

# THE OAT

“There is a bear by the fountain.”

- Maria Koziebrodzka

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## Health Alert: Teacher You’ve Never Heard of Prepares to Deliver Two Hour Anecdote During MFW

*Sophie Cao '26*

Ready your ears. Unlike typical Tuesdays where the whole entire student body sits in silence for 40 minutes, occasionally listening to a student or two rant about something completely unrelated to the query, this upcoming one is very different. The Oat has uncovered plans of a teacher who you have never heard of [name redacted for security reasons] to deliver a two hour anecdote during MFW. Specifically, the teacher plans to speak at 9:59am—the minute before MFW ends! Therefore, once the student body is released, it will be 11:59am, which is when lunch is almost over. While the prospect of a 2 hour and 44 minute long MFW sounds dreadful, we are here to tell you that it is not 100% bad. An English in-class essay on the Voynich Manuscript, which no one can read, was also cancelled. Thus, you don’t need to be resigned to your fate of getting a D on an important assessment worth 99.9% of your semester grade. A math exam that requires you to prove why you can use Fourier Transform to rewrite any function in terms of sine and cosine was also cancelled. We at the Oat have uncovered other news that the student body may be ambivalent about. We uncovered plans for a Spanish



Above: The Teacher Speaking at MFW

test that only [gender redacted] would get an A on while the other genders would get an F. A history document based question on the Great Molasses Flood in 1919 was planned, in which everyone who said “molasses is bad” would get an A and everyone who didn’t do so would get a D- (you never know what others believe).

The Oat’s investigative journalists have uncovered a detailed outline of what [name redacted] will say during MFW:

9:59am–10:29am: Start talking about being born in a random town in Scotland. Then talk about moving to Russia for my middle and high school years (I got to meet Valentina Tereshkova, the first woman in space, at Lenin’s dacha in Moscow). Then, I’ll explain what a university is like in Canada—I attended McGill and majored in

“maple syrup making.” Afterwards, I’ll discuss working in Tunisia (a 10/10 for work-life-balance totally).

10:30am–10:35am: Baking apple pie with SPICES.

10:36am–11:00am: Answer D to every SAT question for a 1600 (don’t ask me how I know).

11:01am–11:20am: I almost ran over an old lady who was walking on the Autobahn as I was getting my drivers license, Führerschein, in Germany.

11:21am–11:39am: Riding on zebras (none were harmed) while crossing crocodile-infested rivers, is more athletically demanding than sports at Sidwell. I’ll teach zebra-riding to the attendees for a grade on their transcript.

11:40am–11:50am: why simplicity is key for pho.

11:51am–11:52am: argue that stewardship equals kidnapping teachers’ pets for an A.

11:53am–11:54am: a presentation on why archaeologists in Sanaa, Yemen have the most amount of community—more than Quaker houses.

11:55am–11:56am: A verbal essay about why prom in Svalbard is the best prom ever—in history.

11:57am–11:58am: Tricks to fly to any destination, including Pyongyang, via Boliviana de Aviación.

11:59am: (or pm): Say MFW has ended.

Studies warn that the effects of listening to this two-hour long anecdote (or many anecdotes???) include eardrums bursting, brains exploding, eyes watering, tears, drowsiness, nausea, PTSD, and death.

## National Guard Deployed to Tuesday Lunch Lines

*Amika Biblov '27*

President Donald John Trump has deployed the National Guard to enforce the Honor Code during Tuesday lunch. 80 troops are being sent every Tuesday morning to the Sledge Garden and are rotated in 20-person, hourlong shifts into the afternoon. The White House announced that federal presence “will continue until the end of the first quarter.” Due to an obscure clause in the school handbook, a longer stay would require Honor Committee approval.

President Trump has long held a grudge with the school. Sources close to him report that he has been planning for an eventual takeover of Sidwell since its 2017 purchase of the nearby Washington Home hospice building. While the Home (now Upton) is generally considered a savvy acquisition, President Trump appeared to interpret it as a personal attack. In a leaked phone call, he exclaims “[Upton is] terrible real estate... terrible deal... They must think they’re so much better than me!”

In his second term, he has gotten more power and lost any willingness to compromise. As a result, the Trump administration’s relationship with Sidwell has slowly deteriorated, with its breaking point coming last week when a former Department of Government Efficiency senior engineer, an 11-year-old Sidwellian,



Above: Troops swarm the Middle School.

got a D on his plagiarized 6th grade history report. President Trump flew into a rage upon hearing of the incident. Shortly after, President Trump began posting on Truth Social. In one post, he made several claims about the state of the line and Sidwell’s ability to control it: “ROVING GROUPS OF UPPER SCHOOLERS DURING MIDDLE SCHOOL LUNCH DISGRACEFUL!!! ALL EMPLOYEES SHOULD BE FIRED! WORST ITS EVER BEEN!”

A cocktail of hunger and fear, the line has been known to grow to over 200 kids long and stack to three kids high. Nevertheless, the data contradicts President Trump’s claim that Tuesday lunch lines are worse than ever. Sidwell has seen a 30% drop in line-cutting and a drop of almost 60% in loudness compared to 2024, according to a study conducted by an independent watchdog. Experts say policies like staggeringly early

off-campus lunch and an around-the-clock fire hose of disappointed all-school emails have made great strides in improving the quality and safety of Tuesday lunch lines.

Even students who express support for increasing policing of the lines are concerned about the heavy-handed approach President Trump appears to be taking; Guard troops have autoLOped eight students for infractions as small as pulling out their phones while exiting school buildings or wearing headphones. Checkpoints have been set up all over campus, requiring all students attempting to pass to show their ID. Since half of the populace has already lost their IDs from last year, many students now face serious barriers to travel. “I tried to go into the second stall of the Arts Center bathroom,” said [name redacted for safety] in an interview, “and there were three uniformed guys who had barricaded it with a wet floor sign! One of them asked to see my Middle School diploma for some reason!”

We spoke with junior Harold Wyatt in the Sledge Garden. When asked his feelings on the takeover of the lunch line duties by the National Guard, he seemed a little confused. “The Tuesday lunch line... National Guards? I didn’t know the National Guards were in the lunch line. I don’t ‘hang around’ the cafeteria. I’m off campus at Popeyes, all day every day.”

# OATLOOK

Sophie Cao '26

Hello esteemed readers,

It's September—summer break is a thing of the past. You probably thought that the Oat befell the same fate. No. We are back, really 1000% back—and better. Most of you are probably excited about this: something entertaining to read for once (after all who wants to read about Holden Cauliflower, MacBeth Publishing Ltd, or Gatsby Bay, no offense English Department); something to cheer you up after getting a diabolically bad grade on an assignment you worked your butt off or failing a test (because your teacher didn't use the test calendar); and something to inform you about what's really going on (the Horizon is the administration's propaganda machine). We'll soon provide you with an archive of our first-hand investigative journalism from the past years—if the regime permits IT to give us access to the Internet first. If you're a Horizon loyalist, you're probably frustrated that the Oat is coming back, so the masses actually have a choice of what to read, thus choosing the Oat's Pulitzer-Prize-winning journalism (Horizon readers: Pulitzer-Prize-winning means very good); our own Pulitzer Prize is on page 4.

We know that you will love this issue as it will not only answer all of your burning questions—*Does words equal word? Why a hospice???*—but also provide you with invaluable life tips. Don't worry—there is more breaking news that YOU need to know for a successful 2025-2026 school year tucked inside this edition.

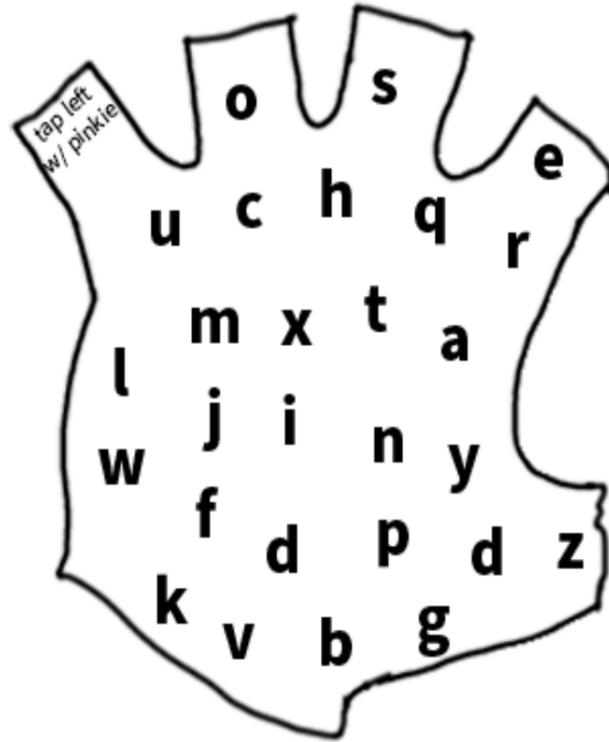
Without further ado, I present to you Volume 29's first issue.

# Need to speak?

Can't?

Np.

1. Cut out shapes
2. Tape to back of hands
3. Point your pinkies at symbols
4. Use in quiet places, like... the garage. Or hallways. yup.



## SAT WORD OF THE MONTH

### Platitude

(noun) a remark or statement, especially one with a moral content, that has been used too often to be interesting or thoughtful.

*The pestilence Platitude runs rampant in the Class of 2026.*

## LOST

common Sense

*If found, please return to the Senior Center.*

# THE STAFF BOX

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# Top 10 Better Buildings to Buy Than a Hospice

Lukas Schensul '28

1. The nearby medical center. Free vaccinations & mandatory mind control chips for all! There won't be bad behavior—taking teachers' pets as hostage for an A—anymore.
2. DC jail. Great alternative to LOP for the gamblers in the senior center. YOU know who you are. The current seniors will inevitably take up the mantle from last year's seniors and rise to the challenge of filling the senior center with poker chips, cash, and angry faculty.
3. That one McDonalds nearby. The smell of frozen french fries and undercooked beef is not as bad as the smell of death. As philosopher Socrates once said, "I would rather have extremely subpar fast food than be subjected to the eternal torment of the ghosts in the Upton building."
4. Nando's PERi PERi. The cafeteria's Peruvian chicken will become #1 forever.
5. Haunted house in the middle of nowhere. At least the ghosts are fake and nobody died there. It would be a great way to scam people's money during Halloween.
6. Olympic sized swimming pool. Why not get a big swimming pool for the swimming team to train in? Make sure to put large pool noodles in there so we can have a pool fencing team, something to give to the admin a handy "first" they can brag about for the next 300 years.
7. Dungeon. This is a great place to put the enemies of the regime. Actually, maybe the Oat shouldn't suggest this considering how much its investigative journalists have been making fun of the regime. If nobody hears from me next week, you know where I am.
8. 9-5 job office building. The Oat supports mandatory 9-5 jobs for ALL students to prepare them for the real world.
9. The Fox Den. It's owned by the CIA. Every time we buy something, the CIA reads our minds to make sure we are not committing thought-crimes against the government.

10. LITERALLY ANYTHING ELSE.

# Top 5 Ways to Get Out of Meeting for Worship

Nathan Aguiar '26

Getting out of Meeting for Worship (MFW) is a pastime that every student has done at least once. The RLS is a lovely place and all, but occasionally, you might need a window to escape it. Thus, I have provided a list of ideas to help get out of it (and maybe get lopped).

## 1. Get sick

The most authentic, and the OG method for getting out of MFW is getting sick. While it is probably the most painful method on this list, it will work without question.

## 2. "Get sick"

Faking illness is a less painful version of the method above, but it is harder to pull off. It takes strategic planning and an adaptive mindset, having to create false positives in the tests your parents will make you take.

## 3. Use the bathroom

Using the bathroom is probably the easiest and best way to skip MFW. You can "use the bathroom" at the beginning and excuse yourself, and return just in time for the end. You will not get points, while also being able to not disturb the peace in the room.

## 4. Schedule an appointment

This method only works a couple of times a year. When you have a doctor's appointment coming up, schedule it for the time that MFW happens. This method is often difficult to pull off, as it requires planning with your guardian.

## 5. Run

Flat-out skipping MFW should only be done under extreme circumstances. You will face an auto-lop, and maybe even more extreme consequences, but if you are really that desperate you could give this strategy a go. Recommended locations to flee are the Middle School, the Fox Den, the outdoor fields, and inside the Wetlands.

# A Letter to the Incoming Freshmen

Richard Worthing '28

A letter of advice to the incoming freshmen:

In the shadow of the new school year, rising freshmen have been creating social media posts about the academic and social stresses of Sidwell Friends. These posts have become a niche trend across DMV-area schools—but where did they come from, and how true are they?

According to a handful of upperclassmen from an unnamed school, the trend was their idea. After further questioning, they revealed their motive: attracting more students to their own school. Working with their student government, they launched a low-budget misinformation campaign.

When asked about it, the freshman student government explained that they didn't want more students because of academics—but because of the average "fine factor" in their grade. Apparently, it all started in 8th grade. That year's student government wanted to enter freshman year with a stronger lineup because their current class was "a bit chopped."

Their strategy? Campaign on a promise of creating a real-



14-yr old propagandist Vladimir Solovyov splits his time between school and working in the Kremlin.

life *Love Island*. They told classmates they needed more students to ensure solid romantic drama and formed a platform around it. Shockingly, it worked.

Once elected, they kicked off phase two: convince the rest of the student government to flood social media with exaggerated claims about Sidwell's difficulty. When asked why they picked Sidwell, they said it had the most believable reputation for being academically brutal.

To be clear: yes, Sidwell classes are hard. But no, that other school is not worth transferring to for *Love Island*. Choose your academic future wisely—and maybe don't trust 14-year-old political strategists.

# 5 New IA Classes

Sophie Cao '26

The Oat has uncovered 5 new IA classes that the administration is planning.

## 1. Ninth Grade Studies IA

Yup, you heard it right. Instead of following the traditional Ninth Grade Studies curriculum, it will be split into two parts: the first half is teaching you how to pay your taxes, the second half is teaching you how to get an A in every class—whether or not you have a hard or an easy teacher. In addition, there will be a midterm and final to conclude each half. The "A" means accelerated, though it doesn't sound hastened.

## 2. English IA

This course requires you to read every single book in English 9, 10, and 11 over your 8th grade summer. Then, on the first day of 9th grade, you send in an essay for each book. Afterwards, you can take whatever senior-year English electives your heart desires. But beware: if you don't write your essays well (as in good enough so that the hardest English teacher, your decision who, will give it an A), you will be forced to take English 9, 10, and 11.

## 3. Break IA

Instead of having your break, you will have Break IA! This means that your break will pass by twice as fast! Hooray!!!

## 4. Latin IA

This is a misnomer for Greek. There will be zero Latin taught. Rather, the class will completely—as in 100000000%—be in Greek. If you utter one word in English, it will be an automatic F on your transcript. Who will be teaching it, you ask? Poseidon.

## 5. Biology IAIA.

This double "IA" means that it is extra accelerated: you will be ~~learning~~ cramming everything that is taught in classes Biology IA and Biology II during the first week of school. Then, you have one massive 100-page test. If you pass (as in get above a 98), then you get the chance to go to Norilsk, the northernmost city in Siberia, to find penguin fossils (the Oat found a scientific paper saying they don't exist there... but you never know what the administration is planning).

## The Oat's Pulitzer Prize Medal



## A Conversation Between Horses



## ChatGPT's Take on the Senior Word

Chat G '29

The enemy of the English Department has leveled up. Leveled up as in REALLY leveled up. It can provide opinions (that are argumentative). Out of intellectual curiosity, the Oat has asked it to write about its opinion (once again, VERY ARGUMENTATIVE as people can disagree) on the senior word “lets ride.”

It's terrible. First, “lets ride” is two (2) words. But the senior word, with the word “word” implies one (1) word. So whoever decided to pick “lets ride” can't tell the difference between one word or two words. Is this a failure of the Math Department? Or does it stem from earlier... perhaps Middle School? Could brainrot be the culprit here?

Second, it symbolizes the English Department's biggest failure. And no, it is not the rising number of students who get sent to the Honor Committee (read: the rate has quadrupled to 600 students since September 2024), though that is a very salty wound. Rather, it is that “lets ride” is grammatically incorrect. Since it means let us ride, it should be let's, with an apostrophe. But “lets” means hinder, in very very very archaic (older than the Oat) English. So, the lack of basic grammatical understanding from whoever came up with it and the students that voted for it reflects the English Department's incompetence at teaching grammar. Students are forced to write essays, yet they don't even know the most basic English grammar.

Third, it holds a shallow understanding of the Class of 2026. If you are a troglodyte so don't know what that means, it means that the English teachers would give this a -100, worse than plagiarizing, which, for the record, gives you a 0. “[L]ets ride” tells you absolutely nothing about a group of people: you are in the dark about challenges they overcame, special moments they had together as a grade, or any other defining quality, unless you count grammatical incompetence or thinking one equals two as defining qualities. I could use “lets ride” to define all Sidwell classes between its inaugural class in 1889 until the last class in however many years. Thus, you know very well it's extremely bad (better than the Horizon, a fact).

Fourth, it is visually traumatizing. For starters, the s is supposed to be a 2 while the r is supposed to be a 6. However, how does the letter s even look a fraction like the number 2? Even the curvature is different! The 6 and the r look like polar opposites: the circle arc parts are on opposite sides. Really, no one can argue that the numbers and letters fit together; it'll be nice if one says they fit together incongruously.

In conclusion, the Class of 2026's senior word (should I say words, instead?) “lets ride” is the worst choice in history. Let's hope the classes of 2027, 2028, and 2029 pick better ones (at least keep it 1 word long).

LETS<sup>2</sup> RIDE<sup>6</sup>

# The Lower Water Fountain Is Better Than the Higher One

Amika Biblov '27

Water is down. Water belongs down. Did our hunter-gatherer ancestors, after long days hunting dinosaurs, rehydrate standing upright? No, Friends, they did not; they swallowed their pride and squatted by the creek. When your nap in the library is cut short by the bell, are you going to the senior center tall water fountain on your tippy toes? No, Friends—a thousand times no!! Slouch on over to the fountain made just for you. Drinking low is drinking natural. While health codes prevent the school from lining the hallway floors with cisterns to lap water out of, we've already got the next best things. These 5'1" babies pump 10 mL an hour, give drinkers a healthy 90-degree back stretch, and are so low they should be illegal. Yes, the spouts are chock-full

of that weird green mineral gunk. Hey, at least it's our gunk. The lower water fountains are for us, the common folk. The inferior neighbors to the North are for them: the nose-up, heel-turned, bougie bigwigs who choose to sip out of their little metal skyscrapers in spite of the geyser of facts in opposition.

The lower water fountains are thoroughly superior to the high ones. This begs the question: why are water bottle fillers at Sidwell all positioned on top of the high fountains, not the infinitely more conveniently accessible lower ones? To get to the bottom of this discrepancy, I had to go to the source of all water.

The Elkay© website has lots and lots of confusing words like RetroFit, Endpoint, Integral SwirlFlo, Lead Drop Down Wrapper,

and PFOA/PFOS. Since I don't have the time to learn a new language, I researched this company the same way I do my history readings: skip the words, look at the pictures. After a few hours of searching for the exact model of water fountain Sidwell purchased, I discovered something shocking: water fountain sets are sold with the bottle fillers attached to the lower fountains! Any aberrant configuration requires large amounts of manpower and money to orchestrate—so the administration supplied both. Under direct instructions from the top brass, engineers had to meticulously jerry-rig \$6400 cables to disfigure the fountains and cover up the evidence, all just to tear the fillers from their rightful place. But why? Was the school scared that



Above: The water fountains in question.

literally no one would use the top fountain otherwise? Is it intent on emphasizing verticality in Sidwell culture to further elevate the prestige of our basketball teams? We may never know. But know this, dear reader: there is a conspiracy afoot to stop us from trusting our liquid instincts, a proverbial poisoned well of information trying to stop the free flow of cool, fresh, low-lying water. The next time you stop at a water station, which fountain will you pick?

# 11 Things I Do Not Want to See on Your LinkedIn Profile

Maira Zaidi '27

- “Founder of [Sidwell Club]” under “Experience”:** This one is by far the most absurd. Last time I checked, being the Founder and Head of Whatever Club at Sidwell Friends is not a job. Move it to the education section under Sidwell. It's even more hilarious when that club has met literally twice the entire school year. Just admit you're unemployed and leave that Experience section blank.
- #OPENTOWORK:** And your profile is literally blank...that internship will not be magically landing in your inbox.
- Your sixth-grade Parkmont Poetry award:** Literally half the school won that. Let it go. If that's your only honor...lock in, then.
- Nonprofits and AI startups:** Of course, this does not apply to actually impactful projects—which are scarce. But half of them are pure fluff and Instagram accounts. I do not want to hear about your “revolutionary” AI startup built out of “passion” that's endorsed by your parents.
- A million different things under “Skills”:** “Business Administration” You're 15.
- Your middle school minimester:** While it was valuable work, it was middle school.
- LinkedIn Premium:** Respectfully, why?
- Way too many languages:** You get English, your school language, and whatever languages you speak at home. Don't put like five languages, all of which are “elementary proficiency.” That only means you can only speak English (hopefully well).
- The Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth:** Canon event for most Sidwell students. Unless you're still doing stuff with it in high school, delete it.
- China Folk House:** Okay, to be fair, this is a completely valid volunteer experience. It's just hilarious because so many Sidwell students do it. It greets me on almost every profile of a “Student at Sidwell Friends School.”
- Fake comments:** “Good work, Jane!” “Love to see it, Doe!” Wrap it up. Stop showing off to everybody that you're the least authentic person in the world.

# Keeping Up With the Editors-in-Chief

\*not responsible for any trauma sustained from this issue

## Amika Biblov



What have you been up to this summer?

Overdosing on Arctic Monkeys music.

What is your goal for the Oat?

Earning six or seven all-school emails implicitly targeted at us.

What words do you want to say to the masses?

Keep your eyes on the stars, feet on the gas, and hands off the wheel.

## Sophie Cao



What have you been up to this summer?

Sleeping under waterfalls.

What is your goal for the Oat?

To be remembered by humanity—forever.

What words do you want to say to the masses?

The best place to be is nowhere.

## Lukas Schensul



What have you been up to this summer?

Lazing around doing nothing.

What is your goal for the Oat?

New issue more than twice a century.

What words do you want to say to the masses?

We exist this year.

## Richard Worthing



What have you been up to this summer?

I have been climbing the tallest mountain in Africa.

What is your goal for the Oat?

The Oat is to be leader of the Oat.

What words do you want to say to the masses?

Good luck in the new year.

## Maira Zaidi



What have you been up to this summer?

My annual reading marathon since school is so busy :(

What is your goal for the Oat?

To actually be funny.

What words do you want to say to the masses?

Stop founding useless clubs.

## Ghost Deanna



What have you been up to this summer?

Haunting ice cream shops.

What is your goal for the Oat?

To be a zombie, like the Horizon.

What words do you want to say to the masses?

If you dare betray the Oat, I will hunt you down and then haunt you for the rest of eternity.

*Image from Stock Photo*