

News and Events

WATER, WATER, EVERYWHERE

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration referred to it as an “exceptional rainfall event.” N.H. residents who lived through the May flood would probably consider that an understatement.

In all, more than 16 inches of rain fell in Exeter May 10-15, flooding a low-lying portion of campus along the Exeter River, briefly canceling classes and putting the entire campus

on alert. While Principal Ty Tingley, school administrators and the safety/security department oversaw emergency planning, the facilities management department worked around the clock to forestall further flooding and to clean up damage around campus.

At a special assembly held in the midst of the flood, Principal Tingley told students, “This is a time when we need to pull together. There are a lot of folks

in Exeter and nearby who have been affected by this flood. One thing that you

can do is work to keep your own spirits up and everybody else’s as well.” Members of the Exeter Social Service Organization (ESSO) responded with an outpouring of support. With help from Community Service Coordinator Laurie Loosigian, ESSO members prepared food baskets and distributed them to those affected by the storm, both on campus and in the town of Exeter. A group of students, faculty and staff also assisted town employees with sandbagging efforts along the Squamscott River.

By May 16, the rains began to abate and classes resumed. Several spring sports teams saw their seasons curtailed, but they could still count themselves lucky. Flooding in Concord, NH, was so severe that St. Paul’s School was forced to cancel school altogether.

By June 1, the floodwaters had long receded and cleanup was near complete. At an all-school cookout held that day under sunny skies, Student Council President Charles Dameron ’07 thanked faculty and staff members who kept the school running smoothly throughout the flood. “It’s sometimes easy for students, self-centered teens that we are, to forget that there is an entire community that has been built to nurture us,” Dameron said. “If there is a silver lining to this storm, it is that this community has a better appreciation than ever of the hard work invested in this great school. It has allowed students to step back and recognize the incredible support we receive here.”



Lake Exeter? No, that’s an Academy playing field submerged under several feet of water after the Exeter River overran its banks. In all, more than 16 inches of rain fell May 10-15.

Exeter Angels to the Rescue

The same torrential rains that flooded Exeter’s playing fields deposited six inches of rain in my basement. Overwhelmed at the thought of where to begin cleanup of all the waterlogged items, I was both surprised and moved by the help I received from members of the school community. Marilyn Chew, dean of faculty office manager, and Laurie Loosigian rounded up an energetic band of students—Christina LaSala ’07, Maryl Ludden ’06, Sarah Sawtelle ’08 and Tom Smithburg ’06—to lend a hand. Earlier in the week Smithburg and other ESSO members had brought me a gift basket of homemade food. Inside was a card that read, “PEA community neighbors are thinking of you during your difficult time.” It brought me to tears.

That Saturday, Marilyn Chew arrived on my doorstep with my “troop of student angels” and a friend who brought his truck. My sister, Janet, and I opened the cellar doors and everyone pitched in, quickly moving the damaged goods from cellar to truck to dumpster. What great teamwork! I could not have done it without their help.

Afterwards, we all sat around my kitchen table, talking and eating a home-cooked meal. I thanked everyone for their kindness and generosity, and for restoring my spirits as well as my home.

—Alice Ann Gray