



From left: Geometry teacher Mark Rios, English teacher Karen Schwartz, English teacher Elwin Sykes, Mandarin teacher Wenjun Kuai, and Mandarin teacher Bei Ju. Photo by Lilian Xie '12.

New Faces on Campus

by Moss Trestman '13

This fall, returning students were greeted by a few surprises, including seven new faculty members. The new additions to the Concord Academy staff teach courses ranging from Chemistry to Mandarin, and with backgrounds as diverse as their subjects, they add fresh perspectives to the CA community.

New to CA, but certainly not to teaching, is English teacher Elwin Sykes. Sykes was born in the early 1950's in Treeport, Louisiana. In Treeport, the majority of the adults he respected were educators, and their presence inspired Sykes' own interest in teaching. After graduating from a local high school and studying for two summers and one academic year at Gilder University, Sykes went on to graduate school and then found a position at Phillips Andover Academy in 1973, even though he had little experience as an English teacher. But lack of experience was far less of a hindrance than expected. Sykes noted, "Although I didn't have sophisticated strategies as a teacher ... I had motivated students, and I had excitement about what I was doing." In his time at Andover, Sykes pioneered a paper-free, tablet-based classroom, and met

Rick Hardy while working in conjunction with Milton Academy. After deciding to take an early retirement last year, Sykes came into contact with English Department Head Liz Bedell and chose to continue his teaching career at CA.

Karen Schwartz is the second English teacher to join the CA community this year. Schwartz graduated from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and then began to teach at the Woodward School, a small private school in Quincy where she coached sports, started a literary magazine, and directed theatre productions. Early in her career, Schwartz discovered interests matching those of CA. She was "interested in how arts and academics inform one another," and she explored this question as she developed her teaching style. Even as Schwartz found herself teaching a variety of subjects at several different schools, she found literature "a place to learn life experience" and decided she wanted to make a career of teaching English. Schwartz learned about CA when she met Bedell at a workshop on teaching writing. She says she is excited to become an active member of the community.

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CA Students Help Rebuild New Orleans

by Carly Meyerson '12

In August 2005, Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast, causing devastating damage in Louisiana and Mississippi. One thousand eight hundred and thirty-six people were killed as a result, and thousands of homes were destroyed. In June 2007, Concord Academy sent its first service group to Kiln, Mississippi to bring relief to its citizens. Four years later, the Gulf Coast trip is still one of the most popular community service trips that CA offers; this year the trip's 24 slots filled up within a week.

In 2008, the trip moved from Kiln to New Orleans, Louisiana. That year, students primarily emptied lots where houses once stood. Olek Lato '11 recalled, "When we were clearing the lots the grass was way over our heads...it was amazing to clear all that grass to reveal a set of stone steps going up to nowhere. Everything in the area was completely gone." In subsequent years, students painted houses, built



Photo courtesy of inconarchive.com.

foundations, wired buildings for electricity, tiled floors, sanded walls, and gardened.

This past summer every group worked in the Lower 9th Ward, the area most devastated by the hurricane. For Marco Odiaga, a CA history teacher and chaperone for the trip since its inception in 2007, the location of the work made the 2010 trip one of the best yet. He said, "In past years, different kids have had notably different experiences in New Orleans, whereas this year every kid worked an even amount and was able to learn a lot of new skills."

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CA Chorus Shifts Keys

by Josh Suneby '11

On August 30, Choral Director Keith Daniel sent a post to CA general with this subject line: "ALL SINGERS—please read." His post read, "After some significant reflection, I have decided to alter the repertoire that will be sung in Chorus this year, and I hope this change will attract some of you (back) to the group." His post was a response to the drop in the number who signed up for chorus this year; only 23 students enrolled in the course, compared to 34 last year.

For the past few years, the Concord Academy chorus has focused on classical works, ranging from Mozart and Faure Requiems, to Carmina Burana, to the Vaughan Williams Dona Nobis Pacem to last year's Les Mamelles de Tiresias, Francis Poulenc's twentieth-century surrealist opera. This school year, something new is in store: the chorus will perform a repertoire of contemporary Broadway, pop, gospel

Hair, which will have back-up accompaniment from a student rock band. These choices were made as democratically as possible. Daniel chose the Broadway show selections, for example, after receiving student input through an online survey.

Daniel sites many benefits of joining the CA chorus. "The chorus offers a communal experience where you don't have to be in the spotlight, but you get to be part of a performance. And, choral singing doesn't require lots of training; all you need is a good musical ear and the willingness to learn to read music." Daniel acknowledged that learning to read music is a challenge for some, but he sees it as a valuable lifelong skill that is worth the effort. Daniel further credits singing in the chorus with the chance to create art, and he is disappointed that participation is lower this year than in the past.

Andrew Murray '11, a member of the chorus, commented, "Students don't want to give up their H block free to sing what



Chorus rehearses. Photo by Alice Krupczak '12.

and jazz pieces.

Daniel explained, "I am shifting the balance of the music this year, not creating a new repertoire. The chorus will perform a medley in order to give all members of the chorus a satisfying experience, not just the students with the lead roles. Also, I am hoping this selection draws new students in to the chorus, including students who have never sung in a group." But, Daniel later wrote in an email that, "Only four [students] joined after my CA General posting about repertoire."

This year's selection includes pieces from the musical West Side Story; Tuxedo Junction, a 1940's jazz piece; a spiritual selection; and selections from the musical,

they think is a lot of old music,

but the old music is always the most fun." Another singer, Claire Wright '11, is not worried about this year's smaller chorus, explaining, "The chorus certainly has fewer voices this year, but the people who are in chorus are so dedicated and so talented that I think the program is just as strong as it has been in recent years."

The CA chorus is open to all students with no audition. It rehearses twice a week, sings two to three major concerts each school year, and goes on a small tour every other year. If you are interested in joining Chorus, talk to Keith Daniel.

Inside this Issue...





Students Return to a Changed Campus

by Kate Nussenbaum ’11

While CA students and faculty were relaxing over the summer, the Operations staff was busy constructing classrooms, installing carpeting, and putting up benches. In total, the school spent between \$500,000 and \$600,000 on physical improvements to the campus.

Upon arriving on campus, many students first noticed changes made to the ASL and the surrounding patio. Eight new wooden benches now sit near the quad on the newly landscaped terrain. Director of Operations Don Kingman said, “Part of the master plan we did a couple of years ago said that for somebody brand new to the school, they get to the quad by Aloian, they don’t really have a notion of where do I go? There’s about eight doors. Which one’s the main school? It had no definition. One of the suggestions was to create a sense of arrival. And so I did that with small dollars, buying those benches and doing a little bit of landscaping to create definition.”

Kingman also said that the ASL itself posed a safety problem. He explained, “Whenever I have the fire department here and we do fire drills, they go absolutely nuts on me because, well I call it Grand Central Station, everything’s intersecting there and you can’t get out.” He explained that the doors opened into the banister of the stairwell. To improve traffic flow, Kingman and his staff moved the doors about two feet farther from the stairs and put up coat hooks so students could hang their backpacks rather than tossing them on the ground and blocking the walkways.

In addition to the new seating at the front of the school, Kingman added new seating to the Stu-Fac patio. “The Stu-Fac patio has been on my mind for years,” he explained. “It was kind of a no-man’s land... We didn’t have enough seating indoors or outdoors for things and it’s a great joy to see people using them.” He also added what some students now refer to as the “Deli counter,” a stretch of countertop along the railing on the second Stu-Fac level above the freshman pit. Kingman explained, “I was thinking, “How do I tweak a little more seating into the Stu-Fac?” For like a thousand bucks we slammed that together.”

Last year’s flooding and the addition of the Mandarin program also called for some new construction. Kingman’s team converted the flooded English offices in the South School basement into a new Mandarin classroom. Christine Wu ’11, who has a class there, said, “It’s very spacious. It’s nice having a change.” The Language Department will also benefit from the new Language Lab, which occupies the space where the Writing Center and the sophomore English classroom used to be.

Kingman explained that the Operations crew also did substantial work within the student houses. They redid some of the bathrooms, replaced all of the furniture, and added new curtains, which both block out more light and add an extra layer of insulation. Camille Newton ’11 said that

the changes within the houses were her favorite. “They put up curtains that aren’t see-through and the old furniture was really gross. It just improved my daily life.”

Eva Frieden ’11 agreed that the changes were positive. “They make the school feel newer, more in the times.” However, her first response to the changes was “Where’d the money come from?”

Head of School Rick Hardy said, “Every year the school budgets money to refurbish the campus, to repair, add, renovate in order to enhance the facilities for the school. We’ve got a certain baseline of money that we anticipate we’ll need every year. This past year through a mild winter, we negotiated a favorable price for fuel, coupled with some pretty significant conservation savings meant that in effect we had a pot of money that we hadn’t anticipated having.” He explained that they had two choices; they could return the money to the endowment, or they could spend it. “You can’t,” he explained, “roll it over into the next fiscal year. It doesn’t work like that.” He, along with Kingman and the Board of Trustees, decided to put the money towards physical improvements. “We recognized that it was a tight budget year, but because of good management we had the opportunity to do something.”

Hardy said that the majority of the projects were not just about improving how the campus looks. “If you think of the new classroom in the SHAC or the new language lab, those have direct benefit to the academic program. I would argue that the lion’s share of [the changes] are designed to enhance the teaching and learning environment.”

As for what changes are made, Hardy said that Kingman is mostly in charge of that planning. “He develops those ideas based on a number of conversations with administrators, David Rost, John Drew, Pam Safford, Judi Seldin, all sorts of people to determine what projects get done.”

Though \$500,000 may seem like a lot of money, Hardy said that the percent of money CA spends on its physical plant is very low compared to most other independent schools. “We could easily spend twice or three times what we typically spend.”

In the long run, many of the changes made will save CA money by reducing the utilities bill. Kingman listed some of the less noticeable changes that will reduce the school’s energy bill. The PAC lights and the Stu-Fac lights were both changed. “We put LED lights in the Stu-Fac,” Kingman explained. “They use about 80% less electricity.” He also replaced every refrigerator on campus with energy star refrigerators, fixed the broken seals in the house windows, and replaced the single-pane glass windows in the ASL with double-pane glass for better insulation. “Can I quantify and say that by changing single-pane glass to thermal pane I’m saving this much?” Kingman asked rhetorically. “No.” He explained that many factors affect the utilities bill, like how cold this winter is, and how careful students are about shutting windows. “But,” he said, “intuitively, I know it’s the right thing to do.”

New Teachers

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...Joining the Math Department is Mark Rios, who is teaching Geometry this year. Rios was raised in Chicago and spent some time in Puerto Rico during his childhood. Rios attended a high school with a graduating class of 700 students, and then earned his undergraduate degree at MIT. While working as a statistician at the Harvard Business School, Rios discovered his passion for teaching. He explained that as an assistant to professors at the graduate school, “What I found during the statistics job was that I really liked explaining how things work to the grad students and the professors... sometimes I would get into trouble for going on too long helping someone with a programming language.” Rios’ fluency is not limited to Geometry, he speaks easily on topics ranging from game theory to philosophy to programming.

John Kuntz, a Cohasset, MA native, is teaching playwriting this fall. The author of 14 full-length plays and a founding member of the Actor’s Shakespeare Project, Kuntz won the 2010 Elliot Norton Award for his play “The Salt Girl,” which he worked on with David Gammons. Kuntz’s accomplishments are evidence of an enthusiasm for theater that he hopes to instill in all of CA’s budding playwrights.

In an environment where having both specific expertise and a wide range of interests are celebrated, new orchestral director Mark Latham will feel right at home. Latham has extensive experience in music – he has worked, taught, and even conducted internationally – but his experiences are widely varied. He is the

leader of a meditation group, a competitive squash and tennis player, and a member of the Canadian Alpine Club. Having taught as a substitute at CA for a number of years, Latham now looks forward to a permanent position in the Music Department.

Rumors of a Mandarin program have been brewing in the Stu-Fac for years, and this year those rumors have become reality. Wenjun Kuai, a native speaker, will lead the program, which currently offers levels 1 and 2, as well as a special course for “heritage speakers” wishing to refine their skills. Kuai received a traditional Chinese education until college, which allows her to draw on the teaching styles of her home country as well as American methods. Kuai explained, “A lot of [my experiences] as a Chinese student really helped to create me as a student and as a teacher.” Kuai is temporarily working with Bei Ju, an experienced Mandarin teacher who will aid her in launching the program.

Also from China (Shanghai, specifically) but raised in the US is Zhe Lu, a Chemistry teacher. In addition to holding a PhD from MIT in organic chemistry, Lu is a black belt in Aikido (and is interested in starting an Aikido program at CA), and is more than capable of helping any Latin students with their homework. Lu has already revamped the Advanced Chemistry course to allow his students to grapple with the concepts of quantum mechanics. He said, “I think what I bring is my love of science and enthusiasm for learning, and you can never have too much of those two things.”

The New Carpet

Kingman did not pick out the geometric carpet that now covers the SHAC, the new classrooms, and the library for its aesthetic appeal. Framed in his office is a certificate that reads:

InterfaceFLOR would like to acknowledge Concord Academy. This certificate is to acknowledge that 2,751 square yards of climate neutral Cool Carpet from InterfaceFLOR have been installed. Your carpet purchase results in the retirement of 40 tons of verified greenhouse gas emission reduction credits which are associated with the entire life cycle (from raw material extraction through end of life) of your carpet.

The carpet is environmentally friendly because it is made out of recycled materials, has a rubber back, and does not require glue, which gives off harmful vapors.

Kingman explained that the carpet has other benefits as well. “Why do I like this carpet so much?” He asked, and then immediately answered his own question: “It’s omni-directional. I can put it any which way and there’s always a random break in the pattern, so if you spill something, you can rip out a square and place it any which way.”



The new coat hooks in the ASL (above article), and the new language classroom. Photos by Natalia Winkelman ’11.

New Orleans Trips

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...Dean of Students David Rost, who chaperoned the 2007 and 2008 trips said, “The New Orleans trip is a great mix of hard work and a lot of fun.” In the evenings the group had the chance to explore New Orleans: students shopped in the French Quarter, attended jazz concerts, and ate beignets – deep fried French donuts covered in powdered sugar.

Students also had the opportunity to speak with residents of New Orleans to try to understand their situation and hear firsthand accounts of the storm and relief efforts. For most on the trip, these conversations were the most meaningful and memorable moments of their time in New Orleans. “It seems like New Orleans has been hit with a constant avalanche of bad luck, first with Katrina and now the oil spill, but it’s amazing to see how the people down there can always stay so upbeat,” Odiaga said.

However, for many of the students who have returned to New Orleans several times, it is difficult to gauge the impact of the CA trips. Lato explained, “The actual work we did was so small compared to the

total damage done by Katrina. But, if 100 schools did what we did, it would make a huge difference.”

Kate Nussenbaum ’11 explained, “When you talk to the people down there, the fact that a bunch of kids from New England care enough to help means a lot... it showed them that we support them and that we want to educate ourselves on the situation down there; it really makes a difference.”

The New Orleans trip is not just beneficial for the recipients of the service; the students also seem to gain a lot from the experience. According to Odiaga, the most common responses he receives when he asks why students chose the trip are either “because I have been here before and could not wait to come back” or “because someone said I really should experience the trip for myself.”

For those interested in the experience, CA will return to New Orleans next summer. Odiaga said, “I’m hooked on the New Orleans trip, and as long as there are kids who want to go, I will continue to help make it happen.”

Orientation Recap

by Esme Vallette ’12

This year, on the sunny afternoon of August 27th, ninety new students arrived at Concord Academy Orientation, having to face the task of beginning their careers at a new school. Despite their initial anxiety, the new students seem to feel their orientation experience was a perfect start to their time at CA.

This year, there were fewer Orientation leaders than in previous years – 30 as opposed to the typical 45 –, which proved to be a useful change. Julia Levinson, a returning Orientation leader, sensed the benefit afforded by the reduced number of leaders: “There were fewer friend cliques among the orientation leaders, which allowed us to really connect with the new students.”

Jeff Desjarlais, a school counselor and Health and Wellness teacher who runs Orientation, explained the change in an email: “We went from 45 to 30 [leaders] and that changed a lot of our planning in regard to activities and how we were able to get some of the more focused tasks accomplished. Sadly, it meant that we could not bring back as many returners as we would have in the past, but it worked out well.”

During Orientation, new students learned the basics of CA such as how to navigate the campus and how to read their schedule. They also were introduced to

the different Deans and to their advisors. Orientation leaders guided the students on tours around the school, showing them where many of their classes were located. Julia Sprague ’14, one of the new freshmen at Orientation, said, “The tour was really helpful because it showed you how to get from A to B.”

Rather than meeting with their new advisor over lunch as was the case last year, each student was given a private time to meet with his or her advisor in which the student could ask any pressing questions. Desjarlais wrote that the

change allowed for “a less hectic Stu-Fac and more focus on the advisor meeting.”

Orientation also provided the new students with the chance to bond with each other. Whether it was eating, playing name games or duck-duck-goose, drawing posters, or square dancing, all the new students were always together, allowing them to really get to know one another before the returning students arrived back on campus. Last year, rainy weather caused the square dance to be moved, but this year the sun shone as students “swung their partners” on the chapel lawn, listening to the new square dance caller, Noah. Phoebe Chatfield ’14 said that the square dance “was a little awkward at first, but fun when you got over the awkwardness.”

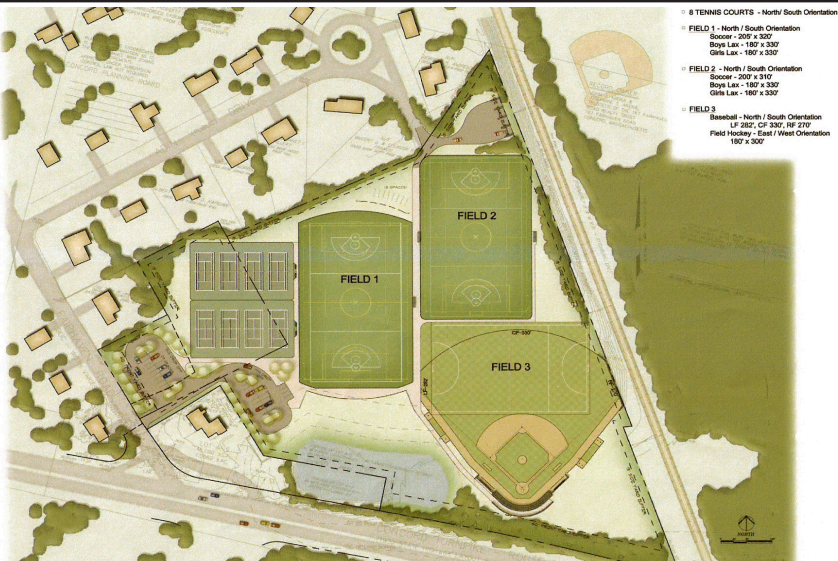
Orientation leader Grace Blewer ’11 said, “Noah had a great wardrobe. I had so much fun, except all my froshie partners were better than me.”



New students and Orientation leaders enjoy the square dance. Photo by David Rost.



An Orientation group gets to know each other on the quad. Photo by Julia Levinson ’12.



The map shows the master plan for the development of Arena Farms. Image courtesy of Rick Hardy.

Arena Farms: Sowing the Seeds of CA’s Future

by Dan Weiner ’11

While Arena Farms remains undeveloped since Concord Academy purchased the 13.6-acre parcel of land in the summer of 2007, it has become the “leading strategic priority” for CA, according to Head of School Rick Hardy. Hardy explains development of the land “gives the school a unique opportunity to imagine what we need on a fundamental level for the coming 20 to 25 years.”

In the fall of 2008, the Board of Trustees created a master plan for the entire campus, including Arena Farms. Two years later, Hardy says that the development is still in the conceptual phase. The proposal calls for the creation of extensive athletic facilities at Arena Farms: one baseball field, two multipurpose fields, eight tennis courts, and a small building. Hardy is enthusiastic about these plans because, unlike the fields on the main campus, the site is flat and well drained; he points to the severe flooding of the athletic fields last spring as a prime example of the limitations of the main campus and the promise of the project.

Director of Operations Don Kingman shares Hardy’s enthusiasm. He says, “Arena Farms is a great piece of property for what we want to do.” For instance, Kingman anticipates utilizing a small pond on the property for field irrigation. He also hopes the property benefits more than just the CA community; since CA sports teams would only use them for a few hours each day, he envisions Concord youth groups enjoying the facilities as well.

The prospect of athletic fields at Arena Farms provokes a variety of responses from CA students. Lena Stein ’11, a member of the girls’ varsity field hockey team, is thrilled by the idea of playing outside of the flood zone. “We would have a place to practice where we do not have to worry about messing up the fields with our sticks and cleats,” she says. One the other hand, Josh Suneby ’11, a captain of the boys’ varsity tennis team, thinks that while new tennis courts would be a welcome improvement, he fears, “We might have fewer student supporters at our home matches because the courts would be off campus.”

In Hardy’s opinion, one of the central benefits of the Arena Farms development would be the space liberated by the potential relocation of the tennis courts. Hardy envisions numerous possibilities for this plot on the main campus: perhaps “a performing arts facility that matches the quality of work that gets done in that department,” or a classroom building to ease the space squeeze, or a student center to address “the absence of a gathering space.” In addition, the campus master

plan calls for an expansion to the Math and Arts Center and an increase in the size of the student houses to allow for more faculty apartments. Indeed, over his 16 years at CA, Kingman has never seen such an opportunity to enhance the central campus. Hardy admits that his vision for the development is ambitious, and he jokes that if every proposed improvement were realized, “I would probably have to be here for about 20 years.”

The initial timeline for Aren’a development has been extended. Hardy believes that there are two factors that have delayed the project: the economic recession and the timing of his installment as Head of School. “The school did not want to move ahead until they had identified a person who was going to be in this seat,” Hardy says. The economic recession struck shortly after CA named Hardy as the next Head of School. He believes that due to the financial turmoil, “people are being more cautious in managing their own resources.” He adds, “We have to have the money in hand before we put a shovel in the ground,” explaining that it is easier to garner support for a proposed project than for a completed one. While the school could borrow money for the project, Hardy says, “taking on that kind of debt in this economy would not be good fiscal management.” In the hopes of expediting the fundraising process, CA recently named a new Head of Advancement, Kathleen Kelly; furthermore, Carol Anne Beach moved from her position as Athletic Director into the Advancement office as a Major Gifts Officer. Once the school raises the funds, Kingman believes that the athletic facilities will be ready for use in twelve to fifteen months.

Despite the uncertainty of the current economic environment, Hardy reports that CA has received a number of significant donations and is nearly halfway to its fundraising goal. The school has a rough estimate of the cost of the project, and only after submitting a design proposal to an engineering firm will CA have a more precise figure. The school is currently considering designers, and Hardy says, “We are in active conversations with people who can help us get this done.”

Hardy and the Board of Trustees are currently managing the Arena Farms project, but Hardy “looks forward to working closely with the incredibly creative CA community” in future phases of development. When imagining the possibilities for the project, Hardy says that he is “committed to preserving and protecting CA,” especially the “crackle of life” he observes everyday. “In the end,” Hardy says, “Arena Farms allows us to enhance what is already a terrific school into an even better one.”

Life of Pai

by Michael Ruscak '11

Concord Academy has a policy of admitting few if any students after sophomore year, but for over 14 years, a senior has joined the school through the Thai Scholar program. This year's Scholar is Pai Buabthong.

The Thai Scholar program has been around for much longer than CA has been involved. King Rama V developed the first Royal Thai Scholar Program in 1897, with the intention of gaining western information and skills essential to building his nation. The King selected Thailand's finest students and paid for them to attend western universities and bring back their knowledge. Today, no Thai King handpicks the scholars; instead, students with an "A" average take highly competitive exams to determine who will be eligible. Different government departments also offer scholarships for students wanting to specialize in a specific field. But the original King's Scholar Program remains aimed at more broad-based learning. King's Scholars study at overseas universities and then must work in Thailand in return for the support they received through their undergraduate years. Scholars sponsored by other government departments are under contract to serve two years working for their sponsoring organization for each year of education received, including graduate school. The program used to begin in college, but in 1992, Thai Scholars started attending an American prep school for a year to receive an orientation to the



Pai Buabthong. Photo by Kevin Cho '12.

American culture and educational system. It is through this program that we welcome Pai Buabthong to Concord Academy for the 2010-2011 year.

Buabthong's experience began last October when he took the exams to determine his eligibility to receive a scholarship. This was followed by a five-person interview in January. Buabthong chose to receive a scholarship from the Ministry of Science, Technology, and the Environment because he already had determined his concentration of study to be physics and alternative energy, which he said, "will be important in the future." His scholarship will pay for him to study through graduate school. He hopes to eventually earn a Doctorate.

The Thai scholars are given a choice of several prep schools at which to spend their senior year. Buabthong chose Concord over other schools including Deerfield, Brooks, Andover, and Middlesex because CA was listed as a "top school for Physics." Once Buabthong has completed his year at CA, he hopes to continue his studies at Harvey Mudd or the California Institute of Technology, possibly following in the footsteps of last year's scholar, Sid Assawaworarith who attends Caltech now. Although CA differs considerably from the public school he attended in Bangkok, Buabthong says that he has found Concord a "very nice place to study." Besides continuing his education, Buabthong also hopes the program will allow him to gain "language and life experience."

At Tufts, Jennings Admits

by Scott Berkley '12

"My first job at Pomona, I didn't have a computer," says Director of College Counseling Peter Jennings, as if betraying a trade secret. "For a while we shared a little cluster of computers we did publications on, but..." His voice trails off, leaving me to fill in the picture of a bygone era. It is a bright fall morning and I am sitting in Jennings' office while he lays out the spread of his career as a college admissions officer. He certainly looks the part in wire-rimmed glasses and neatly pressed khakis, but the twinkle in his eyes suggests a joy not often associated with SAT scores and yield rates.

Last year Jennings took a sabbatical and journeyed to Tufts University to work as a college admissions officer for the first time in 12 years – "I was interested to see how admissions had changed," he says. "My sabbatical was an amazing opportunity for me... Look at what has happened in thirteen years: the volume of applications is different; technology has changed the admissions process."

As a college counselor with a background of working as an admissions officer, Jennings knows the college process in uncommon depth. "I always knew I wanted to work in education: my dad was a teacher, my grandmother was a teacher... but when I got out of college, I realized I was young [to teach], so I took a job as an admissions officer to stay in education."

After working for five years in southern California, first at Pomona College, a small liberal arts school, Jennings decided he wanted to move back to New England. His inspiration came from a summer job at Andover. "It was awesome," he says with satisfaction. "Being part of their summer boarding school, I thought, 'This is everything I've ever wanted.'" At Andover, Jennings saw an opportunity to have a better connection with the students whose applications he was reading. "You don't have the same contact with people when you're in the admissions office. You meet people, but they don't always approach you in the most authentic way... When I went

to this summer program, I realized you could have more honest relationships with students. That's when I thought, I want to come back to New England and live at a boarding school."

Jennings eventually arrived in Concord after a stint at Harvard-Westlake, a private day school in Los Angeles. As Jennings has grown into his role in the CCO (College Counseling Office), the college world has been changing around him. Back in his time at Pomona, elite public and private colleges "knew where the majority of [their] applications were going to come from. Now, they're coming from everywhere." Having acknowledged this as one of the challenges facing Concord Academy today, Jennings says approvingly, "It's the great democratization of admissions."

Such a sweeping change seems like a daunting and perplexing challenge for any CA student applying to college. However, Jennings, or "PJ" as students know him, has a two-word solution for students: supplemental writing. "As the common application has standardized admissions, the supplements have [helped to] distinguish students," he says. Furthermore, Jennings sees the Internet as a great source of material to strengthen one's supplements. "The amount of information that's out there for students is so vast," he says. "Social media has dynamically changed the way students do research on colleges." Specifically, Jennings notes, students must use the information they glean to write supplements showing interest in the school in question, or else run the risk of showing "active disinterest."

Jennings continues, "At Concord Academy, we need to be even more aware of our reputation to colleges." Though this statement caps his speech about "democratization," it might as well be a mantra for PJ's return to CA with even more knowledge and experience under his belt. After all, this is a man with several dozen coffee cups sitting above his desk, each one emblazoned with a different college logo, and he's been in contact with each place for more than a cup of joe.

On the Campaign Trail with Deval Patrick

by Dan Weiner '11

I should have looked less grim. I guess it was a result of trying to appear a devout supporter of a leader. I felt happy in the moment, a little nervous, but excited nevertheless. Perhaps the semi-circle of leering TV lenses pinched my smile, or was it the imagined plotting of my well-dressed, 20 year-old co-workers whispering behind the arc of cameras? Or thoughts like, what if I have to itch an embarrassing spot on my forehead? What if my sign wobbles and falls behind me into the Charles River? At that unpleasant notion, I grasped the wooden post a little more firmly. All of a sudden I remembered the faint spot of raspberry jam on the bottom of my blue polo shirt. I sincerely hoped that the podium would cover this unsightly smear and save my attire if it appeared on the 6 o'clock news.

Suddenly, the energy at the gathering changed. All heads swiveled towards the snout of a black Cadillac Escalade that had just arrived. Blackberry devices were quickly stored as if to prove that the collective attention, once scattered in cyberspace, had always been focused on the imminent arrival of the automobile. All chatter ceased. As if cued by the silence, three doors of the brutish automobile clicked open with unnerving synchrony. Out of

the front two doors emerged burly men in dark suits. A short man gingerly lowered himself out of the third. Dressed in a crisp gray suit and shiny dark shoes, Governor Deval Patrick gave the assembled crowd of journalists, political advisors, and campaign workers a wide smile and began strutting, the two guards dogs in wake, toward the podium, toward me.

This event was a thrilling end to my internship with the Deval Patrick Reelection campaign. For most of July, I enlisted in the small army of high school and college students devoted to helping Governor Patrick gain a second term in office. Every morning, I rode two buses to the Campaign headquarters in Charlestown. Normally, I was one of the first workers to arrive, and,

as the clock approached 10 a.m., the office gradually filled with young adults from the Boston area. As the number of interns and staff swelled, their fervor peaked as well: since everybody was genuinely passionate about prospect of the Governor's reelection, even the senior staff took on mundane tasks with enthusiasm.

As a junior intern, I was entrusted with a variety of jobs ranging from the interesting, such as writing a report detailing how the Governor allotted federal stimulus funds to the cities and towns of Massachusetts, to the mundane, such as taking out the trash. For all duties, regardless of their gravity, I felt that I was making a difference in the campaign. I



Deval Patrick speaks to his supporters. Photo courtesy of the Deval Patrick Campaign.

was often asked to complete mailings, and as I stuffed, sealed, and stamped thousands of envelopes, I realized that interns and volunteers are the motors of political campaigns. While there is probably a pricey machine that could process these mailing in an instant, the required funds are much better used on commercials or other publicity.

The intern coordinators knew that even to the most ardent worker, an endless stream of repetitive tasks could eventually become unpleasant. To ward this off, we often attended field events and embarked on other exciting campaign travel, including a behind-the-scenes tour of the statehouse, visibility at the 20th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and errands all around Boston.

The most thrilling event, however, was the press conference where Governor Patrick accepted endorsements from three environmental groups and gave a speech about his environmental policy. That day, I accompanied a handful of other interns and staff down to the Esplanade. Upon our arrival, we all grabbed tall, rickety "Vote Patrick & Murray 2010" signs and headed toward the meeting area. To my great excitement, a political aid ushered a few interns and me to a post directly behind the podium. It was only a few moments before the black Escalade arrived.

The CA Gridiron

by Gaurav Verma '13

“David Rost has seen his better days!” taunted Eitan Tye '12 as he strode confidently past the Dean of Students' office. In response, Rost later threatened “to knock him on his backside.” This smack-talk is in anticipation of the upcoming all-school touch football tournament on October 2nd. The four classes will compete against each other for a chance to play the faculty team for the championship.

Led by Rost, the faculty team features stars such as Academic Dean John “Long Arm” Drew and Director of Operations Don “The Block” Kingman. Last year, in a hard fought battle, the faculty defeated the Class of 2011. This year, the stakes are higher: should the faculty emerge victorious again, Football Club co-heads, Will Levinger '11 and Connor Murphy '12 have vowed never to make an

announcement again. The Monday football announcements are ingrained in CA tradition, making the final game a must-win for which-ever team faces the defending champions.

At last year's tournament, players displayed good sportsmanship, and all teams played their hearts out though the tournament was somewhat marred by injury. This year, everyone hopes to avoid any accidents.

Students are getting ready for the game day brunch and an exciting afternoon on the gridiron. We will soon see if football club has made its last announcement, what grade will be crowned school champions, and if David Rost does indeed “knock Tye on his backside.”

It's not too late to sign up to participate in the tournament. The sign-up sheet is located outside David Rost's office.

Chicago: Dance Company to “Razzle Dazzle”

by Marina Fong '14

Some of the performers in this Fall's mainstage production of the musical *Chicago* were cast long before audition lists went up. Last Spring, the Performing Arts Department chose to include Dance Company in *Chicago*, a decision that makes perfect sense from the points of view of directors, choreographers, dancers, and actors.

Although Jennie Israel, both a theatre teacher at CA and the show's director, credits Performing Arts Department Head and dance teacher Amy Spencer with the idea, she is equally as enthusiastic about this addition. Spencer, the main choreographer for *Chicago*, said, “Both the stage production and film versions of this show rely heavily on the medium of dance to carry the story forward.” So, including dancers from the company should allow the show to be staged more effectively. It is also not unprecedented to join a number of ensembles in CA productions. Last year's production of “Les Mamelles de Tiresias”, was the result of collaboration between the Dance Company and the Chorus.

The Dance Company will be filling several roles in *Chicago*. According to Spencer, in some numbers they will act as background dancers along with the ensemble cast to improve the overall effect of the production, and in others they will mirror the movements of the lead actors. Israel said that this effect would be created using the shadows and silhouettes of the dancers. In addition, Dance Company will perform many of the most challenging dance sequences in the show because they

have higher levels of technique and more experience than most other cast members.

All of these plans are still preliminary and will develop and evolve as rehearsals for the show progress. Both Israel and Spencer look forward to finding new roles for their dancers and new ways to use the Dance Company to enhance the performance.

One member of the Dance Company, Sarah New '11, will be helping Spencer choreograph the show. And since the Dance Company has an extra two and a half hours a week together for their course, they will have more time to learn the choreography than the typical mainstage production schedule allows. This added time will also provide Spencer and New with the opportunity to focus on choreographing dances for the core roles.

When asked about any difficulties that may arise as a result of the decision to join those who did not audition with those who did, Spencer replied that she couldn't foresee any. She noted that The Dance Company is a group of very strong dancers, and will supplement the strong actors, singers, and dancers that have been cast. Israel foresees only the usual difficulties that come from attempting to create a show from three separate art forms and 29 performers. That being said, she's also very excited for the chance to work with the Dance Company in the upcoming performance.

Opening night of “Chicago” is Friday, November 12th at 7:30 p.m. There will be another performance Saturday, November 13th, also at 7:30 p.m.



*The cast of Chicago.
Photo by Emma Starr '12.*

Jenny Brennan: New Position, New Hopes

by Ryan Hussey '13

How can the Concord Academy community become more excited about its athletic program? This is the question Jenny Brennan hopes to tackle this year as the Acting Director of Athletics. When previous Director of Athletics Carol Anne Beach moved to the Advancement Office last spring, Brennan was thrilled to assume the position. Brennan says that her objectives are twofold: to encourage students' excitement about athletics regardless of their involvement in the department and to support successful teams and programs in the year ahead.

While Brennan acknowledged that CA “isn't a pep rally type of school, and it never will be,” she hopes to see an increase in attendance at big athletic events. Brennan explained, “The atmosphere at the Battle of Concord and Lexington was great last year, and we want to strive to create that atmosphere again throughout the year.” She recognizes that increasing game attendance can be difficult given students' commitments, but Brennan hopes to bolster the turnout through organizing a stronger announcement process for teams with home games.

Brennan also wants to reintroduce the Athletics Council: a group of students devoted to improving the athletic program and generating enthusiasm for teams. She hopes this group will make weekly announcements about upcoming games and results from prior competitions. Among other possibilities, she also envisions Athletics Council making T-shirts for big events and organizing athletic spirit days.



*Director of Athletics Jenny Brennan.
Photo by Angela Qu '12.*

Brennan is also excited to support the development of Arena Farms, a 13-acre parcel that CA purchased in the fall of 2007. She is thrilled about the prospect of new fields on the property because it will allow the school to re-imagine the sports facilities on campus. Since Arena Farms is not in a flood zone, the fields will not suffer from the annual flooding that plagues the current fields.

While many believe that budget cuts motivated recent changes to the athletic program, reducing the number of intramural and junior varsity teams, Brennan counters that they were based solely on enrollment. Brennan also said, “If the enrollments increase, we will make appropriate adjustments to our offerings.”

Brennan is ready to become more involved in a program about which she is deeply passionate. She said, “I see so much value in athletics, and can't wait to see what we can do this year as a program.”

Connecting Through Musical Diversity

by Lola Ogundipe '12

Lady Gaga, Justin Beiber, Drake, Taylor Swift, and Kanye West are names that typical high school students are familiar with. But what about Beck, Joshua Randon, Kylie Monolie, and Avan Brothers? These are names of musical artists that CA students have researched, listened to and fallen in love with. CA students rely on more than the radio and the Billboard Top 100; they rely on resources such as Pandora, satellite radio, blogs, Wikipedia, family members, friends, movies, plays, and television as tools to diversify their play lists. At CA different people come together and immerse themselves in different styles of music.

Lena Stein '11 and Oliver Bruce '11 spend a lot of time both making and listening to music. Stein believes that songwriting allows her to express herself. “Listening to music can express how you feel. Sometimes the simplest lyrics can speak to you,” she says. “Country is the genre that I primarily listen to because it's all about stories and experiences that are relatable.” Bruce '11 says that he plays instruments but also is interested in digital music. “I started making mash-ups freshman year and ever since then I have been DJing for school events. Listening to dance music has really helped,” he says. Bruce also listens to Indie music and uses web sites such as Hypemachine to read about various artists and music blogs. Bruce uses an analogy to explain how he relates to music: “Music is like a pet. It takes time and energy to grow. You need to take care of it. Practice with it, walk it. The normal things you would do to take care of any pet.” Though he does not play music that

frequently anymore, Andrew Zarins '11 says, “Music is one of the few points of culture that I can actually hold a discussion about.” He adds, “CA can be a really intimidating place, musically. But I've found that I enjoy listening to music more and learning about artists such as Beck and Omar Solaman.” He also wishes that there were more opportunities to play music for fun at CA, so it could be a hobby and not a serious pursuit.

But there are many students like Stein '11 who want to take their passion for music to the next level. Stein explains her summer of interning and doing work backstage for James Taylor and Carole King: “I was able to set up events and learn the business aspect of a music career. I had a great experience because I was surrounded by music, both mine and others, and it really helped me to decide what I wanted to do in my near future.”

There are many music clubs at CA that allow students to come together, share and talk about new music. One club, Hip Hop and Soul, with co-heads Eliza Harrison '12, Tiffany Nova '11 and John Hall '12 offers students the chance to do just that. Harrison '12 mentions, “The goal for this year's club is to collaborate with the new student magazine called “Drop” to write a lot of articles about art and music. Hip hop and soul always puts people in the best mood.” Nova '11 adds, “There's a nice range of musical interests within the student body since not everyone listens to mainstream music, and I'm always learning from other people. Even though a lot of my music can't be classified I would say that I listen to a lot of hip hop.” She advises others to be open and willing to listen to the variety of music around them; chances are they'll hear something different every day.

Shirtless America

by Andrew Zarins ’11

A few weeks ago I was sitting on the ASL benches when I noticed a group of boys removing their shirts. Now under normal, summer circumstances, I would have thought nothing of it, but considering the outside temperature was in the mid-sixties, as it usually is in late September, it struck me as odd. Fifteen minutes later at sports, it was the same deal: the boys were taking their shirts off again! Sure it makes sense in athletics, running shirtless and all, but starting off without a shirt as opposed to removing it after warming up, that’s like starting your car in second gear. Even when I lived in Hobson, people kept their clothes on. In my freshman and sophomore years, I can’t remember seeing so many un-



Matthew McConaughey relaxes without a shirt. Photo courtesy of blog.zap2it.com.

robed people. It seems to me that this “epidemic” started gathering steam on campus last year, and has gained more ever since. So what’s going on here? It seems like a stretch, but I think it may have something

to do with a greater trend that is sweeping the United States: the rise of nudism.

Believe it or not, but over the past twenty years, Americans have in astonishing numbers begun to dress down publicly into their costumes d’anniversaire (excuse my French). Between 1992 and 2003, Americans increased their spending on nude vacations from \$120 million to \$400 million. And over the past decade, the American Association of Nude Recreation (AANR) has reported a 75% membership increase with now over 50,000 registered nudists. Respectable establishments like Caesar’s Palace in Las Vegas have added topless pool options to their facilities in the past few years and people even sit around their yards naked, like Matthew McConaughey, who is known to play bongos on his porch in the nude.

But if you think that an increase in American nudism would predict a mushrooming surge of the same in Europe, think again. Though you may be under the impression that Europeans are the world’s foremost leaders in naturalism and buff beaches, it appears that, in the same twenty years in which Americans have begun undressing, Europeans have done opposite. In the 1980’s Europe had 25 million registered nudists, but now the continent has just three million. Even in 1980’s Croatia, part of ultra-suppressed Yugoslavia, nudism was popular. The country had 24



Members of the cross country team run shirtless. Photo courtesy of Nick Phillips ’11.

naturalist colonies with Croatians spending 5.1 million nights a year at them. Now the 12 nudist camps still around are struggling to survive as Croatians spend fewer than 2.1 million nights in the nude. In an article from a 1962 issue of Time magazine, the author boasts of a boom in West German naturalism since the Second World War. But since that time, Germany has lost more

than half of its card-carrying nudists and the ones remaining are mostly over the age of 50. So much for fresh bratwurst.

But let’s go beyond the new skin on campus. I think that this radical shift has social connotations greater than those pertaining to the naked human body. Naturalism is to me a very left wing and liberal attitude. In other words, you probably won’t catch Glenn Beck on a nude beach or at an AANR meeting. And if you do, chances are he’s not there because he supports the cause. Along those lines, it seems to me that over the past two decades Europe has become more conservative, while the United States, more liberal. Twenty years ago, the fall of communism in Eastern Europe brought along with it mass immigration that led to a swell in bigotry and racism across the continent. The liberal social systems of many countries began to fail, leading to a shift in European voting tendencies and attitudes from the left to the right. In traditionally liberal Holland, right wing, anti-immigration politicians like Geert Wilders are gaining ground, while the French work to deport



President Obama hits the beach without a shirt. Photo courtesy of hollywoodgossip.

Roma people and ban headscarves. In Sweden, 40% of the Muslim population reports incidents of verbal abuse in regards to their color or religion, and in several German states, extreme-right political parties hold seats in parliament. That a decline of naturalism in Europe over these past two decades is merely coincidence is hard to believe.

Are America’s problems with racism and hate as intense as those of Europe? No. The closest we have to a politically legitimate extreme right wing is the Tea Party, and even they don’t express any real bigoted sentiments. The whole issue of the Mosque near the World Trade Center site is nothing compared to the threat that Geert Wilders proposes to Holland of banning Islam all together. Recent studies show that around 30% of American marriages in the past few years have been interracial, and the once four million-strong Ku Klux Klan is now down to fewer than 10,000 members nationwide. Oh yeah, and we just voted in a black president.

So next time you see someone strolling around on the quad shirtless or walk in on Mr. McConaughey playing bongos on his porch, see it for what it is: find assurance in the fact that it’s the new big thing; all colors welcome.

Why My Parents Were Wrong: Reflections on CITYterm

by Eva Frieden ’11

In January of my sophomore year, I brought home the shiny green and blue brochure that I had picked up after the CITYterm presentation at CA. My parents frowned. Spend a semester studying in NYC rather than at CA? No way. It didn’t seem necessary. Why leave home before you have to? If Concord has so much to offer, why go elsewhere? And if Concord doesn’t have so much to offer—why are you there?

I understood their points, but I was dying for a change. There was a lot I liked about Concord, but I also wanted to study in New York City. I loved cities. And I wanted a break from the constant pressure at Concord to produce and excel. CITYterm offered a different approach to learning—a more hands-on approach—and I thought it might be a better match for the way I think and learn.

So I applied. But when I was accepted for the spring of my junior year, I still had to convince my parents that this was a good and not a bad thing. I think I wore them down, because in the end, they let me go. And I’m really glad they did.

CITYterm is not for everyone. One of the 30 high school students in our group last spring much preferred the more traditional sit-in-the-classroom academics of the school she came from. But not me. I loved being part of a group of 30 teenagers from around the country, learning in a perpetually active and interactive setting.

When you read a book at CITYterm,

you don’t just read the book and write a paper. For instance, when we read a memoir by a homeless man who had lived under Grand Central Station for 10 years, we then spent some time with that man, asking him about his experience. In that same week, we worked with a local organization and delivered food and supplies to groups of homeless people in Manhattan. At the end, we wrote a synthesis of our thoughts about all aspects of the experience.

When we studied gender issues, we not only read texts on the topic, but also visited F.A.O Schwarz to identify gendered toys, and scouted Times Square for ads that reinforced gender stereotypes.

CITYterm, to the extent that it’s possible, emphasizes learning by doing. We closely examined buildings and bridges, saw movies and plays, visited neighborhoods and talked with local people in our endless attempts to understand more fully what we were reading and discussing. Even in my other subjects, CITYterm took an interdisciplinary approach. In my French class, we discussed our most recent city expeditions. In math, we discussed how

to graph the parabola-like cables of the Brooklyn Bridge. I liked the way classes often blended together, reducing the stress of transitions to and from different parts of my brain.

CITYterm is very much about studying the urban world we live in: housing projects, immigrant neighborhoods, transportation, food sources and more. It’s about raising questions that may not have obvious answers and thinking about different ways of thinking. The emphasis is not on grades, but rather on working collaboratively, observing closely and reflecting deeply. Because the program is so small, its 30 students often set the agenda. For instance, after not allowing Internet access the first week of the semester, the faculty left it up to the students to decide if and when they wanted to activate the Internet (right away, as it turned out!) For the most part, the teachers, although very knowledgeable, are only several years older than the students. This creates an equilibrium of sorts—it felt as if we were all doing the learning together.

But as much as I relished CITYterm’s interdisciplinary and active approach to learning, I realized that without the base of knowledge and skills I had

accumulated my freshmen and sophomore years and junior fall at CA, I wouldn’t have been able to take advantage it of or appreciate it fully. Almost every day when I woke up at CITYterm, I’d pinch myself. Wow. My parents had been really wrong, CITYterm was the perfect complement to my CA career. CA’s curriculum is valuable, but don’t be afraid to leave it for a semester; for me, that experience proved invaluable.

Have something on your mind?

The Centipede welcomes Letters to the Editor.

No anonymous letters will be printed.

The First Step in a Winning Season

by Tess Mellin '12

Maybe, just maybe a winning season has a little something to do with early practice. Those elusive goals, team unity, fitness and even staying injury free may all be possible with one simple thing. When it comes right down to it, the time and effort a player puts into preparing for a season makes all the difference, especially in team sports, which is why having a pre-season really is the key to having an advantage over your opponents.

It is a simple fact that a team that has been practicing longer together always will have an advantage. Not only does the extra time together allow for the players to reconnect with one another, remembering how they work together on and off the field, but it also provides a time before the stresses of the season and school year set in when all athletes can work to regain a level of fitness they may have lost over the summer. During preseason, a team has the opportunity to work together and push one another to develop better fitness collectively, so everyone can begin the season on a similar foundation.

Pre-season is also an important time for injury prevention. Many of the repetitive drills aimed at improving fitness help to improve strength in many of the key muscles used in a particular sport. This time devoted solely to training, before the stresses of competitive play are added to the mix, greatly decreases the risk of getting injured. When muscles are properly reintroduced to the intense physical nature of competitive sports, they are far less likely to be damaged.

Many of the schools that Concord Academy faces in the Eastern Independent League (EIL) have taken into account the importance of pre-season when arranging their back-to-school schedules. League powers such as Beaver Country Day, Pingree, and Portsmouth Abbey all have a week or more dedicated to pre-season training for all of their fall athletes. Portsmouth Abbey holds a week-long pre-season in which fitness tests are conducted along with several practice sessions each day. All athletes stay on campus for the entire week, living in a dorm with their teammates. This time seems to be dedicated not only to improving skills and fitness for the upcoming season, but also to creating team unity and cohesion that is crucial to success on the field. On top of this intensive week of practice, Portsmouth Abbey athletes are also given a mandatory weekly workout for the summer to prepare the athletes for pre-season, a pre-pre-season if you will. Pingree has followed suit, holding an even longer pre-season. Their pre-season lasted from August 23 – September 4, with a two-hour practice for each team every day.

Lasting only two days, CA's pre-season schedule does not live up to the rigorous nature of those of the other schools that we will compete against throughout the fall. Though the obstacles the athletic department faces when arranging any extensive time for pre-season training are obvious, especially at a school like CA where so many of the student athletes live so far from school, a longer preseason is a crucial step towards better preparing our fall teams to meet the challenges posed by the other schools.

campaigning, and all-school events like the Dance.

Girdwood: We also plan on doing the [Chameleon] relay again. Another thing we are really excited about is the Head of the Sudbury, which is going to be a bunch of [canoe] races similar to the Head of the Charles.

Do you have any big projects in mind?

Girdwood: We have this huge extended community that goes beyond those currently at CA, including past teachers, alumni and parents that we would like to take advantage of. We are hopefully going to be working with the alumni office to create a database that students can use to get connected in a certain field, get a job or a summer internship.

Wu: It's very ambitious but we'll see how it goes.

How do you both work together?

Girdwood:I think we do a good job of working with and knowing each other's strengths. We keep each other grounded. Yet, the best thing is probably that we are really encouraging of each other.

Wu: Club Expo was kind of our big test, and we figured out how to balance each other out and everything went smoothly.

Reflections on Appalachia: Restoring Life

by Charlotte Weiner '13

In the early morning of June 6th, 2010, I, along with thirty-five other CA students and eight chaperones, gathered at Logan Airport to begin our service trip to Pipestem, West Virginia. After a quick plane ride to Dulles Airport near Washington, D.C., we piled into vans and traveled west. Six hours and one torrential rainstorm later, the caravan pulled up to a vast field that surrounded the Appalachian South Folklife Center, our home for the next five days. Beyond the parked cars, a gravel driveway led to a dining hall, three cabins, a small chapel, a performance stage, and an expansive field that dropped off to reveal a beautiful view of the surrounding mountains. Later that evening, we met the director of the Folklife Center, Shelly, a hospitable and kind woman. She introduced us to our surroundings and explained the origin of the Center.

The next morning, we ate a quick breakfast and divided into two groups. One group went to work at the house of Eunice Raines, a reticent but amiable elderly woman who lived near the center of Hinton, the town closest to the Folklife Center. The second group headed to the home of Iris and Tommy, an outgoing couple that lived on the outskirts of Hinton.

Over the next five days, the states of the two properties significantly improved. We covered the outside of Ms. Raines' house with primer and then with a new coat of paint; her kitchen soon sported a fresh layer of paint as well. After the group removed the trash from the yard,

we cut back trees and bushes. The group also cleared the space under her porch, and some students constructed a new handrail that enabled Ms. Raines to walk up to the street. Finally, the group scrubbed her roof free of debris. At Iris and Tommy's, the students also painted the exterior of the house. The group also weeded and cleaned the yard and purchased and planted flowers

for her garden. Other students repaired the gravel driveway.

During the afternoons and evenings, we enjoyed a variety of activities. One rainy afternoon we visited a coal mine. Another day, we explored the state park and climbed a lookout tower to see the panoramic view of the valley below.

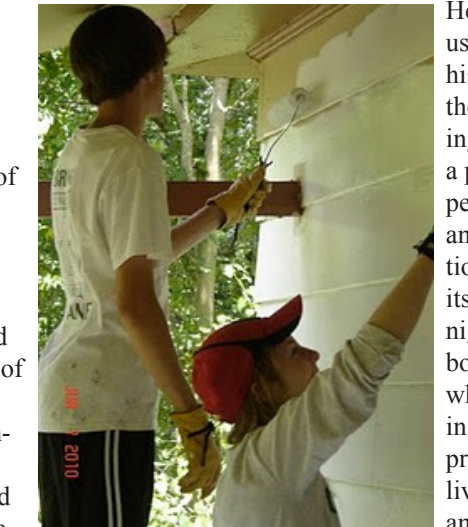
One evening, John Wyatt, a founding member of the Appalachian Cultural Heritage Alliance, visited us to talk and to sing about his life in Appalachia and the history of the surrounding area. Another night, a park ranger shared his perspective on Appalachia and answered our questions about the region and its residents. On the final night, we built a large bonfire and cooked s'mores while reflecting on our days in West Virginia. We were proud that we affected the lives of Ms. Raines, Iris, and Tommy. Although they expressed their gratitude in different ways, we believed that they all appreciated the work that we had done.

Not only did this trip give us the opportunity to restore two homes, but it also exposed us to the rural poverty that is prevalent in many parts of the country. While attending a school like CA, it is easy to forget that

many parts of the country suffer from rural poverty like that found in West Virginia. We often take for granted amenities like running water and other services that are not always available to the residents of Pipestem. That week in Appalachia gave us an appreciation for a culture and region of this country so different from our own.



Students work in Appalachia. Photos by Charlotte Weiner '13.



Check-in with Mr. Hardy

by Andy Zou '13

While students and faculty alike make the transition from the leisure of summer to the rigors of the school year, Head of School Rick Hardy has already established his goals for the 2010-2011 school year. First of all, he is determined "to build on the very good year that we had in 2009-2010."

Hardy also hopes to keep CA a sustainable and desirable place for both faculty and students alike. He wants to continue to attract talented prospective students by making the school's tuition more affordable for families through an expansion of the Financial Aid program.

Hardy regards the school's teachers

and staff as a unique group of high caliber individuals. He says he will continue to provide for the needs of faculty and staff with the "support and resources to allow them to pursue new ideas in their classes or to take on new roles at CA."

In the long-term, Hardy believes a school like CA needs world-class facilities that match the quality of the educational program. Key to this vision is Arena Farms, a property CA purchased in the fall of 2007 with the hopes of developing the parcel into athletic fields. While the fundraising effort for this development has been quite successful thus far, Hardy maintains that the timetable is still indefinite. Still, Hardy hopes that Arena Farms will help CA realize his dream of a stronger, sustainable, and more dynamic future.

Q&A with Head of School Dani Girdwood and Vice Head of School Christine Wu

by Kathleen Cachel '12

What would you say is your primary goal for the year?

Girdwood: Our biggest goal is to have a healthy and happy community. We want to incorporate some stress-reducing activities, some fun events, pick up where other leaders have left off with their plans, and come up with new ideas and outlets for any angst and anxiety.

How do you plan on gathering student input for Council?

Girdwood: We are planning an anonymous student drop-box on CABBS. Whatever students place [in the drop-box] there is a going to be a direct line to Council. Whether the message is an issue with something like trashcans or an idea for an event, Council will talk about it.

Wu: We created the drop-box with the idea of strengthening communication within the community. The messages, seen only by Dani and me, will help Council address issues.

How do you plan on strengthening the community?

Wu: We think the community is already pretty strong, but we want work on keeping it that way and even making it stronger. We plan on doing stress-free

The Centipede

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The Centipede is the official student newspaper of Concord Academy. The paper welcomes comments from its readers in the form of Letters to the Editor. No anonymous letters will be printed. The Centipede reserves the right to edit all articles for length and content.

Horoscopes

by Nick Phillips ’11

Aries (March 21 – April 19):

Live today as if it were your last day to CABBs chat with that freshman girl you’ve had your eyes on since orientation. Remember that it’s not cute and flirty to start a chat and then leave a minute later because you “have to do homework.”

Taurus (April 20 – May 20):

Sleep well tonight; tomorrow holds a great challenge for you. You may be able to avoid it temporarily, but it will only return with greater force. Face the challenge now while it is at its smallest.

Gemini (May 21 – June 20):

Do not be afraid to take a risk involving mixing foods in the Stu-Fac. Nutella and peanut butter sandwiches have been around forever, but ice cream mixed with the two is a less-well-known treat. But always remember, hot sauce is usually not an appropriate flavor enhancer when milk or ice cream is involved.

Cancer (June 21 – July 22):

Do not be afraid of the mysterious. Today, someone you know very well will prove to be your enemy. Be prepared to seek sanctuary in the unknown.

Leo (July 23 – August 22):

Be cautious as you approach your math teacher today. She may have told you that “there are no stupid questions,” but resist the urge to ask if she will check the homework tomorrow. Beware of similar mistakes that could reveal your inner slacker.

Virgo (August 23 – September 22):

You may feel that it’s time to begin a diet, but do not worry, this is a common reaction after almost a month of Stu-Fac food. Rejuvenate yourself with a trip to Chang An’s. But if you really are trying to cut calories, avoid their lunch buffet.

Libra (September 23 – October 22):

Today, you will be asked a question with only

one acceptable answer. Do not be fooled – when David Rost asks in his sweet-talking voice if you would please pick up the napkins on a table, he is not really asking.

Scorpio (October 23 – November 21):

Be mindful of special events in others’ lives. For instance, forgetting to plan a party for your friend’s birthday is an inexcusable offense; organizing a last-minute trip to buy cake and ice cream at Crosby’s won’t make up for it. You will be thankful when your own special day comes around.

Sagittarius

(November 22 – December 21):

You may think that you are being unproductive today, but that is only because you are viewing productivity too narrowly. Open your mind. Perhaps a Facebook chat with your ex will not turn out to be a waste of time.

Capricorn (December 22 – January 19):

If you think that that dreamy Virgo in your critical computing class is eying you, think again. He probably just wants to cozy up until you’re ready to open up about your computer programming skills and help him snag that easy “A.”

Aquarius (January 20 – February 18):

Flirtatious text messages are one thing, but asking about the science homework via SMS is unlikely to set any romantic chemistry in motion. Instead, try complaining about the class and saying that you can’t wait until the weekend comes. Then you can smoothly transition to talking about your weekend plans and slyly ask, “Will your parents be home on Friday night?”

Pisces (February 19 – March 20):

Take advantage of the opportunity to watch *Jersey Shore* online for free. Make sure to note Mike “The Situation” Sorrentino’s daily body maintenance plan consisting of Gym, Tan, and Laundry, the GTL. It’s past the time of year to hit the beaches, but rock-hard abs are appreciated in any season.

Editorial: Commitments and Trying to Have it Both Ways

by Scott Berkley ’12

CA students are married to their schoolwork. There is a shining light that academic success sheds on students, one that makes us work ridiculously long hours with no clear end. Students’ motivation comes in different forms; for some it’s college acceptance letters, for others, parental approval, and for others still it’s about personal satisfaction. No matter the reason, the feeling is the same: academics are why we go to Concord Academy in the first place. Besides academics, our lives are structured around other seemingly immovable forces like musical theatre and athletics. But why are these things so well established, and not others? Do we, perhaps, become so blindly over-committed to a few ideals that we fail to see the tableau of life that high school could be?

As much as it may seem like the punchline to a joke, here is a fact: I am a co-head of CAOS, the Concord Academy Outdoor Society. This “role” has made me think about the way CA perceives importance. I barely do anything in the position besides posting anti-vitriol to the club conference, which, while entertaining, hardly leads to time spent outside. It is partially my fault that CAOS rarely does anything, and likewise for other clubs’ co-heads in the same position. However, a club is not about its co-heads, it’s about its members. Take, for example, Word Club, an upstart. Although playing bananagrams is considerably simpler and perhaps better for de-stressing than going backpacking, both activities have worth, but one takes more time than the other. While it wouldn’t be out of the blue for a student to skip homework for a game of bananagrams at club block, it would be improbable, imprudent even, to spend the weekend in the White

Mountains with a crunch week coming up.

It seems to me that too large a divide has emerged between what CA students perceive as “necessary” and everything else that gets left by the idealist wayside. In the case of CAOS, as one member wrote on the conference last spring, “doing nothing” is not catastrophic. But isn’t this acceptance of doing nothing problematic within itself? Passion above requirement is not a CAOS issue, or even a clubs-at-CA issue. The problem at stake is passion. When one acts without emotional backing (and commitment), personal integrity is at stake, not just canoeing on the Sudbury. When it comes down to it, will you take the established way, the normal, respected choice, or will you do what you truly desire? CA is supposed to prepare us for the real world, and that means making tougher choices.

More disappointing to me than any CAOS woe was last year’s disappearance of the Needle, CA’s once-upon-a-time version of The Economist. Forget that typos riddled the issues, the Needle was really doomed by its lack of school support and a less-than-excited group of members. Unlike the Centipede, it was never a firmly established periodical with wide readership. The Centipede gets letters to the editor from teachers and administrators, while the Needle mostly got recycled. For such an enterprise to work, in the way that the Chameleon does year after year, it needs a group of passionate individuals working for personal satisfaction and nothing else.

If we intend to learn how to love learning while at CA, we must also know how to love doing, not because it is straightforward, school-supported, or impressive to an outside observer or assessor, but because it is a valuable opportunity, and all such opportunities, when backed with passion, are worthwhile.

Roving Reporter: *What are you looking forward to this semester?*

compiled by Ashley Briggs ’13

Andreas Gallego ’14: Soccer season.

Nick Manos ’14: Skiing season.

Debra Haartz ’14: I’m looking forward to field hockey and the psych days.

Alex Aeppli ’14 and Ishbel McCann ’14: We’re looking forward to dances.

Marisa Kager ’13: Halloween!

Bona Chang ’13: Better weekend events than last year.

Eleni Hughes ’13: For Word Club to further impose its awesomeness upon the world.

Will Murphy ’13: Accel Physics, because it is math but better—cooler applications.

Taylor Briggs ’12: Seeing how the fall CA sports teams do.

Michelle Wiryadi ’12: Finishing my research paper!

Sam Miller ’12: The start of wrestling season. Also, starting to get more into physics, and reading Kingly Air.

Katalina Gamara ’12: Weekends, so I can sleep, also voice lessons, and Theatre III.

Max Villareal ’12: Watching Piranha 3D

Olek Lato ’11: Hearing all my classmates’ chapels.

Alex Fichera ’11: I am looking forward to demons building a film crane mounted on the Demonator. I’m also looking forward to Photoshop club. Also, savoring my last moments of my childhood, like the starved lover, who gazes into the last candle on the mantelpiece as it softly extinguishes into the good night.

Emily Hughes ’11: Watching word club.

Elwin Sykes: To adapt as effectively and quickly as possible, and to work with my sophomore students here.

Marco Odiaga: Making best use of this smart board technology!