Twilight at the Dawn of the Century: Native Activists and the Myth of Indian Disappearance," the book highlights influential Indigenous scholars, teachers, and activists, challenging long-held stereotypes that portray Native peoples as relics of the past.

"I started this chapter with a really strong desire to challenge this mythology of American history that says that Native Americans are... antithetical to modern life, that they stand outside of the American body of politics... Indians became not only characterized outside of civilization, but they also remained in this time be-

fore time. It represented, in many ways, the opposite, or the contradiction to the American subject," said Blackhawk.

Kit Leckerling, Instructor in History and Dean of West Quad North Cluster, organized the event with the help of Elliot Weir '26 and Marisol Tang Rasmussen '26. Acting on recommendations from Emma Slibeck '20, founder of Native Americans at Phillips Academy [NAPA], Leckerling explained the Speakers' Committee's motivations for inviting Blackhawk.

"Last year, I served as the faculty advisor for Marisol Tang Rasmussen and Elliot Weir when they planned and facilitated a MLK Day workshop that used [Andover]'s land acknowledgement to learn more about the Indigenous history of this region, the experiences of Native students at Andover since the 1790s, and the recommendations of Emma Slibeck... for recruiting and supporting more Indigenous students and incorporating more Indigenous literature, history, and culture into our curriculum. One of those recommendations was to invite an Indigenous scholar to speak at ASM," wrote Leckerling in an email to *The Phillipian*.

Bruce Ru '28 appreciated how Blackhawk's speech helped him broaden his perspective on U.S. history and realize the number of stories that may be left untold. He

noted the talk's relevance to Andover as an institution.

"Due to the way history and social studies are portrayed, there are always voices that are yet to be captured... Andover is a very exceptional institution, but it's an exceptional institution within a wider historical and cultural context. When you have such a pervasive issue like the omission of Native American heritage in our education system, a school like Phillips Academy is not going to be totally exempt from the negative impacts that this overall culture of omission is going to have," said Ru.

On the other hand, Sophia Liu '27 expressed disappointment in the ASM's execution. Though she enjoyed the content, Liu believed the message fell short for students without a previous understanding of Native American history. She stressed the importance of providing context when discussing nuanced topics, something she wished Blackhawk could have done more of in his speech.

"When I was a lowerclassman, we didn't learn [Native American] history as in-depth as what we're learning in Upper year or even Senior year, and jumping straight into a chapter that's very rich in history, I feel like he could've given more context of the situation. Even a brief, one-to two-minute background about what he is going to be talking about would



K.MA/THE PHILLIPIAN

Ned Blackhawk delved into Indigenous history at All-School Meeting.

[have been] be helpful, as some people don't know why this is important for us," said Liu.

Through this ASM, Weir hoped to raise awareness about Native American culture at Andover. He outlined his intentions to further this goal in the future, such as by reviving NAPA this year.

"We're hoping to bring more ASM speakers who are Native

American. I know that NAPA has been dormant for two years, so we're trying to bring that back... It's quite easy, especially in history classes, to include these perspectives, and hearing that Marisol hasn't had that happen was disappointing. I hope that this helps people to start taking notice and then start integrating those things into their classes," said Weir.

HERE AND THERE: THE WORLD RIGHT NOW

Science: Trio Awarded Nobel Prize in Physics for Work in Quantum Mechanics

This past Tuesday, scientists Dr. John Clarke, Michel H. Devoret, and John M. Martinis were awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in Sweden for showing that two properties of quantum mechanics could be observed in a system large enough to see with the naked eye. In 1984 and 1985, the Nobel laureates discovered a phenomenon known as quantum mechanical tunneling in an electrical circuit, according to the Nobel Prize organization. Clarke told "CNN" that they "had not realized in any way that this might be the basis of a Nobel Prize" and that their research had laid the foundation for quantum computing and other technology, such as the cell phone.

Crime: Two Killed in British Synagogue Attack

Two people were killed and three people were seriously injured in an attack on a Manchester synagogue last Thursday. The attack, which police called an act of terrorism, occurred during the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar. "The New York Times" reports that the attacker was identified as Jihad al-Shamie, a British citizen of Syrian descent, who used a car and a knife to carry out the attack. Officers on the scene responded by fatally shooting al-Shamie. According to "PBS," UK officials, including Prime Minister Keir Starmer, condemned the violence, vowing to combat rising antisemitism.

World: Jane Goodall Passes Away at 91

Jane Goodall, a famous British primatologist known for her work with chimpanzees, passed away last Wednesday at 91 years old. Goodall was in California on a speaking tour of the U.S. at the time of her passing, according to the Jane Goodall Institute. Widely regarded as a pioneer in her field, Goodall recorded six decades worth of research with chimpanzees in Tanzania. According to "NPR," her work established the intelligence and neural capabilities of chimpanzees, including their ability to use tools and display complex social structures. Sir David Attenborough and Prince William of Wales paid tribute to Goodall, praising her as "a great champion of environmental protection" according to "BBC."

Politics: United States Government Shutdown

The U.S. government shut down last Wednesday for the first time since 2018. According to "CNN," the shutdown is a result of Democrats pushing for the extension of Obamacare subsidies as part of the funding bill. On the other hand, Republicans have asserted that the issue can wait until the end of 2025. "The New York Times" reports that since both parties are currently locked in a stalemate, Congress feels as though the situation lacks urgency as government shutdowns have little political and economic impact overall. President Trump has threatened mass layoffs for federal employees, "CNBC" reports. As of now, the Senate has failed multiple times to pass a bill that would end the shutdown. Negotiations will likely remain deadlocked as neither side yields.

Conflict: Israel and Palestine Agree to Proceed with Peace Deal

Israel and Hamas have agreed to the first phase of a U.S.-brokered peace plan as of this Wednesday. Last Monday, U.S. President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu pledged support for a plan to secure the release of the remaining hostages and end the war in Gaza. The U.S. offered a 20-point peace plan which would immediately end Israel's war, boost aid to Gaza, and require Hamas to release remaining Israeli hostages, "NBC" reports. British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said the conflict is now "closer to peace than ever before." However, certain elements of the peace plan remain unclear and may prove to be sticking points, according to "The New York Times."

Phriendly Phire

Pete Hegseth’s Summarized Address at Quantico

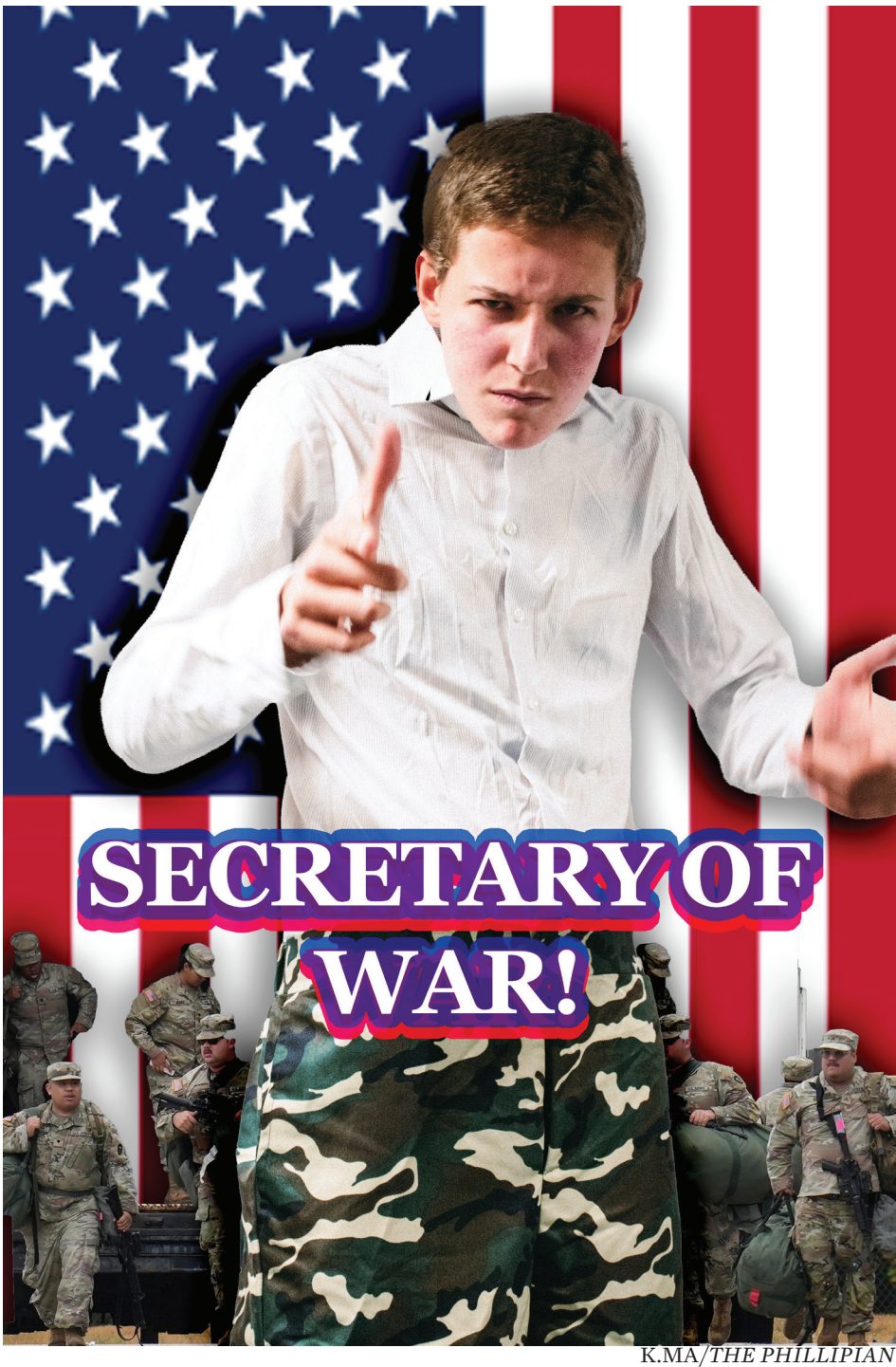
By Mac Strong

Now, for physical fitness, I just want one day a year where I'm not visually assaulted by uglies and fatties. Seriously, Virginia, these retinas need a day off. If the Mormons have Lucky Blue, we need good PR somewhere. So we will be implementing the Paris Hilton diet. We can't afford Coke, but if Hunter can get crack, I'm sure we can find something crystal for all of you dweebs. As you might be able to tell from my slight frame and sweet masculine voice, I've already started.

If you can't fit through the door at the Sam Phil side door, then you don't fit in this army. I like my men skinny and hairless; that goes for all you beardos out there, too. I want all of you under 115lbs, freshly shaven, waxed, and douched, ready—I mean perked up for your physical assessments when I drop by unannounced (maybe in the bathrooms) later this Quarter. All this liberal body positivity and “woke” principles have completely undermined the integrity and central focus of our Nation’s armed forces: to be the manliest, hairless, strongest, straightest men of this country, and I guess women too.

If I hear another Grindr notification south of Stonewall, we will be banning all cellular devices across governmental organizations. Until the RNC. No more yoga either, that stuff’s for hairy hippy chicks, not our fighting brigade of twinks and otters, NO BEARS.

“Whether you’re an airborne ranger, or a chairborn ranger,” you’ve gotta stay DL level hot and mysteriously unmarried. If we all work to serve our lord and savior, Daddy Donny, then maybe some of you chunkers will make it to his court. I know we all vie for the attention and admiration of our collective dom. But only the slimmest, fittest, and at the end of the day, you’ve got to be the richest (He’s looking for a sugar daddy, that’s the only reason we still talk to Russia), will become a concubi- I mean, constituent of the crow-kin- cabinet of officials in the President’s inner circle. Outro music *rock national anthem* and that’s how Petey peeps it. We out.



K.MA/THE PHILLIPIAN

Week’s Top Headlines

- *All Deans (/diːnz, déenz/) Required to Add A “Hear My Name” to Their Outlook Email Signature*
- *Lowers Caught at Rabbit Pond Explain Sticky Situation*
- *PAPS Called On Project X BBC Function*
- *BVL Player Reportedly Wined and Dined at ShoYu*
- *Andover Football Finally Released From “Hell on Earth.”*
- *Taylor Swift’s Songwriter Does The Same Thing Over and Over Again*

- Surviving the DoorDash Taskforce
- By : Elizandro Pereira

The DoorDash Taskforce is worse than we thought. They are doing this 'cause Commons done paid for too much turkey and they can't return it. As a self-diagnosed Bigback, I was able to sneak in and find out more. Now according to the Deans, a major concern is people being on campus at night This is of course, after the driver drove onto their lawns to deliver more font colors.

There were also some conspiracies mentioned at the meeting such as that every time a student orders one Commons employee disappears. Another theory I heard was that Grubhub paid the school millions of dollars to eliminate the competition, which explains why the school is ALL IN this year. The Taskforce also addressed equity concerns, now how does equity involve ordering food, this is just another way to have another ASM speaker talk about their liberal background.

Now do not worry about this potential food ban coming to dorms near you. The best way to combat this is to boycott eating at commons and when half the student body loses 50 pounds they will need to make a change. My best tip is to order food to areas in downtown or order the hockey rink. We must stop this tyranny now!!! Also anyone got a five dollars on them. I need my Popeyes.

Bill Belichick Returns

By Nate Kreppner

In a shocking turn of events, the Andover Varsity Football team’s first win over Kent has been voided as footage of Bill Belichick Andover ’71 was seen in a BVH players cutoff under armour sweater deflating footballs. After UNC’s 2-3 start to Belichick's inaugural season as head coach, his new girlfriend (Andover ’25) seems unimpressed. Belichick returned to his alma mater last Saturday to witness Andover's shocking first win over Kent. When asked about his appearance, he stated he was “here to scout the younger prospects.” Belichick also had remarks to say on Twitter following the game “Those bum big rigs gotta stop with those Twitter shouts. I ain’t give you no offer.” The six-time Super Bowl champion also had some comments about the tailgate: “the worst I have ever seen”. Both Andover and UNC have done their fair amount of losing this season, with neither teams' future's looking bright. Both are expected to lose out the rest of the season and Belichick returns back to the Hill to put on his sleep apnea mask and get his back rubbed by his masseuse.



The Phillippian SPORTS

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not a fan of
the weather...

October 10, 2025

Beginning of Something Special: Football Earns Long-Awaited Win

ALEX GODSEY

SATURDAY 10/4	
Andover	29
Kent	6

Football (1-4) earned its first win of the season in a game against Kent on Saturday, with a final score of 29-6. This long-awaited and well-deserved victory reflects the improvement and strategic adjustments made in the last few weeks.

The team played under the lights last Saturday and with an electric home crowd supporting them. Ben Kazlouski '28 highlighted the team's preparation and anticipation for the game.

"The atmosphere was absolutely incredible, not just after the win but coming into it. In the practices we had before the game were some of the best practices all season. We've been having some more high-intensity drills to really get the energy going," said Kazlouski.

A physical and tight defence has been a consistent strength for Football all season. This game was yet another example of that, with the defense holding Kent to just six points. Scott Carmichael '27 reflected on the team's defensive performance,



M.STOUT/THE PHILLIPIAN

In first win of the season, linebacker Matthew Saleh '26 lines up on the field.

noting several "tackle for losses" — plays where defenders stopped the ball carrier behind the line of scrimmage for negative yardage.

"The defense was super consistent. They did a great job of playing physical and fast, not giving up any easy things. Brock Feinberg '26] and Richard Indresano '26] had many tackles for losses along with Nathan McCormick '27] and Matthew Saleh '26], while [Co-Captain] Ollie Velez '26, [Co-Captain] Bennett Rodgers '26], Tyler Baty '27], and [Mark] Gaines '26] played great defense in the secondary [cornerbacks and safeties]. The defense came together well and caused a lot of three-and-outs, making Kent either punt the ball or go for it on fourth down, causing a lot of turnovers," said Carmichael.

A central storyline for the game was Quarterback Cale Barker '28. After a touchdown strike against Salisbury and a few injuries at the position, Barker was stepped into the starting spot for the team. Even with a great performance from Barker, the win wasn't just his; the entire team worked cohesively.

"We had Cale Barker starting

the game this weekend, and he had a really good game. He was throwing some beautiful passes accurately to our receivers, and our receivers also did a great job getting open, giving the quarterback the window to throw the pass. Then, at the center of it all was our [offensive] line. They had a really solid game. They set the pocket for the [Quarterback] and gave him the time to do what he's got to do, and we did a good job moving the ball up the field efficiently," said Kazlouski.

Carmichael described a crucial early connection from Barker to Will Mascena '27, which led to one of four touchdown passes in the game.

"Early in the game, Cale got the ball and threw it up to Will. It was a 50/50 ball, third and long, and Mascena overcame his defensive back and caught it over the opposing player. That was a really big momentum play that gave everyone a whole lot of confidence," said Carmichael.

Overall, Barker handled his first start exceptionally well, with Carmichael commending

Barker's natural confidence and composure on the field. He added that Barker has added composure to his game, something that has been missing from the team for two years.

"Cale played great; he really surpassed all expectations. In warm-ups, you could see that he had that swagger to him, like he knew that he was good, which is exactly what you want out of a fresh, first-start sophomore quarterback. When he started throwing the ball well, everyone was just like, 'Yeah, he's really good.' It was something we haven't been able to do in two years, so seeing the ball move down the field and those crazy catches really makes football a fun sport to watch," said Carmichael.

The team hopes to carry its momentum into its next game against Suffield away on Saturday, October 9.



M. STOUT/THE PHILLIPIAN

Co-Captain and wide receiver Ollie Velez '26 gets set in Football's 29-6 victory over Kent.

Boys Cross Country Blazes Past Choate in Heated Home Opener

AVIAD AWA

Boys Cross Country cruised past Choate this Saturday in its first home meet of the season. Runners battled on Andover's 5-Kilometer course, with Co-Captain Robert Budzinski '26 securing first place in 17:04. Andover's top five finishers included Budzinski, Charlie Gillick '27 in 17:14, Henry Zimmerman '27 in 17:23, Cameron Butler '28 in 18:21, and Alfonso Gonzalez-Cano '27 in 18:24. The number of personal records broken across grade levels bode well for the season as well as the future of the program.

Many runners prepared for the meet by getting sufficient sleep and, particularly on meet day, where the temperature reached 81°F — atypical for this time of the cross country season — at the height of the meet, by keeping hydrated. Newcomer Alessandro Reverdito '29, who ran a time of 19:49, spoke on how he prepared for the meet.

"With Cross Country [taking place] in the fall, the con-

ditions are usually pretty cool so the hardest part was dealing with the heat. The two nights before the meet, the main thing I did was get as much sleep as I could and stay hydrated. I had lots of carbs the night before, stretched a bunch, and warmed up with the group," said Reverdito.

Despite the challenging conditions ahead, Nicholas Jung '28 expressed how many were excited for their first race of the season. Finishing in a personal record time of 20:29, Jung reflected on the team's energy before the meet, explaining a ritual that grounded the team.

"Around two hours before a race, some of the BXC [Boys Cross Country] boys grouped together, and we closed our eyes and imagined the course and said that we were running for each other. We were thinking about finishing the last mile for a specific person. These words of encouragement really increased the team spirit," said Jung.

In preparation for the meet, the team's workouts picked up in intensity. Gonzalez-Cano

described these workouts and how the team used the home course to its advantage.

"The week before, we had a pretty strong hill workout at Boston Hill. Pretty rough, but gave us some real confidence heading into it. We also practiced sections of the home course, making sure we ran the least distance while staying on the course. All of that works together in tandem to really give us some compass heading into it," says Gonzalez-Cano.

Gonzalez-Cano noted how the teamwork fostered in practice translated into the race itself as teammates paced and motivated each other.

"Usually, just running alongside another guy is enough because you're pacing off of them. If he starts pushing a little bit more, then you start pushing a little bit more, it's a symbiotic relationship. Cameron and Aaron [Blanchard '28] were pushing hard together on Heartbreak Hill, and that really pushed me to stay with them. I was dying at that point, but seeing them run side by side pushed me to



J. CHAN/THE PHILLIPIAN

Co-Captain Robert Budzinski '26 claimed first place at Andover's first home meet of the season.

finish strong. That teamwork was happening all across the race. Everyone had someone to pace with, and that really helped us get such a strong result," said Gonzalez-Cano.

The team will continue its season away in Concord, New Hampshire at St. Paul's School this Saturday.

Finding Her Voice: Kate Rodgers '26 Serves Her Teammates with Bold Support

STAFF REPORT

Since joining Girls Volleyball in the fall of 2022, Kate Rodgers '26 had the goal of becoming a Co-Captain. Rodgers began playing volleyball in the fifth grade and competitive volleyball since sixth grade after moving to Texas, where volleyball is very popular. Being a part of the team for the last four years, Rodgers embodies a loud and supportive presence on and off the court.

As a Co-Captain, Rodgers was inspired by her previous Co-Captain, Sophie Holton '25, and tries to mirror her attitude on the court. Even though Rodgers admitted she is a bit introverted, she saw the fruits of Holten's loud presence on the court, encouraging the team to become better and play with energy.

"[Being a Co-Captain] forced me to come out of my shell a little bit since I am pretty introverted and don't necessarily consider myself a loud person. I really had to step into the role of [last year's Co-Captain]," said Rodgers. "I don't necessarily consider myself the loudest and most outspoken person, but as I've gone through the last month of being Co-Captain, I've been able to do that better."

Rodgers also shared her philosophy as a Co-Captain. She noted the importance of instill-



COURTESY OF PHILLIPS ACADEMY

ing confidence in her teammates while also working to identify a player's individual weaknesses. However, Rodgers explained the fine line between being supportive and critical of players.

"Sometimes, you have to be a little harsher, especially if people are goofing off during practice or if people aren't focused, you do have to be the person to not lay into them, but lay on the lawn and be like, 'Ok guys let's focus up,' and I realize it doesn't necessarily have to be in a demeaning way," said Rodgers.

Jacqueline Li '27 commented

on her relationship with Rodgers over the past years. While Rodgers holds an obligation as a Co-Captain to develop the team by enforcing rules and constructively criticizing players' weaknesses, Li points to how Rodgers supports her by promoting an open and trustworthy culture.

"I find her to be someone that I can rant to, and she would be there and listen and agree with me, or not agree with me, but give her own thoughts, and she'd just be a good person to talk to whenever I want to talk about team stuff with her. I don't just

see her as a Co-Captain. I see her as someone that I can confide in," said Li.

Li identified Rodgers' composure as one of her key strengths as a volleyball player. She mentioned how volleyball is a mentally intensive sport and that Rodgers remains poised by not overthinking mistakes. Furthermore, Li described how Rodgers is even open about her mistakes to the team.

"During huddles, we all come together and we talk about stuff, or other times it's just purely encouragement. But even when she makes a mistake, in our huddles, she always tells us, 'okay, we're still in this,' 'we got it,' 'let's move on.' She doesn't let the mistakes get to her, even if she makes one."

Rodgers defined being a Co-Captain as a role model, not as a perfect person. She stressed the importance of keeping a positive mindset, especially considering the highly momentum-based nature of volleyball.

"For me, being a team Co-Captain just means that you have to be someone that everyone on the team can look up to, and not in a sense that you could never mess up or make a mistake or have a bad day, but in the sense that you always have to have a positive attitude. I really try to make sure everyone has a positive attitude, and by virtue, myself having a positive attitude and making

sure everyone kind of feeds off of that."

Not only does Rodgers develop players by remaining positive, but she also voices the team's needs, acting as a conduit between the players and coaches. Alexis Arias '28 recalled that Rodgers frequently communicates with coaches in games, especially when the team is down.

"During huddles when we are down, she gives players advice on what we can do to improve on the court and get the win while still being encouraging. Kate is great at speaking to the coaches about what the team thinks we need, whether this is in huddles or things we all feel we should work on in practice," said Arias.

Rodgers reflected on her goals for this season. While Andover has not beaten Exeter in the past three years, Rodgers noted that the team will need to play cohesively in order to beat Exeter this year.

"I would love to beat Exeter this year. I want to break that losing streak and come strong against them. That will really take hustle from everyone, and everyone needs to be very high-energy during that game. We play Exeter twice, so we play them before AE and then obviously at AE, so coming at both of those games with 110%, but that's definitely a goal I have for the team this season."

Setting the Tone: The Role of Girls Volleyball Co-Captain Nneka Ezeike '26

STAFF REPORT

Girls Volleyball Co-Captain Nneka Ezeike '26 first began playing her sport in seventh grade as a means to pass time in isolated periods during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Now, having been a part of Girls Volleyball for three years as a pin hitter, she has come to the realization that the role of a Co-Captain is to balance being a leader on the court and a supportive friend throughout campus.

In game time performance, connection among teammates is a crucial factor. Team member Danielle Han '28 described Ezeike's personality as a Co-Captain and how she fosters a positive team culture while offering constructive points of criticism.

"[She's] funny, athletic and kind. She builds team chemistry by having great energy on the court while also reminding us of the small technical mistakes we need to fix. We love her for who she is, and if I had to choose one thing [that we love about her the most] it would be her mentality on the court," said Han.

So far, Ezeike has enjoyed being Co-Captain. Specifically, she explained her love of developing connections with her teammates and cheering them on off the court. She also spoke about the importance of continuous growth and how, as a leader on the team, she seeks to be patient and accommodate her teammates and their diverse personalities and backgrounds.

"My favorite part is just being able to support my teammates off the court too and going to dance performances or watching them play other sports, and being able to have that role during all parts of the year, not just on the court or during the season," said Ezeike.

Ezeike continued, "I definitely personalize my approach to each player on the team on how to best advocate for them and support them. As a player, it has taught me awareness on the court since I know a lot of pieces that are coming together for each game and play. I know each person on a deeper level as a [Co-]Captain as well, so it helps me with the on-court connection."

Ezeike's experience in the



A. LEE/THE PHILLIPIAN

sport informs the advice she gives to her teammates, and Jacqueline Li '27 commented how her experience shines through her boldness on the court.

"Nneka is a great player, so she has a lot of confidence in the things that she says. That sort of assertiveness reaffirms a lot of our confidence and our mutual trust towards her. If you want a specific example, if the back row is not doing good enough, she says,

'Hey, you guys get the passes to the target so we can actually hit,' or, 'Hey, push me in more on the set or push me out or just set tempo,'" said Li.

Li mentioned how she looks up to Ezeike despite having joined the team the same year. She points out how Ezeike has pushed her constantly to be a better player and teammate through high expectations and words of encouragement.

"[Ezeike] pushes me a lot.

The year that I was new to the team was the year that she was new to the team. So we went into this together, but she has a lot of expectations for me, and I love that she thinks that I can reach those things. So she constantly encourages me just like, 'Hey Jacqueline, do this, do that, do this, do that.' Sometimes, I don't listen, but she's always there to remind me and is someone that keeps me going forward in the right direction that I'm supposed to be going," said Li.

Ezeike did not necessarily expect to become a Co-Captain when she began playing volleyball at Andover but wanted to contribute to the team as much as possible. To aspiring team captains, she explained that true leaders know how to build and maintain team chemistry.

Ezeike said, "I would say energy is a bare minimum in volleyball, and encouraging your teammates is a bare minimum. But the difference between a player and a captain is someone who is able to also keep the team together and cohesive off the court."

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

C NNEKA EZEIKE '26
ELLICOTT CITY, MD

C KATE RODGERS '26
DALLAS, TX

ALEXIS ARIAS '28
LAWRENCE, MA

SOPHIA FANG '28
ANDOVER, MA

KALIAH FORTUNE '26
BRAMPTON, ON, CA

ZOË GILBERTSON '27
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

RIHANA GOMEZ '26
SALEM, NH

ASHLEY SCHUMAN '27
BEDFORD, MA

DANIELLE HAN '28
NEWTON, MA

JACQUELINE LI '27
ANDOVER, MA

HAILEY PIASECKI '26
GIG HARBOR, WA

EMMA WEBBER '28
ANDOVER, MA

SELENE XU '27
MINHANG, SHANGHAI, CN

GRACIE AZIABOR '26
ATKINSON, NH

MANAGERS:

JONATHAN OH '27
CABOT, AR

JUSTIN PUNO '26
CARMEL, IN

KAI SZANTON '26
CHARLOTTE, NC

MALCOLM TOLBERT '26
WALTHAM, MA

RAYMOND WILLIAMS '26
BOSTON, MA

ALL Students, Faculty & Staff
Invited to Apply!



DREAM IT, THEN DO IT

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Have you attended the Faux African Wedding or a Flow Arts performance? These are just a few of the thousands of projects made possible with grants from the Abbot Academy Fund (AAF).

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- CARING Foster a community of belonging!
- INNOVATION Invent creative solutions!
- BOLDNESS Envision new possibilities!

Share your ideas, get guidance: All grant applicants **MUST** schedule a brief meeting with AAF community liaison Christina Landolt (clandolt@andover.edu) OR attend a Conference Period drop-in session to chat with her about their ideas.

APPLY SOON! Deadline is Monday, November 3

Questions? Please email Ms. Landolt or AAF coordinator Belinda Traub (btraub@andover.edu). Start dreaming today!

LEARN MORE!

DREAMS & DONUTS
Monday, September 15
7–8 p.m. in the OWHL
Meet Ms. Landolt and recent student grant recipients, learn more about how to get funding, and enjoy cider and donuts.

DROP-IN INFO SESSIONS
Stop by Paresky, lower left, during these Wednesday Conference Periods:
September 17
October 1
October 15
October 29



Scan for AAF grant application and examples of past projects.

Girls Volleyball Shows Grit Despite Close Losses to Choate and Austin Prep

AVIAD AWA

SATURDAY 10/4	
Andover	2
Choate	3
WEDNESDAY 10/8	
Andover	2
Austin Prep	3

Girls Volleyball (1-8) fell short against Choate and Austin Preparatory School (Austin Prep) on Saturday and Wednesday, respectively, in close games. Despite appearing as the underdog against Choate, Andover pushed the game to its last set even with Choate holding a formidable 6-1 record going into the game.

Sophia Fang '28 described some of the drills the team has conducted. Fang talked about how recent practices have focused on building mental toughness and composure in close games.

“So, for the past few prac-



A.LEE/THE PHILLIPIAN

Rihana Gomez '26 prepares to spike the ball in game against Austin Prep.

tices, we’ve really been practicing going on runs under pressure. We’ve been playing six-on-six, and each team is at an imaginary 20–20 score. The game ends at 25, and we’ve all just been trying to get those five points and win under that pressure of being near the end of a match. So, I think that’s helped us to not lose control when the score is

tight.” said Fang.

Kaliah Fortune '26 described how the pre-game atmosphere at Choate and Austin Prep games differed. Fortune also explained how the atmosphere could shape a team’s performance and noted how the team felt more excited to play against a competitive team such as Choate.

“[Austin Prep], or today,

really wasn’t [exciting]. We had energy, but I don’t know, it definitely wasn’t our best game. I mean, there was a lot less energy today in general, like in the gym. There were moments when the gym was just silent.” said Fortune.

Reflecting on key moments in the match against Choate, Fang praised the composure of Jacqueline Li '27, one of the middle positions, who helped the team rally late in the game.

“[Li] kept the serve for six points in a row, while our team focused on ourselves and worked on our skills to make sure we weren’t making mistakes to end the game and lose our serve. Jacqueline carried our team through that rut. She had enough mental strength to be like, ‘Oh, this is what I have to do. This is not a time where I can just let go and stay unfocused,’” said Fang.

Fortune also shed light on the emotional impact of the bench and how it played an important role in keeping momentum and morale alive, even during tough stretches. While the players’ focus on the court definitely sways the course of the game, Fortune

talked about how the bench sustained energy and communicated key calls for these players.

“We are basically like the seventh player: we call whether things are in or out. We just say things so that it’s not silent, like, ‘Okay, this serve’s deep, this serve’s short, it’s in, it’s out, it’s coming to you, it’s coming to whoever,’ and also making sure that we’re keeping people hyped up.” said Fortune.

Emma Webber '28 saw the back-to-back close matches as learning experiences and reflected on the lessons that the team will take.

“I think that this game sets the tone for the rest of the season because it shows us that we’re really good and that we can beat other teams. We just have to want it a lot. I think that losing today shows us that, because it was a really close match, we can beat the rest of the teams,” said Webber.

Girls Volleyball will look to bounce back away against St. Paul’s on Friday, October 10.

Choate and Milton Fall to Field Hockey’s Hot Streak

By Gauri Bhakta

Field Hockey (8-0) continued its undefeated streak with dominant shutouts against Choate and Milton, allowing only two goals in this entire season. The team showcased resilience and explosive offense this week, earning praise from coaches for their intensity and teamwork in back-to-back games against Choate and Milton. Against Choate, the team’s offense surged, scoring five goals off of 14 corners — awarded for a defensive foul within the shooting circle — and totaling 27 shots on goal. The team’s relentless pace and strong defensive recovery defined the performance. Following up with a high-energy matchup against Milton, Field Hockey dominated possession early, scoring twice in under three minutes during the first quarter and earning 13 corners throughout the match. The team’s aggressive tactics and quick ball movement kept Milton on the defensive end, demonstrating how the team’s playstyle continues to bear fruit as the season progresses.

Abigail Nager '27 highlighted the team’s progress and collective mindset throughout the two games. She emphasized how the team had been working in practice to build an energy that they work to take into the games.

“We’ve really been focusing on consistency, being disciplined with our press, and keeping up the energy from start to finish. Against Milton and Choate, everyone bought in, and you could feel that connection across the field,” said Nager.

Nager added that the team’s success comes from a shared trust and drive to push each other. She pointed out that every player is crucial to the team at all times, whether they are on the field or not.

“Every player has a role, and when we all commit to doing our jobs, it makes a huge difference. The support and communication have been incredible, and it’s been really fun to see how we’ve grown as a team,” said Nager.

Girls Field Hockey will travel to St Paul’s on Friday, October 10.



I. BORJAS-ANDRADE/THE PHILLIPIAN

Wendi Wei '27 dribbles the ball in 4-0 victory against Milton.

SATURDAY 10/4	
Andover	9
Choate	0

WEDNESDAY 10/08	
Andover	4
Milton	0

Girls Cross Country Breezes Past Choate in Opening Home Meet

EVA JACKSON

This Saturday, Girls Cross Country (1-0) hosted its home opener against Choate. The much smaller meet contrasted the massive 25-school meet at the Manchester Invitational two weeks prior. The team defeated Choate with a decisive victory of 47-16.

The energy at the meet was palpable, and the team started the season with high spirits. Tayla Stempson '27 described how the meet environment was crucial to the team’s success. Stempson emphasized the support from every teammate and viewer.

“It was really hype. A lot of people’s friends and family came out to support the team and to cheer everyone on. There were people playing music. We had a couple of Blue Key Heads there, which really helped the energy as well. Overall, the energy was up. It was very exciting, and it was a great home opener overall,” said Stempson.

Despite only being between two schools, Claire Bancroft '28 expressed that viewer



C. ZHOU/THE PHILLIPIAN

Anya Budzinski '26 and Amelia Alvazzi '26 race in Andover's home opener against Choate, defeating them 47-16.

turnout was still high, and both teams supported each other to the fullest. Bancroft recalled the final moment of the meet, where everyone, Choate and Andover alike, encouraged the last runner.

“It was not as big as some of the other races since it was only Andover and Choate, but at the same time, it was still really supportive. At the end, we had one runner left, and every single person, even on the Choate team, was

cheering, and all the Andover team was cheering on our last runner. It was really an emotional moment for everybody because we got to watch this one runner who had a huge two-minute [personal records (PRs)] on the [5-Kilometer],” Bancroft said.

Many runners on both teams saw PR and eight Andover Juniors ran their first high school [5-Kilometer] race. Stempson shouted out her new teammates, who per-

formed impressively on the course.

“We won against [Choate] by a lot. We saw a lot of great performances on both sides, and a lot of PRs for a lot of the new people, and we had a few people who were running their first [5-Kilometer] ever, who did really well,” said Stempson.

Far before the finish line, the team also maintains supportive energy throughout the race in passing moments, such as in the quieter Cochran Sanctuary section of the course. Fatima Bah '29 emphasized the importance of “spark it,” a phrase that the Andover runners say to each other during the race.

“During races, whenever we pass each other, we always say, ‘spark it,’ which is something that Girls Cross Country says to help us support each other. The captains, Chloe [Song '26] and Zoe [von Eckartsberg '26], are also very supportive, and they help bring up the community,” said Bah.

Bancroft noted that fending off race anxiety is key for the team. She pointed to mental toughness as a crucial aspect

of cross country, for which the team prepares through psychological exercises.

“The day before and the day of the race, Girls Cross Country has been doing breathing exercises to get prepared to not get overwhelmed or too stressed or nervous during the race, and so that’s also been really helpful,” said Bancroft.

In addition to building mental strength, Bancroft explained how runners on the cross-country train their fitness. She broke down how the team is divided into two or three training groups with specific athletic focuses.

“Whether [the training is] building a base so that you’re able to comfortably run the 5K, or whether it’s more anaerobic or aerobic speed, we’ve been building on those things in the past few weeks,” said Bancroft.

The team will face off against St. Paul’s, Austin Prep, and Northfield Mount Hermon next Saturday.

Boys Soccer Shows Growth and Grit in Tight Matches Against Choate and Brooks

GAURI BHAKTA

SATURDAY 10/4	
Andover	1
Choate	2
MONDAY 10/6	
Andover	0
Brooks	0

Boys Soccer (0-7-2) faced two of its toughest opponents yet this past week, falling to Choate on Saturday and battling to a hard-fought draw against Brooks on Monday. Despite the results, the team demonstrated significant progress in its play, displaying strong determination throughout both matches.

“Our performances in the 2–1 loss to Choate and the 0–0 tie at Brooks this week have shown increasing promise that our team is able to play with the best of the best. At



COURTESY OF PHILLIPS ACADEMY

Co-Captain Liam Vitti '26 scored a penalty goal in game against Choate.

7-1 and 8-1, these two teams are some of the best in the league, but we came in energetic and encouraged in both matches,” said Midfielder Matthew Shampine ’26.

Shampine also credited the team’s defensive discipline and attacking for keeping both games close, highlighting that execution in front of the goal remains the key to

breaking through in future matches. Forward Andrew Rodrigues ’27 echoed Shampine’s words.

“Our defense was stellar in the Brooks match, and our attack was quite threatening against Choate, but the biggest challenge our team faces is finishing chances. Midfielders and attackers like Kai Myles ’27, Liam Vitti ’26, and

Arthur Boisvert ’27 played great balls into the box a number of times in both games, and I believe we are extremely close to making it over the hill and coasting to victory in the upcoming weeks,” said Shampine.

“The team put all our effort in during our game versus Choate. We gave it our all, and honestly, it was probably our best game this season. We had an excellent attacking aspect, which we didn’t have for many games,” said Rodrigues.

Rodrigues also reflected on the quick turnaround between matches, which posed a challenge to the team’s stamina as it headed into the game against Brooks.

“[We] were very tired. We didn’t have much time to recover after our game on Saturday, and did not get the result we wanted. As we go forward this season, I hope we can keep our hopes high,” said Rodrigues.

First-year goalie Adam Sealfon ’29 also praised the team’s consistency across the two matches and highlighted

several key contributors on defense.

“The performance was good overall, we just have to play the full game and push to the win... We faced exhaustion, and in the future, we will work on our ability to play the full game to the best of our abilities,” said Sealfon.

Rodrigues also praised Co-Captain Vitti for his composure under pressure and the team’s growing confidence in taking offensive risks.

“The biggest highlights of the game are the attacking component, such as Liam Vitti’s penalty goal, and our ability to take risks. A challenge the team is facing is keeping the team’s spirits high during a rough patch of our season. As we begin the second half, we will come into each game with a better mindset,” said Rodrigues.

Boys Soccer will travel to St. Paul’s on Saturday.

Girls Soccer Ties Choate in Exciting Friday Night Lights, Falls Against Brooks

EVA JACKSON

FRIDAY 10/3	
Andover	1
Choate	1
WEDNESDAY 10/8	
Andover	1
Brooks	2

This past week, Girls Soccer (5-2-3) shone under the bright Friday Night Lights, tying 1-1 in a difficult match against Choate. On Wednesday, they traveled to Brooks and fell short, losing to them 1-2.

Last year, the team lost twice to Choate. In the New England Preparatory School Athletic Council (NEPSAC) quarterfinals, Girls Soccer lost against Choate by just one goal. Revisiting its rivalry this past Friday sparked a fierce matchup. Isabel Park ’28 commented on the physicality and speed in the game against Choate.

“It was intense, and I know the defenders probably had it

one hundred times worse because [Choate’s] forward was the fastest on the team. In the midfield, they were physical,” said Park.

The score was tied for the majority of the game, leaving the team with hope and momentum as it hoped to turn the game in its favor. Nina Oswanski ’28 emphasized the constantly alternating nature of the game and the turning of the ball.

“It was a hard game, and it was pretty back and forth. I would also say it was pretty physical. They have some really strong players,” said Oswanski. “The intensity was just super high the entire game, which really helps us perform well.”

Although it was a demanding game, the players thrived, showing some of the best performances of the season. Park described what translated well into the team’s game and how it influenced its success, specifically in the opening of the game.

“The first half was one of the best we played this whole season. We kept it moving, kept switching the field whenever it wasn’t working, kept it on the ground. It was really dynamic. In the second half, we did better, getting



A. BAETEN-RUFFO/THE PHILLIPIAN

Isabel Park ’28 (left) and Ashley Dimnaku ’28 (right) fight to retain ball from opponent in tie game against Choate.

more goal-scoring opportunities. We were very close, and it was great. The Friday Night Lights also really did add to that,” said Park.

Having had five previous games at Andover, the team was comfortable with its home field advantage, despite the large turnout to the popular Friday Night Lights event. Park described the team’s mentality going into the game and how it affected its competitive performance.

“We were really hyped up, and the captains were push-

ing the idea that this was the most important game, and the one we really wanted to win. We got away with a tie. It’s better than a loss, obviously, but it was really hyped up. Everyone [gave] 110 percent. It was our best game by far,” said Park.

According to Oswanski, the crowd’s energy influenced the team’s performance against Choate. She explained how the lively crowd brought up the excitement level, positively affecting the team’s plays.

“[The crowd] picked us

up. We played really well under the pressure of having so many people there,” said Oswanski.

The team had its third loss of the season at Brooks on Wednesday. Audrey Gotha ’28 commented on the matchup and how it wasn’t the team’s best performance, a stark contrast to its match against Choate.

“The game did not go how we wanted. We didn’t have our best game and fought hard, but in the end, Brooks wanted it more,” said Gotha.

Although the team did not perform up to its expectations, they plan to move on and improve from its mistakes. Gotha described how this will affect the rest of the season and how the team’s mentality changed for its upcoming practice.

“The team was disappointed, but all we can do is move forward. We will use this as motivation for the rest of the season, and really focus on the upcoming practices and games,” said Gotha.

The team faces off against St. Paul’s on Saturday.

Andover Water Polo Displays Heart Despite Missing Key Players in Loss against Choate

ALEX GODSEY

SATURDAY 10/4	
Andover	6
Choate	17

Boys Water Polo (5-3) fought a strong battle against Choate. The team experienced a number of challenges including missing four key players and its coach, but were still able to put up a strong performance.

Going into the game, the team knew that challenges were ahead. Four of six starters were absent, which had major effects on the team dynamics and play. Jacob Shin ’29, a player who was swung up from JV to fill the roster gaps, described the expectations of the game.

“There was a bit of an anxious atmosphere, but by the

end of the game the whole team was very proud of themselves. They still managed to pull through and play a really great game, even though we lost,” said Shin.

With so many critical players out, alongside its coach, Co-Captains Oliver Stabach ’26 and Ethan Zhu ’26 stepped up and filled that position at the helm of the team. Andrew Cai ’27 praises their willingness to step up and their leadership within the role.

“Both of our captains, Oliver and Ethan, definitely played a big role in this game, especially because our main coach, Coach Kalter, wasn’t able to be there. They took leadership and guided the team on mistakes we made, and they also talked during timeouts and helped the rest of the team get opportunities during the game,” said Cai.

Despite the tough loss, the team had a number of stand out players across the board. Shin highlighted Nathan Egbuna ’26, Zhu, and Joshua

Chang ’27, praising their play.

“A few key players were Nathan. He did really well in the hole as a center. He had a really nice backhand shot, flung it with his right hand into the net. Ethan was another key player because he played really strong defense and stayed aggressive on whoever he was defending. Joshua also came off the bench this game and had some very solid defense. He got a lot of steals and assists, so he did really well,” said Shin.

Shin recounted Hugo Appen’s ’27, a player who has been foundational to the team’s defense this entire season, strong effort throughout the match. Specifically, Shin noted a particularly impressive save that helped the team’s play.

“I remember that Hugo had one really great save. It was an open shot from one of the Choate guys, around the five or four meter mark, but he still managed to get the save. I remember another time

the ball was right in front of the goal, and the guy tried to shoot it in, but Hugo made that save as well,” said Shin.

Two of the players out for the game versus Choate were Victor Hillier ’28 and Ryan Loh ’28. Despite not being able to play, they showed up for their team; Cai talks about their help and the overall sentiment from the team.

“Victor and Ryan were watching from the stands, so they were able to help us out and give us some guidance. In general, being down so many players and having lower confidence going into the game, we performed pretty well, given that Choate is ranked pretty highly in our league,” said Cai.

Even with the tough loss, the team still found ways to make the game useful. Reflecting on the team’s play, Brandon Xu ’26 described how it was still beneficial, utilizing it as a moment to grow.

“We were really just focused on getting better and

practicing good defense, not really worrying too much about the final result. We just tried to play good, fundamental water polo. Overall, it was still fun,” said Xu.

Similarly, Loh, a player who was out due to injury, characterized the game he watched as an opportunity for growth and commented on the game which he watched on the stands.

“The team was facing some challenges, of course with a few key players out, but it seemed like [it] rallied well. Despite the scoreboard, they worked together and it truly was a great team effort. Everyone pitched in, even swing players and people who don’t usually get too many minutes contributed,” said Loh.

Water Polo will face Loomis Chaffee and Brunswick on Saturday.

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Arts & Leisure

The Phillipian Co.

Students Celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival With a Full Moon and Full Hearts

BENJAMIN PARK & HAYLEY FAN

Last Friday in Susie's, Andover students gathered under the soft glow of lanterns to celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival, hosted in collaboration with Asian Society, Andover's Japanese Connection, Chinese Student Association, and Korean Society. The event invited students to enjoy cultural foods, games, and music while learning about the traditions that mark the harvest season across Asia.

The relaxed, playful atmosphere in Susie's offered a chance for students to unwind and connect after the school week. Jane Hlavaty '28 described the sense of warmth and welcoming she felt at the event.

"I found out about the Festival through the Weekender. But I haven't really heard of the Lunar New Year Festival itself," remarked Hlavaty. "Everyone was very welcoming, especially the board members serving us at the tables. We got some food and took some photos. That really made us feel included in the holiday."

Beyond the games and food, the evening fostered conversation about connection and belonging. Bruce Ru '28 reflected on how cultural events such as the Mid-Autumn Festival help bridge divides between students.

"The school stresses certain policies or priorities in order to get students to socialize, forcing



COURTESY OF ASIAN SOCIETY/THE PHILLIPIAN

Students shared a range of cultural foods at The Mid-Autumn Festival.

people to stop using their phones and actually talking to people in person. But, there's no better way to foster those kinds of organic connections than at a cultural event. It's an environment where people [can] know that they either have something in common, or they are interested in learning about something that they may have in common," said Ru.

The Festival also showcased Andover's global diversity. The

student body came together to share familiar traditions in an unfamiliar place. Chance Hernandez '29 found meaning in the celebration's communal spirit.

"[The Festival had] a lot of energy and excitement. People are having a good time. I am happy about the passion from the students that goes into this. I'm also happy that Andover allows community events like these. In Andover, diversity is important not just

to the school, but to the students, and there's a lot of vibrant and exuberant community members willing to create events like this to share their cultures, which I am really proud of," said Hernandez.

For others, the event evoked personal memories of home. Woojin Oh '29 connected the Korean celebration of Chuseok to the music and flavors at the event.

"In Korea, we call [the Mid-Au-

umn Festival] Chuseok. For me, it's really welcoming to see some snacks from my country just being displayed at the Festival. Right now Big Bang is playing over the speakers, which is a Korean K-pop boy band. It's welcoming to hear songs from your country and eat foods from your country. In some ways, [the festival] reminded me of home. During Chuseok, I usually visit my grandma's house all the way in Jeju. I have a lot of good memories. My grandma cooks me some baby squid stir fry. It's kind of hard to describe, but it's really good. It evoked memories from my childhood for me," said Oh.

Tables across Susie's were filled with regional specialties such as Mitarashi Dango, Mooncakes, and Yakgwa, each symbolizing reunion and gratitude. Sharing food held both cultural and emotional weight, a theme that Ru returned to as he reflected on the evening.

"Sharing [food] is very important to the union or familial aspect of the Mid-Autumn Festival. I also believe that there is a reason why people are so drawn to food as something to hold on to, even when we are in a foreign country. When you immigrate or go study in a different place, there's not that many things unlike food that you can recreate or just bring to a new place that easily. It's something that people would hang on to, even when they're in an unfamiliar environment," said Ru.

Threads of Comfort, Woven Through Fall

RYAN LEVINE '27

"It's green, it's knit, it's oversized. I thrifted it from Andover Thrift, and I've had it for about a year. I wear it once in a while, usually with leggings or jeans. It kind of shows that I just pick the first thing that's in my closet that I see. Sweaters can reflect personality because they can show if someone cares about how they look, but I wouldn't say mine really does that. My favorite sweater is probably just another knit one that's white."

ROBIN LUKENS '28

"My sweater is a black cable knit sweater. It is slightly cropped at the bottom. It is oversized and has wide sleeves. It has a medium neckline, not too low and not too high. It is pretty fuzzy, the material of it, and it's really soft. This sweater was store-bought. I do not [remember where I got it]. I feel like I actually might have found it at a TJ Maxx, but I bought it a really long time ago [...] It's what I wore at casino night, which was the first time I really hung out with my whole dorm. It just has a lot of memories from that."

CHARLIZE SOW & TAYLA STEMPSON

As the air cools and campus turns golden with falling leaves, sweaters start to make their return. Whether draped over shoulders, layered under jackets, or tucked into backpacks for late night walks from the library, sweaters are a staple of New England Fall. But beyond keeping students warm, these knits carry stories of memory, comfort, and self-expression. Each sweater holds something personal: a reminder of home, a moment of growth, or simply the feeling of being at ease in one's own skin.



KAI OBATA '28

DANIELLE HAN '28

"It's a hoodie from a brand called Former Merchandise. The color is gray with a little bit of green, and the material is 50% cotton and 50% polyester. There are four letters F's on the front, and the back has a square design [...] I bought this hoodie at a thrift store called Chicago, which is in Shimokitazawa, Tokyo. I bought it with my friends in Tokyo when we reunited for the first time since I left to come to Andover. I remember going through tons of hoodies before my friend called me over and said he'd found one he thought would look good on me. I ended up buying it, and every time I wear it, it reminds me of my friends back home [...] I'd say it shows that my personal style is pretty simple. The design also isn't too complicated, which reflects that."

"My sweater is gray from Zadig & Voltaire, with star patches on the elbows [...] I got it in France while I was traveling, and it reminds me of Paris [...] I usually just pair it with jeans and wear it on its own since it's pretty warm, and it's made of cashmere [...] I really like how it fits on me, and the star patches make it less monotonous since it's all gray [...] I think it shows that I like simple and neutral colors. I have a lot of gray in my closet, and this is one of them [...] I feel like if you have a really cute sweater with an animal pattern, you might be a more sociable and kind person. But if your sweater is something simple, like a navy one, I wouldn't think much of it, just that it's classic."

Arts & Leisure

The Phillipian Co.

Ray Williams '26 Blends Legacy and Modern Streetwear

CHARLIZE SOW &
ELIAS JEON

From pajama pants Junior year to carefully layered looks that balance comfort with polish, Ray Williams '26 has grown into a fashion voice defined by intentionality and experimentation. Whether pulling inspiration from his father's wardrobe or pushing the boundaries of how a single piece can be styled, he embraces fashion as both a form of self-expression and a daily challenge.

Typically wearing baggy denim, neutral tones, and thrifted layers, Williams brings a confident and effortless take on streetwear to campus. He carefully selects secondhand pieces that are challenging to style, then combines them with items

from his wardrobe to create looks that feel creative and personal.

"I do a lot of thrifting. I'm a big secondhand shopper. It's not just something fun to do, but it also challenges me to work with new pieces I might not know how to style yet. It makes fashion a puzzle, which I really enjoy. I pick pieces that I know will be interesting to wear and then figure out how to combine them with what's already in my closet. It's a fun, creative process," said Williams.

Williams' style, with its origins in streetwear, blends comfortable fits with sophistication. He often starts with relaxed, oversized basics then elevates them through thoughtful layering and color coordination.

"I'd say [my style is] a mix between early 2000s Y2K

and skater core." He said, "I wear a lot of baggy basics, and I tend to stick with neutral colors, but I also like adding more elevated pieces like soft knits, stacked rings, or structured leather jackets, kind of like a business-casual streetwear mix."

Williams' introduction to fashion began with sneakers, which first drew him into streetwear culture and sparked his exploration of style. Those early influences shaped a personal aesthetic that continues to center on thoughtfully chosen pieces.

Williams said, "Sneaker culture was incredibly important to me growing up, and [it] still is to this day. Buying pairs of Nike and Jordan sneakers with my mom is a core memory from my youth. It was my first dip into the world of streetwear fashion and inspired me to find my own personal aesthetic. Popular pairs like the Jordan 4 and Nike P-6000 are staples in my rotation."

For Williams, creativity isn't the only factor in good style. If anything, the greater strength is in being able to repurpose old items in a way that makes them feel new each time.

"I try not to repeat the exact same outfit. I like seeing how far I can stretch one piece by pairing it with different colors or fits. If I've worn a shirt with light denim before, next time I might try it with black jeans. About 85 percent of my closet is thrifted, so I like making the most of what I already have instead of always buying new things," said Williams.

As his friend since Junior year, Nneka Ezeike '26 witnessed his style evolve over the years. She is now able to appreciate how the effort he puts into each outfit results in something that looks fashionable, yet effortless.

"The way he dresses doesn't look like he's put-



I. PADMAWAR AND K. MA/THE PHILLIPIAN

Ray Williams '26 blends comfortable fits with sophistication.

ting too much thought into it, but it's still really stylish. I've known Ray since [Junior] year, and back then, he used to wear pajama pants a lot. Since then, he's started experimenting with his style and trying to incorporate more basics into his wardrobe. That evolution from focusing on basics to adding more personal touches, like statement pieces such as a leather jacket or layering with a jersey, shows how much he's grown," said Ezeike.

Though Williams is unsure

if he would ever work in fashion, he is confident that he will continue to have fun with it, keeping the same experimental spirit he lives by now.

"I just want to keep enjoying it. I want to keep expanding and pushing myself as far as I can. Maybe one day I'll be on the same level as Wisdom Kaye. For now, it's something I have fun with, and as long as I keep enjoying it and waking up excited to get dressed, that's what matters," said Williams.



I. PADMAWAR AND K. MA/THE PHILLIPIAN

Ray Williams '26 tries to not repeat the same outfit.

A Songwriter's Stalemate or a Showgirl's Pageant?

RAMSEY SARKISIAN &
AUTUMN XIA

Taylor Swift released her twelfth studio album, titled "The Life of a Showgirl," on October 3. Swift is surely one of the quickest artists to release albums: just in the last three years, she has released six full-length projects. "The Life of a Showgirl" is a theatrical return to her iconic pop sound. However, beneath its glittering production and confident vocals, it reveals a plateau of creativity. Still, the album sold over 2.7 million copies in its first day on sale in the United States. The contents, like many of Swift's albums, were met with mixed reviews.

In terms of genre, "The Life of a Showgirl" evokes earlier eras of Swift's career. The majority of the tracks are classic, upbeat pop songs that use simple chord progressions and placed in a 4/4 time signature. These choices resemble the style of Swift's fifth album, "1989," which was released in 2014, rather than continuing the emotional spirit of "The Tortured Poets Department," Swift's last album.

Much of the artistic and lyrical choices in "The Life of a Showgirl" have disappointed a great number of fans, as

they are quite similar to her previous albums. This is even more saddening since Swift is known for her talents in lyricism. The lyrics mainly focus on how the music industry has treated Swift poorly. She highlights how being in the public eye has made her more vulnerable to public insults on tracks like "Eldest Daughter," and "The Life of a Showgirl."

Throughout the narrative of the album, Swift seems to be opening up to fans with a sense of vulnerability, yet that supposed honesty is undercut by clichés, like the internet slang used in "Eldest Daughter," "Wi\$h Li\$t," or "CANCELLED!" The repetitive use of colloquialisms gives the impression that Swift is attempting to connect with wider, most likely younger, audiences. However, it seems as if she is losing her individuality as a songwriter in the process.

Her best lyricism from the album shines in track "Elizabeth Taylor" where Swift uses visual language, shifting away from the one-dimensional lyrics of later tracks. As allusion to the allegedly violet eyes of Elizabeth Taylor, a woman often viewed by the press as a serial dater in the same way Swift was, Swift sings about how she would,

"cry my eyes violet." Swift's blue eyes along with red eyes from crying would turn purple, further highlighting the imagery this song includes.

Despite the predictable chords and songwriting choices, Swift's vocal performance is as strong as ever. Her distinctive vocal range shows control as she delivers her lines in a playful, light manner exhibited in "Wood" while delivering more emotive, resonant vocals in "Eldest Daughter." Similar to previous albums, Swift uses the technique of layering in the chorus to create a blend that suits the overall theatrical theme of the album. The album mainly sticks to major keys, with minor keys sprinkled in for contrast. However, Swift mainly sticks to the same chord progression, causing it to feel predictable. Compared to albums like "Folklore," "The Life of a Showgirl" is less adventurous and may come off as a bit boring or reserved to the listener.

Overall, "The Life of a Showgirl" flourishes in its vocal delivery and theatrical concept, but falters in lyrical depth and harmonic nuance. This album seems to be dazzling on the surface but hollow underneath. This album does not expand Swift's musical palette. Instead, it reus-



HARRY ZHOU/THE PHILLIPIAN

es familiar past tunes without offering any innovation. Longtime fans who have witnessed her past albums, may feel dismayed by the shallowness of her new project. "The Life of a Showgirl" succeeds at entertaining new listeners as a pop record, but falls short of being a memorable Swift statement."

The album earns a 5/10 for being competent as the

album has occasional exciting moments, but nothing is ground-breaking for the listener or Swift's career. There is hope for Swift to integrate a more innovative approach to the classic pop song into her future work, something that may excite fans more than "The Life of a Showgirl" has since its release.

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CARDI B RELEASES NEW ALBUM: “AM I THE DRAMA?”

Cardi B has finally broken her seven-year celibacy run with her second album, “Am I the Drama?,” released on September 19, 2025. The 23-track album is bold and unapologetic as Cardi answers to her haters together with her issues in relationships, motherhood, and the pressure of fame. She expertly ties all these complex themes into one great story.

First is “Dead,” which sets the tone off with head-on lines like “They say, ‘Cardi, you tweaking,’ nah, I don’t be tweaking enough... But when I drag her to hell...” and rapped over a dark, cinematic instrumental with vocalist Summer Walker adding emotional depth and texture to the hook. One of the album’s largest singles, “Pretty & Petty,” has also sparked controversy for being an explicit diss track, seemingly targeting rapper BIA. Critics called it one of her best jabs on the album, where she brought forth her most confident self.

On the other hand, “Pick it Up” with Selena Gomez shifts to reflective verses about lost love. On the song, Cardi admits, “And I still ain’t find nobody who do it like you.” The album also looks back at her previous successes, including “WAP” and “UP,” and crafts a blend of old and new in celebration of her evolution from her 2018 debut with Invasion of Privacy. Cardi aggressively and forcefully promoted the record. She also broke a Guinness World Record for the “most deliveries by UAV drones in one hour,” distributing 176 signed albums to Walmarts in the Dallas-Fort Worth region in Texas.

On the charts, “Am I the Drama?” debuted at number one on the Billboard, making Cardi the first female rapper to have both her first and second albums debut at number one. The album’s been widely debated and deeply polarizing, highlighting just how complex it really is. Some claim the 23-track length as excessive, and some are thanking Cardi for the unapologetic emotion and honesty that permeate throughout the album. Am I the Drama? isn’t a comeback. Instead, it’s a declaration that Cardi B is and remains one of the most dramatic and most daring voices in modern hip-hop.

TWICE ANNOUNCES PART 2 OF “THIS IS FOR” WORLD TOUR

On July 11, 2025, TWICE released their latest album “This is For”. TWICE is a Kpop group formed under JYP Entertainment featuring nine members: Nayeon, Jeongyeon, Momo, Sana, Jihyo, Mina, Dahyun, Chaeyoung, and Tzuyu. TWICE has won multiple awards and many of their songs have topped the music charts. With their song “The Feels” being their first to enter the US Billboard Top 100.

As part of the album’s release, TWICE announced a world tour on June 8th. Many fans were upset that the tour didn’t include locations in the US or Europe, hoping that they would be included in part 2. However, upon the recent announcement of part 2, North America received 20 locations beginning January 9th, 2026 in Vancouver. TWICE will be coming to Boston on April 3rd, 2026 with the presale beginning October 9th.



ERIC YANG/THE PHILLIPIAN

ANNUAL JINGLE BALL LINEUP: ONE OF THE BIGGEST HOLIDAY MUSIC EVENTS OF THE YEAR

The lineup for this year’s annual Jingle Ball has just been announced. The Jingle Ball is a nationwide holiday concert series organized by iHeartRadio, featuring some of today’s most popular artists performing their biggest hits. The tour stops in major cities across the United States, including Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Atlanta, and Boston.

This year, Boston’s Jingle Ball will take place on December 14 at TD Garden, featuring artists such as Ed Sheeran, Laufey, Zara Larsson, Ravyn Lenae, Sean Paul, Myles Smith, Olivia Dean, and MOLIY. However, some fans believe Boston’s lineup lacks in comparison to New York City, which will include artists such as Ed Sheeran, Renéé Rap, Conan Gray, BigXthaPlug, and The Kid LAROI. Other cities on the tour will also host performers like Jelly Roll, Laufey, and Zara Larsson, leading to debates about which location received the best show.



ERIC YANG/THE PHILLIPIAN

KPDH STATISTICS REVIEW

The animated musical film K-Pop Demon Hunters is continuing to dominate global media. It recently broke the record of Netflix, the streaming platform, by staying in the Top 10 for 15 consecutive weeks, longer than any previous English-language film on the platform. In late August, Netflix officially named it the most popular film that has ever been on the service, with some 236 million views to date. As of October 4th, songs featured in the film continue to rank high. Golden is in 1st place with Soda Pop close behind in 3rd, Your Idol 5th, How It’s Done 13th, What It Sounds Like 21st, and Takedown 29th on the Billboard Hot 100. Overall, the soundtrack itself is ranked 2nd on Billboard 200 right behind “Am I The Drama?” By Cardi B. The voice actors of the lead trio and protagonists, HUNTR/X, made their live performance debut on The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon on October 8th where they will perform their hit single, “Golden” and sit down for an interview.

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