

## Creating Smooth Transitions To Life At Proctor

By Rylee Norton  
Proctor Journalism Class

What is it that Proctor does to help 120 new students transition smoothly onto campus each year?

Since 1971, the school has been welcoming new students by throwing them into the New Hampshire White Mountains for a week of camping and hiking, rain or shine. Sleeping under tarps on the ground every night and not showering for a few days seems like a bizarre way to start off a new student's year.

"It was really tough," said Greer Brodie-Hall, a new freshman at Proctor. "I loved meeting the girls in my group, and the faculty was great, but I was extremely homesick the first night, and the camping and hiking at times was very difficult for me."

I'm sure many new students would agree with Greer that having to spend the first couple of nights away from home in the middle of the woods with strangers is not the most ideal way to be accepted into a new school. Despite the discomfort and uncertainty about finishing the trip, almost all students succeed with the support of their newly found friends and faculty members. Students even flourish over the five days and arrive back on campus ready for a nice meal at the dining hall and a long, warm shower.

"Walking onto campus after orientation is an overwhelming feeling for most students, especially the younger ones, due to the fact that they still haven't found themselves yet. It's okay to feel nervous and uncertain," says Assistant Head of School Anne Swayze. "Swayz" advocates and supports the ways in which Proctor embraces those who come onto campus for the first time.

From personal experience, I can attest that Proctor is succeeding at welcoming and accepting newcomers into the campus environment. What specifically does Proctor do to help all the new students adjust?

Is it Edna Peter's delicious homemade waffles from the dining hall? The beautiful landscape of mountains

and lakes that surround the school and Andover? Or is it the five-day camping trip which allows you to familiarize yourself with new students and learn the rules and school expectations with faculty members?

At first, it was extremely difficult for me to adjust to life on campus, and the stresses started impacting my sleep. Getting run down caused me to become emotional and irritable the first week I was here on campus.

I knew it would be difficult for me to do it on my own, so I asked for some assistance. That help was there for me. As soon as I walked through the door of the Health Center, Lisa Scarry, the Health Center Office Manager who has worked at the school for 25 years, gave me a big hug and a comfortable bed to rest in.

That help was also in my dorm. My dorm parents, Melanie Maness and Lindsay Brown, have made Mackenzie House into an open and welcoming place in which I feel I've lived for years. Their apartment door is always open, and they are two of the most approachable people I've ever met.

One night Lindsay invited me into their apartment to sit on the couch, eat a popsicle, and watch TV with her for an hour. Little moments like these made me realize I am surrounded by people who genuinely care and are willing to support and comfort me. I heard Swayz's words replaying in my head: "The campus community embraces new students and wraps its arms around them."

I have been on campus for a little over three weeks now, and I have already developed relationships with faculty and friends who I know will be there for me every step of the way this year. "My advice to any new student would be to ask questions, remind yourself to have fun, and just know that things will fall into place," says Swayze.

It's true. Although the first few days were extremely difficult for me, I have already adjusted to the routine here and have familiarized myself with a couple of people I know I can go to when

## AE/MS Parent-Teacher Organization

By Carmen Bates  
AE/MS PTO

The first AE/MS Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) meeting was on October 3, and it was a very productive meeting. Jane Slayton, Mel Gotthardt, Becky Smart, Jeanny Preston, Amy Fecteau, Jim Reed, and Carmen Bates were in attendance. A first-timer to the meetings stepped right up and took on school spirit wear ordering – thank you, Amy Fecteau!

Square One art has been completed by almost all the students and has been sent into the company. The artwork is amazing! The order forms should have gone home around October 31. Remember that these make great holiday gifts.

We need you to save Hannaford Helps dollars from now until December. Also, please save ink cartridges and box tops all year long and send them into the school. This enables us to do more fun things like Slim Goodbody and the Eagle Store.

The kids are very excited about the Eagle Store and all the interesting items. It will hopefully be open once a month to reward the students for good behavior. Remember, if you are ever out shopping and see a deal on something we could use for the store, either let us know or pick it up for us. We try to keep the items under 25¢ per item.

As I write this, we are beginning to plan for the AE/MS Veterans Day celebration. We are rounding up paper goods to make the table look festive, as well as baked goods, coffee, and someone to man the table. The veterans really enjoy their day here, and we want to make it special for them.

things get overwhelming. It's surprising to me that in a month's time I've been able to form relationships and gain support which had taken me four years to find at my previous public school.

So whether you're 14 years old and coming to Proctor as a freshman or an incoming 18-year-old starting off your senior year, remind yourself that it's okay to feel the full range of emotions that come along with transition. It's normal. Like Swayze said, "Let things fall

The PTO would like to have a movie after school in December and show *Polar Express*, serve hot cocoa and cookies, and maybe have an ornament for the kids to make. This will be a fundraiser for the PTO as well as a memorable event for the kids.

Rick Libby, Andover's Moose Man, contacted me about doing another Moose Night as a community event with the school. We all felt it would be a fun evening to do again, as the last one we did was two or three years ago, and it was well-attended and fun. We may do a fish/moose/outdoor night. We are looking for suggestions and help.

Popcorn/Fruit Fridays are going well, but we need to have volunteers every Friday to make this possible. Please let me know when you would like to do a Friday.

Fruit Friday was a huge hit! Every Friday, students who paid for a snack will get a snack of popcorn, and one Friday, they will get fruit instead of popcorn.

Be sure to check out the PTO section on the AE/MS Web site at [Andover.K12.nh.us](http://Andover.K12.nh.us). We try to put all our information there, as well as send it home.

Upcoming events to keep in mind: Grandparents Thanksgiving will take place on Thursday, November 17, and we will need a parent volunteer to come in and take pictures of the students with their grandparents. If you have a nice camera and could do this, let me know. We will also be decorating wreaths in the gym at the beginning of December and need all the help we can get!

Next meeting date: Monday, November 14, at 6:30 PM.



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