

March 2008

Dear Parents of Graduating Seniors:

With winter ending and spring upon us, our thoughts turn toward the upcoming Academy commencement. We hope you can make plans to join us beginning on Saturday, May 31—the first day of family graduation activities. The graduation ceremony runs from 10:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 1. Rain or shine, there is unlimited seating for family and friends of the graduating class.

Please refer to the enclosed Graduation Week Schedule for times and details of all planned events. Or visit our Academy website at “www.exeter.edu” and click on “Parents” for graduation information.

Housing: To reserve rooms, parents and adult guests should make direct inquiries to the various hotels in the Exeter, Portsmouth and Hampton area. Please check the Academy website under “Parents” on the homepage for a link to the various hotels and motels in the area. Younger siblings and high school-aged friends may sometimes be housed in dormitories by arrangement with your child’s adviser. Off-campus seniors are welcome to return to campus on Thursday, May 29, but not before.

When to arrive: There are no events scheduled for parents and friends before Saturday, May 31. However, most parents, friends and families arrive either Friday or Saturday.

Special Events: The Cum Laude Society will host a ceremony and luncheon for senior members and their families on Saturday, May 31. New members will receive invitations on Friday evening, May 30.

Parking on Sunday: Parents are asked to leave their vehicles near their son or daughter’s dormitory. Other guests will be directed by the safety/security staff to the boiler plant parking lot off Court Street (Rte. 108), behind the gym and the tennis courts.

If the weather favors an outdoor ceremony, the roadway in front of Peabody Hall and the driveway beside Bissell House will be cleared for emergency use only, while Front Street will be closed to traffic. Drivers of cars bearing elderly or handicapped guests should ask the police officers for permission to use the Peabody roadway to let off their passengers, and then should park elsewhere on the street. If the ceremony is held indoors, the main entrance will be the gym ramp. Elderly or handicapped guests should be driven to the yard between the old gym and the Cage, and enter the gym through the back entrance below the new squash courts and by the training room.

Invitations or tickets are NOT required to attend the Graduation ceremony and there is unlimited seating based on a first come first serve basis: Please note that there is ample seating, inside or out, and thus there is no limit on the number of guests a senior may invite to the graduation ceremony.

Each senior will be given five free graduation invitations by the Exeter Bookstore—one of those invitations is enclosed. After spring break the other four free invitations will be placed in each senior’s PO Box. If parents and/or seniors want additional invitations, they can be purchased for \$1.00 each at the Exeter Bookstore or by calling the Bookstore at (603) 777-3500.

Photographs: To minimize the number of people taking pictures during the ceremony, the school has contracted with an outside still photographer to take a photograph of each senior at

the time he or she receives the diploma from the principal. Commencement Photos, Inc., 1348 Main Street, Tewksbury, MA 01876, (978) 851-5924, will contact you shortly to offer you their services. While the school realizes that many parents may wish to take their own pictures—still or video—it is the Commencement Committee’s hope that those doing so will be thoughtful of other spectators and work as inconspicuously as possible.

After the Ceremony (approximately noon): Graduation ceremonies will end at approximately noon. Immediately following the ceremony, a buffet lunch will be served in front of the Academy Library. All in attendance at the day’s events—graduates, families and friends—are invited. Although some families choose to make reservations for a lunch in the Exeter area and/or leave when the ceremony is over, the majority of families remain for this last meal together—a festive send-off for the graduates, and their family and friends. Either option is, of course, completely at the discretion of each family. You may wish to make travel plans that include an extra hour or two if you choose to attend the buffet lunch.

Financial Obligations: Seniors must pay all Academy and town obligations prior to graduation in order to receive their diploma. Seniors will receive a special notice in May outlining procedures to be followed in reviewing their status. Diplomas will be withheld until all obligations have been fulfilled.

Alcohol and Tobacco: We look forward to a joyous celebration. However, in keeping with the Academy’s alcohol and tobacco policies and state law, we remind you that alcoholic beverages—including champagne—are forbidden on campus both before and after graduation. Also, note that Exeter is a smoke-free campus for students, and as such, we discourage the use of cigars after the ceremony.

Post-Graduation Parties: The Academy remains concerned about the existence and nature of post-graduation parties where teenagers consume alcohol. The Academy does not condone underage drinking. We want you to be aware that more and more states are passing legislation against the hosting of such parties. In New Hampshire, a property owner, or one in control of property, who hosts a gathering of five or more unrelated people under the age of 21, knowing that these persons possess or intend to consume alcohol, may be charged with a misdemeanor, punishable by fine or up to one year in jail. Already, New Hampshire law enforcement officers have charged at least one parent under this new law. While alcohol laws may vary from state to state, the Academy encourages you to check the laws of your state, for other states may also have become more proactive in trying to control underage drinking by holding adults criminally or civilly liable.

Should you have any questions about graduation, or if we at the Academy can help you in any way, please feel free to be in touch with me at (603) 777-3499.

Sincerely,

The Rev. Peter Vorkink
Commencement Committee