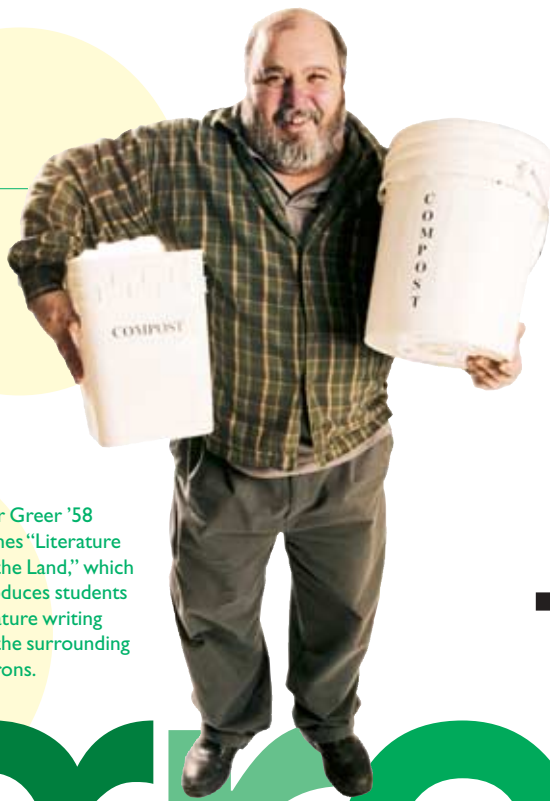


Stanley Babula is purchaser for dining services, where recycling, minimal packaging and composting are becoming standard practice.



Conservation and an improved energy management system have led to a drop in energy consumption, says Bob Kief of facilities management.



Peter Greer '58 teaches "Literature and the Land," which introduces students to nature writing and the surrounding environs.



the green

Together, students, faculty and staff are improving the Academy's environmental practices and creating a culture of lifelong environmental awareness.

By Marcia Tingley

Plus, interviews with alumni/ae environmentalists.

LITTER
CREW
AHEAD

Mark Trafton serves as faculty adviser to a student club that does highway cleanup in Exeter and neighboring towns.





Environmental education intern Pat Leslie '97 spearheads efforts like the use of energy-efficient fluorescent bulbs.



E-proctor Maddy Hartzell '04 helps coordinate recycling efforts in Hoyt Hall.

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It's Friday night in McConnell Hall,

and the dorm's environmental proctors (better known as e-proctors) are getting ready for their weekly recycling run. This year marks the first time all dorm rooms have been equipped with individual recycling bins, one for mixed papers and another for bottles and cans, and the e-proctors want to encourage the students to use them. What can motivate students to recycle, even if the trash bins are closer?

"Food!" says Chloe Frank '05, her laughter echoing down the hall. Anna Consla '05, Camille Avestruz '05 and Becca Austin '06 agree, and the four come up with the idea of a weekly Olympic-style recycle run. They draw posters to publicize their plan: one full bin of recyclables equals one slice in their drawing of a large pizza; once the pizza is completely filled, the dorm gets a pizza party.

The idea is a popular one, and the McConnell girls save up their recyclable materials each week to ensure they have full bins for the Friday pickup. Slowly but surely, the slices on the pizza poster are



Kate Galemba, supervisor of purchasing, has put PEA on a diet of recycled printer and copier paper.

Exeter



Key to the greening of Exeter has been the revitalization of the environmental proctor program, now more than 80 students strong. E-proctors like (left to right) Reid Singer '04, Chloe Frank '05, Jeff Wirken '04, Becca Austin '06 and Camille Avestruz '05 coordinate recycling of paper, bottles and cans in their dorms; the dorm with the best results wins the coveted "Golden Bin" award. Day student e-proctors oversee recycling in academic buildings.

colored, and in December the dorm gets its pizza party. What's more, the McConnell e-proctors win the first "Golden Bin" award, which is given to the dorm that worked the hardest at recycling each month.

After completing their recycling run, two e-proctors bag the items for the custodian to put out with the dorm's recycling on Tuesday morning. "It's important we don't add to the custodians' workloads," says Austin. Connie Simmons, lead custodian for the girls' dorms, agrees. "There's been a huge increase in the amount of recycling we're doing this year," she says, "but the students have been very helpful. At the beginning of the year, the lead e-proctors met with a panel of custodians to discuss how best to help each other. That really paid off, and the project became a joint effort."

"The kids are more aware and conscientious this year than in the past," adds Donna Jackson, custodian for Bancroft and Kirtland, who is reusing as well as recycling. She saves large empty toilet paper tubes for area elementary schools, which use them for crafts projects.

While the e-proctor program is not new, it

has been revitalized this year under the leadership of Amy Schwartz, instructor in history. Part of the new emphasis was to make the e-proctor position more visible and responsible, as well as to provide some formal training before school started in September.

Day student e-proctors play a role too, working with the custodians in academic buildings to handle recycling there. This effort started more slowly, getting underway later in the fall. Emma Loosigian '05 is the e-proctor for the Mayer Art Building, where she worked with the custodian not only on recycling but on replacing the incandescent light bulbs in the art studios with compact fluorescent bulbs that last longer and use considerably less energy. Loosigian's enthusiasm for what she does is contagious. "I can't imagine not trying to do what's best for the environment," she says. "My family has been

recycling as long as I can remember. It's as much a part of our lives as spending time outdoors."

Moving Hearts into Action

Recycling is just the beginning of PEA's new environmental awareness, however. The past year has seen a concerted effort to improve the Academy's environmental practices and to make all members of the school community more aware of their impact on the environment. In addition to strengthening the e-proctor program, the Academy has hired its first environmental education fellow and formed an Environmental Task Force (ETF) to oversee these efforts.

"What's unique about PEA's environmental efforts," says the ETF's chair, Assistant Principal Tom Hassan '66 (Hon.), "is that they're supported by every part of our community. Most institutions either start with a directive from the top or a grassroots effort from the bottom. The exciting aspect of PEA's initiative is we have both happening at once. Activities are bubbling up from within the community, with the students' ongoing efforts and the involvement of

faculty, students and staff in the Environmental Task Force. At the same time we have conversations with and attention from the principal and the trustees. As a result, the structure we're putting in place is much more solid."

The ETF includes representatives from every area of the school—dining services, purchasing, buildings and grounds, faculty and students—and meets monthly. Led by both Hassan and Pat Leslie '97, the Academy's first environmental education fellow, the ETF is tackling projects small and large, from how best to recycle students' plastic dry cleaning bags to educating itself about "green" or sustainable buildings. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), a program of the U.S. Green Building Council, sets standards for such buildings, and the Academy plans to incorporate LEED principles in the renovation of the former Thompson Science Building into the new Academy Center. Leslie and Don Briselden, the Academy's director of facilities management and an ETF member, have been exploring various options with Centerbrook Architects, the firm designing the renovation.

Conspicuous Conservation

Other activities on campus have been making quiet progress for some time. Kate Galemba, supervisor of purchasing, has had a significant impact through her efforts to increase the use of recycled paper in campus copiers and printers. "We use an enormous quantity of paper—five million sheets of printer paper in 2003 alone," she says. "And that doesn't include letterhead or envelopes. We're now using paper with 30 percent post-consumer content, which is cost-effective while also helping reduce the number of trees that must be cut down."

People all over campus praise Galemba for her ongoing behind-the-scenes efforts, hunting down vendors who can supply environmentally friendly products. "We've put in place a rebate program to encourage faculty to buy energy-efficient appliances," she says. "We've also been able to locate a good source for reliable and attractive compact fluorescent light bulbs, which are now in use in the dorms and many faculty homes."

Dining services has also made numerous incremental changes over the last few years. Stan Babula, purchaser for dining services, works with suppliers to minimize

Tim Wirth '57: Pursuing Global Solutions to Global Warming

Climate change, biodiversity loss, the pressures of population growth: despite decades of effort by dozens of international organizations, hundreds of treaties and countless meetings among concerned nations, the complex environmental problems facing our planet have yet to be solved.

If there is hope for workable solutions, it will be through the continued efforts of passionate individuals like the Honorable Timothy Wirth '57, president of the United Nations Foundation. Wirth's monumental task is to mobilize the United Nations to overcome the seemingly intractable challenges of environment and development in the face of fractious nations, corporate resistance and citizen inertia. His job is many faceted: creative thinker, negotiator, educator, fund raiser and grantmaker.

Wirth has led the foundation since its creation in 1998, when Ted Turner made his unprecedented personal gift of \$1 billion to support United Nations goals and international cooperation. It's a position that lets him combine a lifelong commitment to public service with the experience he gained during his five years as first undersecretary of global affairs in the U.S. State Department during the Clinton administration.

The foundation also allows Wirth to continue to pursue a special quest: reducing atmospheric greenhouse gases. During 18 years on Capitol Hill, first as a congressman from Colorado and then as a senator, Wirth was one of the first legislators to raise the specter of climate change's dire consequences. "Climate change is a keystone issue," he says. "It touches everything: energy, economics, the environment, national security, human health and poverty."

Wirth was also a progressive force for the protection of public lands. A photograph on his office wall shows President Clinton signing the Colorado Wilderness Act of 1993, which Wirth sponsored before leaving the Senate—legislation that protected 750,000 acres of high elevation alpine areas, and "one of the last major pieces of wilderness legislation we'll see for a while," Wirth says.

Wirth's search for innovative ways to check the warming of the planet leads directly to the issue of education. He suggests that Exeter "look at its footprint and become climate neutral"—assess the greenhouse gases produced by campus buildings and activities, and commit to tracking, capping and finding ways to offset those emissions. This could mean scrutinizing everything from travel by staff and students—for example, monitoring emissions from buses used to transport athletic teams—to the quantities and sources of energy used to heat dormitories. Students could calculate Exeter's carbon dioxide emissions and devise strategies to mitigate them as part of the math and science curricula.

The Academy's transition to becoming a more responsible environmental citizen might also be an opportunity to "make public service a much deeper part of the school," says Wirth. While climate change, like so many issues, may be a global problem, an effective response begins at home. "We're telling the rest of the world to put a cap on its emissions," he says. "Let's start doing the same thing."

—Wendy Vanasselt '87

Wendy Vanasselt '87 works for The Wilderness Society and is an avid backpacker, horseback rider and triathlete.



Tim Wirth '57 has been a tireless environmental advocate, first during his 18 years in Congress, and now as president of the United Nations Foundation.

Janet Diehl '77: Keeping Wide-Open Spaces Open

Conservationist Janet Diehl '77 protects the remaining open land in California from the merciless advance of shopping malls, subdivisions and commercial development. Her career began at the Trust for Public Land, where she helped establish land trusts in western states; then in 1988, she co-authored *The Conservation Easement Handbook*. Land trusts were coming into their own in response to the loss of forests and farmland to suburban sprawl. The use of conservation easements—legal agreements between landowners and land trusts or



Conservationist Janet Diehl '77 is author of *The Conservation Easement Handbook*, a bible among those seeking to protect undeveloped land.

government agencies that permanently protect open space by limiting future development—was also fast becoming an important private land preservation tool. The *Handbook* helped standardize practices and increase the professionalism of those working in the land trust field; it

remains the definitive “how to” book on conservation easements.

“Helping local land trusts is particularly satisfying,” Diehl explains, “because with just a little money, they accomplish so much.” Today she’s bolstering land trusts through her work at the California Coastal Conservancy, a state agency. She makes grants to acquire, protect and improve coastal lands and keep them accessible to the public; she also manages the conservancy’s nonprofit assistance program. “In California, it’s easy to see the pressure of population growth on the landscape,” Diehl says. “But it’s not just California—the cornfields around my old hometown in Pennsylvania are now tract houses. There’s no place in this country where you can’t see how important it is to buy land and just keep it open.”

Though Diehl left Exeter intending to be a writer, the Academy “pointed me towards the environmental field, even if I didn’t know it at the time.” Exeter’s Outdoor Challenge course, offered as an option for meeting the Academy’s athletic requirements, proved influential; the course included rock climbing, a camping trip in the White Mountains, and biking to the ocean. “Outdoor Challenge gave me a whole different view of the landscape around Exeter,” says Diehl. “I’d spent summers outside in beautiful places, but I’d never camped without adults. Courses that teach you how to have adventures on your own in the outdoors are important at that time in your life. It’s a set of skills that will help you keep your sanity once you get out of school and sit behind a desk all week.”

Current students, Diehl suggests, can reap these same benefits from the outdoor learning the area offers. Hands-on science, like creek and ocean monitoring, are important; she also suggests students could work on projects with local land trusts. “New Hampshire has one of the oldest and most respected land trusts in America—the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, a leader in policy and land conservation stewardship. Perhaps students could help the society monitor easements near Exeter,” she says.

But the key thing, Diehl reflects, is for students to get outdoors and to have fun. That could mean “participating in Outdoor Challenge [now known as Exeter Outdoors], or just taking a morning bird walk or skating on the Exeter River.” It’s this connection to the outdoors, she believes, that creates great memories, the best learning opportunities and a lifelong desire to protect the places we visit. —W.V.



Guiding the Academy’s environmental efforts is the Environmental Task Force (ETF), made up of faculty, staff and student representatives, including (above) Assistant Principal Tom Hassan; English instructor David Weber, environmental education fellow Pat Leslie, dining services purchaser Stan Babula (right); and history instructor Amy Schwartz (below, right). “What’s unique about our efforts,” says Hassan, the ETF’s chair, “is that they’re supported by every part of our community.”



their packaging and make it more environmentally friendly. Styrofoam cups are no longer used at alumni/ae events, and biodegradable paper cups, plates and bowls are used for events held outdoors. Energy costs have also been lowered by installing motion detectors in the tunnels under the Wetherell dining hall to control lights and by putting other lighting on timers.

Bob Kief, the Academy’s associate director of facilities management, meets monthly with the e-proctors and provides them with statistics on energy consumption they can use to educate their fellow students. “Our biggest focus right now is energy,” he says. “We’ve installed an energy management system and are putting all dormitories, academic buildings and gyms on it.”

While the program is only halfway done, Kief is already starting to see results. “Last summer, we started a program to turn out lights

when a facility wasn't being used. Beginning in November, our electrical bill has declined for three straight months, despite a very cold winter. We've reduced our electrical demand by almost 120,000 kilowatt hours over last year's consumption." That's a 4 percent reduction, which Assistant Principal Hassan calls "an amazing accomplishment."

Change Three Things

This ties into the ETF and e-proctors' major focus for the rest of the year, a campaign to



"Change Three Things" by conserving heat, water and electricity. In a competition organized by Pat Leslie and begun right after spring break, 10 dormitories vied to see which dorm could conserve the most electricity. Electrical meters were installed during February to measure baseline dorm usage for a month before the competition began. While only some dorms competed this year, Leslie plans to involve different ones next year. "Since every dorm will eventually be competing," says Leslie, "the goal is for every dorm to reduce its power usage."

David Rockefeller Jr. '59: Savoring, and Saving, the Great Outdoors

Deep blue Alaskan waters. The rugged coastline of Maine. The sawtooth peaks of Grand Teton National Park. These are only a few of the awe-inspiring places David Rockefeller '59 has explored in his lifetime. Threads of his youthful and adult outdoor experiences are woven throughout all his efforts on behalf of the environment.

"My environmental consciousness began early, but I didn't tap into it until later," Rockefeller reflects. A love of hiking is backdrop to his current tenure as vice president of the National Park Foundation, a congressionally chartered nonprofit that raises private support for America's most spectacular public lands.

Similarly, after a sailing expedition to Alaska in 1991, Rockefeller joined the board of the Alaska Conservation Foundation to help raise and distribute funds to protect the state's ecosystems and promote sustainable livelihoods for Alaskans. Rockefeller devotes special attention to Alaska because he worries others do not. "I work in New York where everyone lines up to give to the Central Park Conservancy—and that's wonderful—but few in the lower 48 are interested in Alaska. It's so far away and so sparsely populated that we assume it doesn't have serious environmental problems, when in fact there are many."

Growing up sailing with his parents led naturally to Rockefeller's concern for oceans and coastlines. That concern translates into service with the Pew Oceans Commission where, he says, "after I retired from business, I could put my legal and management training to use." Rockefeller and his fellow commissioners recently completed a national study of the health status of U.S. marine waters and life; their recommendations for federal legislative reforms would help protect ocean ecosystems from over-fishing, pollution and coastal development. Also out of Rockefeller's sailing passion comes a new pursuit: launching a nonprofit called "Sailors for the Sea" to rally this important constituency on behalf of oceans. He asks, "If sailors don't care about marine health, who will?"

The Academy of Rockefeller's student days wasn't particularly environmentally conscious, but it did afford him other important gifts. "There were," he recalls, "a couple of English teachers who encouraged me to be a better observer, and thereby a better writer about what I was observing. That is very important in the work I do now as a communicator of environmental concerns." He also notes with appreciation his training in Latin, useful in scientific work, and the long-term perspective that his history classes instilled. "Both these things are important when you're involved with coastal issues," he says.

As for environmental education today, Rockefeller encourages Exeter students to study the condition of beaches, forests and other places just a bike ride away. On a more philosophical note, he suggests that students "take a long view of issues—a perspective that is hard for all of us, but particularly for the young, whose focus tends to be 'here and now.' Yet, changing human behavior to reverse the environmental damage we're causing now typically requires perseverance over decades."

Rockefeller hopes, too, that Exeter invites reflection on the pursuit of happiness and goals unrelated to materialistic gain. "Experiences in nature, like exploring national parks, cost very little and bring great satisfaction while instilling the importance of protecting these places," he points out. The best education, he believes, promotes not just individual success, but the importance of society as a whole. "It would be wonderful if the leaders who come out of Exeter espouse and live those values."

—W.V.



David Rockefeller's love of the outdoors has led to his involvement with the National Park Foundation, the Alaska Conservation Foundation and the Pew Oceans Commission.

Carol Lee Rawn '80: Using the Courts to Clean up Boston Harbor

"Crime isn't just about assault and battery," says Carol Lee Rawn '80. "Pollution can also be a crime." Rawn, an attorney with the Conservation Law Foundation in Boston, holds companies and governments accountable for crimes they commit against the environment and assures peoples' right to clean air and water.

Rawn spearheads multiple lawsuits and policy efforts through the Conservation Law Foundation (CLF), which utilizes the law, economics and science to defend New England's natural resources, communities and human health. Right now, Rawn is using the courts to force the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority to control combined sewer overflows, as well as bacteria and toxin-laden storm-water runoff, that pollute public beaches in South Boston. Such efforts are, she says, important for area residents who "may not have a lot of other recreational options, and who should feel safe bringing their kids to the beach." This case is one of the final parts of the historic federal law-

suit that the Conservation Law Foundation filed in the 1980s to force the cleanup of Boston Harbor.

Another part of Rawn's current caseload is CLF's challenge of a power plant that is decimating fish populations by spewing a billion gallons of heated water daily into Mount Hope Bay. Because many coal-burning power plants use similar cooling systems, this case is strategically chosen; a "win" could leverage other efforts to require power plants to improve their processes and comply with the federal Clean Water Act.

Rawn's interest in environmental issues grew from her love of the outdoors—from youthful backpacking, hiking, cross-country skiing and biking, all activities that she still enjoys. She enrolled in law school in order to become an effective environmental advocate, and went on to build a résumé combining the kind of nonprofit and government experience essential for an environmental attorney: a fellowship at the Natural Resources Defense Council; prosecutor of environmental crimes in the Massachusetts Attorney General's office; member of the legal staff in the office of former Massachusetts Governor William Weld; and then general counsel for the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. While her government experiences were rewarding and worthwhile, Rawn says she welcomes the opportunity the Conservation Law Foundation offers to escape political constraints.

As an environmental advocate, Rawn appreciates that Exeter "instilled qualities such as tenacity, which is important in environmental work," along with "the sense that you don't have to accept the status quo." Especially valuable, she says, were history classes that not only stressed the facts, but also encouraged students to question why events happened and what people could have done differently to change the outcome.

Among Rawn's suggestions for schools and colleges is one that Exeter has already adopted: buying local produce when possible. Buying locally grown food, she points out, helps support local farmers, important stewards of open space; provides fresher, more nutritious meals; and avoids the environmental costs of long-distance produce transport.

In addition to encouraging the school to think about constructing "green" buildings and incorporating environmental issues into course work, Rawn encourages students and alumni/ae to get involved with local environmental groups—or to start one. "Environmental issues are universal, and solving them will take everyone's involvement," she reflects. "So often people see environmental issues as the province of special interest groups. In fact, issues like clean air, clean water and sprawl should be of concern to everyone."
—W.V.



Conservation Law Foundation attorney Carol Lee Rawn '80 (shown here with daughters Brita and Anna) is working to clean up pollution of public beaches in South Boston.



The biggest environmental challenge facing the Academy, however, is its aging heating plant. Most of the Academy's buildings receive their heat through steam pipes coming from a central heating facility located behind the gym. "Any discussion of energy conservation in the winter raises questions about heating," says Hassan. The Academy currently uses more than 1.3 million gallons of heating oil a year. To cut down on heating costs, control valves have been installed on most radiators, old windows in dorms and faculty residences replaced with energy efficient ones, and controls upgraded on one of the boilers. Despite these improvements, the campus has many older buildings where the heat remains difficult to control.

In the meantime, Hassan, Leslie and the e-proctors work to educate the community on how to conserve heat, starting with some straightforward advice. "Put down your storm windows!" says Jeff Wirken '04. "Or at least turn off your radiator before you open your windows," adds Sarah Ettliger '04. Leslie used a protracted



Helping the Academy conserve energy is a new high-voltage yard, which enables facilities management to better control energy distribution on campus. Responsible for overseeing the yard are electricians (left to right) Ralph Moreland, Joe Keraghan, Bob Boyd and electrical shop supervisor Dennis Bolduc (not shown).

cold spell in January as a “teachable moment,” putting posters around campus spelling out just how much heating oil the Academy consumed on a single day when the temperature was below 10 degrees: one large tanker truck, or a total of 9,000 gallons.

While students, faculty and staff are grappling with the realities of turning environmental theory into practice, a trustee task force, led by Paul Goldenheim '68, is considering what role environmentalism should play overall. In 2002, Principal Tyler Tingley '48, '64, '01 (Hon.); P'99 and Trustee President Jim Rogers '63; P'05 realized that while environmental issues were discussed at both the elementary school and college levels, almost nothing was happening in secondary schools.

“We wondered why we had no courses in environmental science, for example, and why the same issues that were applicable to universities weren't also relevant to us, particularly since the Academy is the size of a small college,” says Tingley. Adds Rogers, “In the past, the trustees had virtually no discussions about environmental issues or Exeter's responsibility to consider them. The board clearly recognized we needed to remedy this.” While the trustees started to educate themselves about the issues, the Academy funded for 2003–2004 the first environmental education fellow, with a charge to both inspire and educate the school community.

The trustee task force is looking at issues such as understanding what environmentalism means to the school and where it fits in relation to the other

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Madison Condon '04: Turning French Fries into Fuel

It's students like Madison Condon '04 who put the “action” in PEA's Environmental Action Committee (EAC).

As part of an independent project during the winter term, Condon (who is a co-head of the EAC as well as an e-proctor) researched and designed a process by which the Academy can cheaply and efficiently run several diesel vehicles on a biodiesel blend created from the 2,000 gallons of waste cooking oil generated yearly by the dining halls.

While Condon has long had an interest in the environment, the impetus for this project came from an organic chemistry course she took last summer. With the help of Pat Leslie and instructor in science Alison Hobbie, she visited the Chewonki Foundation in Maine, which has a large biodiesel project, gathering grease from area restaurants to produce enough biodiesel to run four vehicles and heat two small buildings.

Condon plans to major in environmental engineering in college and views her project as a way to learn how to turn theoretical ideas like this into practice. After actually refining some of the oil, she hopes to be able to test the biodiesel fuel in one of the Academy's trucks; however, she has a preliminary test planned using a friend's dump truck. “This is such an exciting idea,” she exclaims. “In addition to running our trucks on a product that smells like French fries, the only byproduct from the process is glycerin, which we can then use as soap.”

—M.T.



Madison Condon '04 has researched and designed a process to run several diesel vehicles on a biodiesel blend created from waste cooking oil generated by the dining halls.

The Greening of Exeter

(continued from page 23)

priorities of the institution. While their product, an environmental mission statement, will not be presented to the full board until late May, some tenets are clear, says Goldenheim. “When students leave here,” he explains, “we want them to understand that those fundamental principles of the Academy, goodness and knowledge, also encompass the environment, and that there is a global impact to our actions.”

Knowledge, Goodness and the Environment

Jeff Wirken, co-head of both the e-proctor program and the Outing Club, thinks this is the right approach. “Environmental consciousness starts like a snowball,” he says. “I became interested in environmental issues because of mountain biking and being outdoors.” He thinks one of the e-proctors’ most important roles is to get ideas moving from person to person. “If you educate people, they will start to understand the consequences of their actions.”

Sarah Ettlinger, co-head with Wirken of the e-proctors and head of the Harold Ryan Society, which takes a hands-on approach to the environment by picking up trash at least five times a year in Exeter and neighboring towns, agrees. “The more you know about the environment, the more important it is to you,” she says. “I’ve always been very aware of nature, but I was never active until dorm mates got me involved.”

Peter Greer ’58; ’81 (Hon.), the Bates-Russell Distinguished Faculty Professor and instructor in English, agrees wholeheartedly. In the early 1970s, he created “Outdoor Challenge,” a course loosely based on Outward Bound, which combined

demanding experiences that fostered teamwork with skill-building and conditioning exercises. While Greer no longer teaches Outdoor Challenge (which survives under another name), he has moved on to create and teach “Literature and the Land,” an elective course in the English curriculum that combines exploration of the landscape with literature on nature. “One goal of the course is to give students an appreciation of the land around them,” says Greer. “For example, we read *In the Orchard*, a collection of poems by Charlie Pratt ’52. Then we spend an hour with Pratt in that very orchard, listening to him read the poems. Students have the chance both to appreciate someone else’s love of a piece of land and to learn to value that land themselves.”

David Weber ’71, ’74 (Hon.), instructor in English, has also been involved with environmental issues for more than 30 years. In addition to starting the Academy’s first recycling program, he has been active in efforts with the broader community, serving on the town of Exeter’s Conservation Commission and on several statewide conservation projects, as well as being involved for many years with a local land trust. As the developer of a senior studies course on the environment, he both teaches and practices environmental awareness. “Sustaining interest and activity over time is the key to ensuring we make progress with environmental issues,” he says. “One of the most important lessons we teach is that everything connects to everything else.”

Maddy Hartzell ’04 is co-head with Madison Condon ’04 of the student Environmental Action Committee, which is focused on topics at the regional, national and

international levels. Members read about issues, write letters to state and national legislators, help with the Academy’s annual spring cleanup day, and plan and present Earth Day. An e-proctor in Hoyt, Hartzell became involved with environmental concerns at PEA after a summer job as a volunteer park ranger at Big Bay State Park on Madeline Island, WI. “Educating people about the environment is especially important at a place like PEA where people have such different backgrounds,” she says. “Little efforts like turning off lights and saving water really do matter.”

Critical Mass on a Critical Issue

For the past two years, the Academy has been bringing in a variety of environmental speakers, including David Carroll, a well-known New Hampshire naturalist, writer, artist and turtle expert, and Alex Lee ’93, who spoke on the Superfund program. And this month, David Orr, chair of the environmental studies program at Oberlin College and a nationally recognized voice on environmentalism and sustainability, addressed assembly as part of a two-day session on environmental issues. Also featured were several young Exeter graduates active in the environmental field: Brendan Bell ’98, who works for the Sierra Club in Washington, D.C.; Jackie Errecart ’98, who is studying natural resource management at the University of Vermont; Becky Sanborn ’97, who teaches biology at Vermont Academy; and Pat Leslie.

Later this spring, following the annual cleanup day, the Environmental Action Committee will host Earth Day. “Last year we had hybrid cars, organic food samples, educational posters, live music and great attendance,” says Condon.

Adds Hartzell, “This year we want to make it bigger and better and get people really excited about becoming involved.”

Pat Leslie was involved in environmental issues when he was a student at the Academy, forming the Harold Ryan Society in 1995 with classmate Ryan Logan ’97. Leslie’s enthusiasm for the environment stemmed from a love of the outdoors, and he is a strong advocate for involving more students in the Outing Club. “Connecting with nature makes you understand why environmental action is so important,” he says. “There’s an amazing natural world around Exeter.”

Leslie’s involvement with all the environmental groups on campus is cited by students, faculty and staff alike as one reason why interest in these activities has grown so much this year. “Mr. Leslie helps educate us at all our meetings,” says Hartzell, “by bringing us data on the impact of what we’re doing and giving us fun factoids to help convince our classmates of the importance of environmental action.” Adds Tom Hassan, “Pat educates the kids without them realizing it.”

Hassan himself is also commended for his role in helping to resurrect environmental awareness on campus. “Tom’s stewardship of the Environmental Task Force has given it a real boost in effectiveness,” says Amy Schwartz. “He brings the emphasis of the Principal’s Office to our work, as well as helping us find the right resource for different activities we want to undertake.”

Hassan downplays his role, saying it didn’t take him long to realize that “collectively, we can make a big difference. As a boarding school, where many students live and breathe the school 24 hours a day, we have a unique opportunity to teach and model behaviors we want to affect, both inside and outside

the classroom.” While most activities are taking place outside the classroom, Hassan says he is excited that the faculty is talking about ways to incorporate more environmental issues into the curriculum. He and Leslie are co-teaching a long-standing senior studies course on the environment this spring.

For a number of years, a small number of people who cared passionately about the environment—including David Weber, Peter Greer, Don Briselden, instructor in modern languages Mark Trafton (all of whom are members of the ETF), and former director of financial planning Mary Gorman—carried the torch at PEA. “This seems like the right time for us to take the next step forward,” says Principal Tingley. “The combination of the funding for Pat Leslie’s job and increased awareness of environmental issues helped us reach a critical mass.”

“We have a lot more people who are interested and involved than in the past,” notes Greer. “But it’s important to remember this isn’t an isolated project. Every year some of our new students will arrive with a conservation ethic, but we will have to start from the beginning with others.”

“Our challenge is to instill a culture of environmental awareness,” says Weber, “so we create a community of environmental advocates and stewards both here and in the world beyond Exeter.” ●

Marcia Tingley has a longtime interest in environmental issues and is a member of the Exeter Conservation Commission. She divides her time between volunteer activities and part-time work in the Academy library and for the Kittery, Maine Land Trust.