

Skiing from page 32


of Parson’s Hill (across the Blackwater River from campus) was cleared and blasted to create the Blackwater Ski Area.

Improvements to the Blackwater Ski Area throughout the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s allowed Proctor’s ski program to develop alongside the passion of coaches and program directors. Producing five Olympians throughout the late 1990s and early 2000s, Proctor’s niche as one of the only schools with a privately owned and operated facility on its campus continued to draw talented snow sport athletes to the school.

Throughout the 2010s, significant investment by the school and generous donors amplified the impact of the renamed Proctor Ski Area: top to bottom lights, high efficiency snowmaking capacity on both Nordic and alpine trails, a freestyle ski terrain park, and enhanced grooming equipment have empowered Proctor Ski Area Manager Garry George ’78 and his crew to create the single best snow surface for training and racing in New England. Period.

Today, Proctor’s snow sport athletes and coaches have the opportunity to be a part of something larger than just Proctor. The Proctor Ski Area is a beacon for snow sports in New Hampshire, with some of the best college alpine teams in the region seeking training time on the hill, while also serving as a home base to the Andover Outing Club and local youth snow sport programs. It is this broad commitment to snow sports as a whole that simultaneously energizes us and challenges us to continue to grow.

We believe in the emotional, physical, and psychological benefits of spending time outdoors, especially during the coldest months of the year. We also believe that lifelong lessons are taught when we push our bodies to their physical limits.

Watching the joy on our students’ faces, and the faces of those young and old at the Proctor Ski Area, as they clip into their bindings reminds us that winters in New Hampshire are pretty darn perfect if you simply choose to embrace the snow and cold as we do. 

Snow Day from page 32


meetings. A large majority of students were in attendance on time that day. The reaction from staff and students was all 100% positive.

Elementary Special Educator Haley Peters said, “I have to admit I was worried about today... but that was honestly so much fun! And lots of learning was accomplished. All the students loved telling me about what they were doing in the whole-class sessions. Our whole community – staff and students – did something pretty amazing together today. What a day!”

This was followed up by kudos to all from Principal Dobe. “Our teachers and students prepared for success with our first Remote Learning Day of

the school year, and their efforts clearly paid off. All indications are that meeting attendance was strong, engagement and participation were high, and assignment completion was on par with a regular in-person learning day at AE/MS.

“It could be said that although our campus was closed, learning at AE/MS didn’t skip a beat. Congratulations to AE/MS teachers and students for a job very well done!”


Teachers repeatedly try to teach their students that you learn from your mistakes, so long as you don’t give up. February 4 certainly proved that theory. Although we hope we never have to make it a long-term situation again, we have learned from our struggles and found a way to make remote learning successful when it needs to be done. 

Normalcy from page 32

With our days getting longer, with more daylight and milder temperatures, and the recent lifting of indoor masking requirements in our school, everyone is feeling more comfortable, at ease, enthusiastic, positively engaged, and joyful. Thankfully, we are now moving at a quicker rate to all that our school should be for our students, families, and the greater Andover community.

Despite the incredible efforts of our school staff and the solid partnership of our staff and families, the past two years have been extremely difficult – and it has been extremely hard for any of us to feel truly successful in our work. Now it appears that things are turning around,

and turning around quickly at AE/MS. It is definitely starting to feel like AE/MS is the school that it should be, and we are overjoyed to be in a position where it feels that, at long last, we are truly and substantially gaining.

Although how people stay together and struggle through adversity is the true measure of a person, organization, or community’s character, and we’ve all done fantastically well, it surely would be nice not to be challenged so significantly in the time ahead. Although not completely out of the woods yet, there is reason for great optimism here at AE/MS – and we are now seeing evidence of true progress each and every day in your community school. 

Andover Student Reflects on Mountain Classroom Experience

On site at Big Bend National Park

Scott Allenby, Proctor Academy

For the first time in its history, Proctor Academy is running all five of its term-long off-campus programs this winter. Four Andover students are studying on these programs this winter: Lily Menard ’22 (Ocean Classroom), Sasha MacKenzie ’22 (European Art Classroom), Wesley Koziol ’22 (Mountain Classroom), and Ani McIntyre ’23 (Mountain Classroom). In a recent blog post for Mountain Classroom, Ani shared the following reflections.

Ani McIntyre’s Blog Post

Joy is not usually someone’s reaction when they find out they will be sitting in a car or even a bus for four to seven hours. Personally, when I learn I will be sitting in the car for a large amount of time I am faced with absolute misery.

Not anymore. The announcement of a drive makes me and many others in our group tingle with excitement.

I saw houses that looked so tiny out in the distance. The tiny houses morphed into a vast landscape of nothingness. Or so it seemed.

I began to study the land more close-

ly. The desert is not just flatness, cacti, and dirt. There are also surprisingly big mountains. Naked mountains. Maybe not even mountains but huge rocks! Gi-normous rocks even.


Mesmerized, I watched these rocks grow, shrink, and collapse in the distance. I eventually get bored of the various forms of rocks and look at the billboards again. They are all quite unique; the people who make these need a raise.

Each billboard tries to convince me




Andover’s Ani McIntyre ’23 is one of four Andoverites studying on Proctor’s off-campus programs this winter. She is pictured here at Big Bend National Park. Photo: Caroline Feeney

I need a lawyer, my car fixed, to buy some sort of tree nut, indulge in some beef jerky, or even see this thing. Then I gazed further into the desert and mountains on the horizon returned and so did the music. Never a dull moment on ye old Deb.


Read more about the adventures taking place on Proctor’s off-campus programs at blogs.ProctorAcademy.org. 

School Matters!

The Beacon needs volunteers to help gather school news, especially news of our Andover students at MVHS! If you can help, please call 735-6099.



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