

Life Without Tech, Briefly

FROM PAGE 1

overheard saying, "I replaced my unhealthy Candy Crush addiction with knitting. Now my procrastination is productive!"

The goal of distancing us from technology is to make us reflect on its purpose in our daily lives. My laptop is a tool for learning. I use it to draw and experiment with graphs in Pre-calculus, type up a French essay, or to just listen to music (or a nerdy podcast in my case). I check my email and various social media channels about once a day on the public computers. I also receive regular snail mail, which is all I really need to stay in touch with friends and family.

"Every year I send out a survey to the alumni," said Ann Carson, Head of School, "and they unfailingly say that the experience of having no technology in the cabins made the experience special for them."

Another regulation that was suggested by students was to ban computer use on Saturdays.



PHOTO BY CHEWONKI SCHOOL

Chewonki students out farming, not using technology

In an interview with Chris Percy, Chewonki Spanish teacher, advisor, and member of the technology board, he admitted that if Chewonki students had unlimited access to the Internet and computers the school would be a different place.

"I think it would be a different experience because the biggest thing that I see is a lot of students are drawn to computers but they don't want to be," Percy said. "Students often cry out that they can't use it in a constructive way so we try to help by limiting that use and helping students be more productive in their use of computers and the Internet."

But what if students requested the opposite? What if annually, semester alums requested more access to the Internet and more time with their computers?

"We would never open it all the way up," Percy said. "But if the students brought about constructive reasons if it was a constructive decision that would stay within the school's mission we would see what we could do."

I don't really know how I will use technology once I come back home in late December. Will I forget that these four months ever happened and go back to my old sinful ways? Or will I have grown from this experience and use my technology more wisely, because it is a privilege, not something that I need?

I think that moving forward, I will be more mindful towards my technology use and try to spend more time 'in the moment,' with my family and friends rather than staring at back-lit screens. All that I know now is that I only have three more months here in this incredible place and I am going to try and make each minute count.

Life in Russia

FROM PAGE 3

I have to tell you? You can hit Peter, but not Lida."

As the rest of the children filed in and we were getting to know each other, we all shared a dream profession. Peter wanted to be an astronaut, Phillip wanted to be a fireman, Katya wanted to be a ballerina, and Yasna wanted to be a housewife. For the rest of the day, whenever Yasna dropped anything or stumbled, she would look around sheepishly and say, "I'm too clumsy, aren't I?" At teatime she had no sweets, as she was "on a diet," and during recess instead of climbing on the playground with the rest of the kids she sat demurely with her legs crossed looking on.

There was no concern about her level of participation, but when Peter wouldn't do his push ups or finish lunch the taunts came: "How are you going to be big enough to beat up the other boys if you don't exercise and eat your soup?"

Following my experience at the summer camp came my work at the gallery. The first visit was to artist Lev Povzner, who became famous in the 1960s but slowly drifted out of the limelight as he failed to woo galleries. Now, he lives in the outskirts of Moscow, his apartment remaining a pocket of the soviet era as modern pop blares outside of the window. On his padded door remain immortalized pins from underground movements and protests from decades back. His kitchen is lined with the same cheap, plastic tablecloths that were for sale in the fifties. An iron shoe holds wooden matches and a plastic trophy with the engraving World's Greatest Artist stands by the stove. Dented, tin containers stand in for spices, and cigarette packs line the counter.

"It's a despicable habit," Povzner acknowledges as he reaches over to light one. "But I'm too old to stop now."

As he walks us through his art, the room melts away in a whirl of fantastical beasts, fields, and faces. "I am the only artist from the 60's that continued to grow and progress my whole life," he sighs. "How does nobody know of me?"



PHOTO BY CHEWONKI SCHOOL

Chewonki students out in the wilderness, without tech to guide them