

JavaJive goes Cajun



David Rosenthal and Dan Kleederman

Photo submitted by Shan Wang

Coffeehouse nets \$1K for Katrina relief; faculty performers give help

By Shan Wang

JavaJive, traditionally held at the First Congregational Church in Williamstown, took on a different name in light of the recent devastation of Hurricane Katrina. The "Once in a Lifetime" concert on Friday night, Oct. 7, retained the same JavaJive atmosphere but took on a role of greater scale. "Lifetime" raised approximately \$1,000 for victims of Katrina. Half of the money raised will go towards Tipitina's, a foundation helping New Orleans musicians get their lives back on track. The other half of the proceeds will go towards Habit for Humanity.

Bids due Oct. 24 for renovation planning work

The first major step toward settling the future of Mount Greylock Regional High School -- the building, that is -- will be taken on Monday, Oct. 24, when bids are due from consultants who want to conduct a formal feasibility study of various options.

The school board has already picked a School Building Committee and charged the group with studying whether the nearly 40 year old building constructed for a 1,200 student enrollment should be renovated or razed as mechanical systems age and enrollment appears destined to remain in the 700-student range indefinitely.

On May 16, a team of students and faculty at Williams College produced an 87-page report on options for the building. It considered five other recent school building projects in Massachusetts. Criteria considered included health concerns, cost, faculty satisfaction, student satisfaction, energy efficiency, environmental impact and professional opinions. These were then cross-analyzed for four scenarios -- no-build, light renovation, heavy renovation and tear down.

LINK: <http://www.williams.edu/CES/mattcole/resources/onlinepaperpdfs/papers/greylock.pdf>

Deb Burns, one of the main organizers of the event, said she and other organizers decided to hold the coffeehouse at the high school as a fundraiser for Katrina victims when the school-wide Fall Festival, which would have included JavaJive, was never finalized. "I knew that students would really like to do something for the hurricane victims, and the turnout was just great," said Deb, "But I was utterly amazed at many teachers' willingness to volunteer to perform."

The audience and the performers were not the only ones with New Orleans, Biloxi, and other hard-hit cities of the hurricane in their hearts; Ray Dushaney, John Elder, and Matt Montini volunteered countless hours preparing equipment and managing lighting.

.... [A]mong the requests for shelters and counseling, there were requests "not to forget about us."

The audience was treated to slam poetry and re-enactment in addition to the usual music, but one of the most indelible moments was none of these. Mary Bukowski, a filmmaker who had been sent to Louisiana to record footage of Katrina's aftermath, shared with the audience the scenes of destruction she had witnessed there. She told of stray pets outside of the cities, a man who was too late to escape the storm and was forced to ride it out, unsure if he would survive. Bukowski had asked the survivors what they needed or wanted most, and among the requests for shelters and counseling, there were requests "not to forget about us."

"Lifetime" made sure its cause would not be lost amidst performances by Williams College a cappella group the Ephlats, the Latin teacher and keeper of the keys, Mrs. Keeley, classical guitarist Katie-Rose DeCandia, and a dozen others. A montage of photographs taken in the aftermath of Katrina played on the auditorium stage screen while Tom Plunkett ac-

See JAVAJIVE, Page 2

The College Fair: sifting truth and sales in an hour

By Rachel Payne

On Oct. 4, two busloads of upperclassmen were shipped out to Pittsfield for Mount Greylock's annual excursion to the college fair.

Berkshire Community College played host to the New England Association of College Admissions Counselors College Fair, and hundreds of students from local high schools crowded into the college gymnasium, hoping to catch a glimpse of the next four years of their lives. Some students assaulted the representatives with questions, some chatted with friends over pamphlets and applications, and some, apparently awed by the decision laid before them, just wandered aimlessly about the gym.

Greylock juniors and seniors were given a little more than an hour to explore 170 colleges and universities, each one represented by a practiced spokesman intended to answer questions and entice young people into becoming applicants. Students could not, of course, hope to learn about all the schools presented to them, and outside of a few recognizable names like Ithaca, Emerson, and, Siena, they were difficult to distinguish.

In an effort to ease the confusion, students were supplied with a list of questions to ask college representatives that might provide a picture of admissions requirements, popular courses, and student life. The list represented the intention of NEACAC to find schools that fit for each student; however, getting straight answers to questions was a difficulty, due to the studied sales-

See COLLEGES, page 2

Student council thanks supporters of the Katrina evacuee supplies drive

The student council would like to say thank you to all the people that donated to the Hurricane Katrina supplies drive. Your enthusiasm and willingness to give far exceeded our expectations. No amount is too small in times of tragedy. The middle school and high school classes that donated the most, and therefore won a lunch special party from Happy Star are Mr. Beloin's middle school and Ms. Cece's high school block 7 classes. Thank you again on behalf of the student council and the victims of this national tragedy.

On another note, student council is fielding ideas and suggestions on issues with the school this year. Talk to any representative from your class, or come to student council meetings, now every day 3 early lunch in room 59.

INSIDE/page 2

PTO eyes focus on school's website communications

School board ponders enrollment decline and class-size fluctuations

NEWS



New directors of the Mount Greylock Parent-Teacher Organization, elected Oct. 3, include, from left, Anne Hogeland, Nancy Nysten, Lisa Hiley, Deryle Capozzi, Paula Machado, Drew Gibson and Alison Kolesar.

PTO meeting discusses school issues and fundraising, donations appreciated

The Mount Greylock Parent Teacher Organization continued to devise strategies for school fundraising and improvement at an Oct. 13 annual meeting attended by about 20 parents and teachers. Class sizes were discussed and the Middle School math placement issue has been resolved with two sections of advanced math and two of regular math. Inequalities in numbers in high school classes continue as a result of the reintroduction of science labs and integrating them into the rotating schedule.

The PTO promotes the education and well-being of students, developing efforts for their benefit, provides financial support, resources, and coordinates volunteer efforts. All parent and guardians of Mt. Greylock students, as well as all faculty and staff, are automatically PTO members.

On the fundraising aspect, history teacher Drew Gibson brought up contacting alumni for donations. The PTO also set a goal to improve the school website this year and update the school's software rather than replace it. Supt. Bill Travis said upgrading the school's current website software -- Microsoft Front Page -- would cost an estimated \$6,000. Other concerns mentioned were more projectors needed

(\$750-\$1000 each), a smart board for each team in the middle school, and a digital camera for the principal's office. Co-principal Ellen Kaiser will field input from curriculum leaders for a wish list that could be published in the Forum, Beacon, and maybe Advocate and all donations will be tax-deductable.

A desire for greater connection with Lanesborough was raised.

Student parent Beth Nesbitt has offered to make and raffle another quilt to be ready by the Hesoliday Walk. Last year's quilt brought in over \$800. Parent Carol Stein Payne has offered to run the citrus sale again and the spring musical event that brought together Mt Greylock and Williams groups will be repeated.

Other ideas included another silent services auction, a parents' prom, a winter festival with skiing and sledding, a film festival, Sumo wrestling and inviting Jonah Bayliss (Mt. Greylock graduate and current pitcher for the Kansas City Royals) to talk about life in the major leagues. Ed Bishop, Deb Burns and

Michelle Manners agreed to look into putting on a horror movie night at the school before Halloween. Up to \$300 was advanced as seed money for that event. Kathleen agreed to look into possible collaborations with the Berkshire Mall (such as a Mt. Greylock night where a percentage of the takings that night went to the school). Deb will ask about the possibility of using the Clark auditorium for a school fundraiser and will also talk to Sandra Thomas of Images about possibilities for a film series.

The PTO would also like to sponsor informational events as it did last year around the water line issue and the legislative funding of schools. Some ideas for topics are parenting in the 21st century, a report from the building committee on its feasibility study, and a CPR course.

Parent Bill Densmore brought up the lack of time for students to visit the library and college center, an issue likely to be brought to the School Governing Council in the near future. Also, a desire for greater connection with Lanesborough was raised. Suggestions included holding meeting at Lanesborough at the same time as their elementary school PTO meetings and establishing a regular liaison person there.

School board ponders enrollment decline and class-size fluctuations; hears 79% electric hike

By Kejia Tang

Mount Greylock Regional High School, like other electric users, may be facing up to a 79% increase in electric rates, according to a letter received from National Grid and read to the school committee this week. The increase is subject to state regulatory review, however.

Also at Tuesday's (Oct. 11) meeting, the committee spent most of the time discussing the school's declining enrollment and fluctuating class sizes. There was a 21-student drop off from the estimate of 700 students that will lower the school's state reimbursements from Chapter 70 next year. This fall the school's average class size is 18 students -- 16 in the high school and 20.2 in the middle school -- both down from last year. There were a great number of classes in the upper 20s and lower 30s in both the high school and middle school while many were 10 students and below. There were 24 elective classes of 15 students and under while core classes

tended to report much higher numbers. There were also variations in core classes, however, with one world history class of 27 and two others of 13 and 10, respectively.

Administrators advanced several reasons advanced to explain the fluctuations. One, because many classes offered only one section, students wanting to take those classes must also take others in "package deals," often resulting in very unbalanced sections of the same class. Two, because Mt. Greylock only requires three years of all cores except English, students tend to get nudged into taking electives.

The school committee meeting got off to a surprise start with a lengthy address by numerous members of the Junior Classical League, who describing their exploits and encouraging all who can to attend a Saturday, Oct. 15 catapult and ballista event outside the Mt. Greylock cafeteria, starting at 10 a.m. Authentic Roman style machines capable of hurling both light and heavy

objects nearly 100 feet or farther will be demonstrated. Students were also encouraged to join JCL, its certamen and convention activities, and take the annual Latin and myth exams.

Afterwards, the committee discussed a community day that is being scheduled for sometime in the near future and all parents and community members are encouraged to attend. Community members can take the opportunity to follow a student around class and have lunch with a student, faculty, or administration member.

The school committee's role in the budget was also brought up. Traditionally, the committee has only approved general numbers and, for the most part, "rubber stamped" for the budget but is now looking into having greater oversight of specific things. On a more costly note, the school's administration personnel policy is sorely out of date and in need of professional help with new laws and regulations. An update could cost the school around \$5,000.

Colleges

Continued from Page 1

manship of college reps. Furthermore, not even a paid professional can convey the true atmosphere of a school, which is, in the end, the deciding factor in the happiness of college students.

Because of the number of schools represented and the painful brevity of the event, the college fair allowed students only a glimpse of what might be "their school"; nevertheless, the fair was a good sampling of the variety of colleges and universities of the Northeast. All the various levels of prestige were present, with degrees of academic rigor for every type of student. On the way back to Mount Greylock, the buses were filled with anxious, eager discussion of what comes next, and every student seemed enthusiastic. The true success of the college fair was in rousing the excitement and energy required for the trials of application season.

JavaJive

Continued from Page 1

accompanied with *House of the Rising Sun* [*There is a House in New Orleans*]. Members of Habitat for Humanity gave a presentation of their building experiences in Biloxi, Miss. One of the masters of ceremonies, Ben Nelkin, had recently moved from New Orleans to Williamstown after Katrina forced him and his family to evacuate their home just one day before his school was scheduled to start. Nelkin, who has now settled in as a 9th grader at Mt. Greylock, received the loudest cheers of all.

Mr. Forsburg topped all with two numbers from the Rocky Horror Picture Show.

But the night was hardly a time for sadness or pity. Many of the performers chose songs with themes such as unity and camaraderie.

David Rosenthal and Dan Kleederman delighted the audience with an original song and The White Stripes's *We are Going to be Friends*. History teacher Mr. Gibson vividly reenacted life on the Mississippi River, in the spirit of Mark Twain. Mr. Forsburg topped all with two numbers from the *Rocky Horror Picture Show*.

"Of all the performances, my favorite would have to be the slam poetry," said Mt. Greylock junior Tess McHugh. "It was completely different from everything else. It was an act of people fully expressing themselves, and it was amazing."

The success of "Once in a Lifetime" may result in similar annual fundraisers, McHugh said. "I think we should do something like this every fall. Normally JavaJive is a casual coffeehouse venue, but I would love it if we, once a year, did it at the school to raise money for important causes such as Hurricane Katrina."

OPINION

Narcotics at Mount Greylock? Not the real point

By Lucy White

Parents' Night can be a dreaded occasion for many students. The question lies in the minds of teenagers, "What will my teachers tell my parents about me?"

While parents may not look forward to the evening either, in the past it was for different reasons. Most parents are concerned for their child's well-being, and want to know what their students will be learning, how they are currently doing, and want to be on friendly terms with their children's teachers. Despite the many productive things that come from an Open House, inevitably some teachers will be boring, and stress is added when parents have to find schedules and rush from room to room.

This year, yet another worry entered the minds of parents: drugs. In the traditionally brief orientation before they visited classrooms, parents were given 15-20 minute lectures on drug use, complete with Williamstown's and Lanesborough's K-9 units and an undercover narcotics officer.

While drug use is a problem that faces the entire nation, I'm not so sure this was the right way to go about dealing with any possible problem at Mount Greylock. Scare tactics only work to a certain extent. By having middle-school parents lectured on possible cocaine use, the

presentation's purpose may back-fire in a few instances. What about the 7th grade parent, new to Mount Greylock, where the first way they are introduced to the school is to be frightened about whether middle-school will turn their child into a drug-addict?

If anything, officers should be concentrated on use of drugs and alcohol outside of school. Furthermore, should school be turned from a place of learning about citizenship to a holding ground for police searches and investigations?

I have never heard of cocaine or any other narcotics used at Greylock in my five years here. When the police stressed the need for random searches to find drugs, many parents may feel that public school is not the place for their child. In a time of budget cuts, teacher negotiations, possible building construction, and a declining enrollment, we need as much community participation as possible.

Drug use at Greylock is not the problem. If anything, officers should be concentrated on use of drugs and alcohol outside of school. Furthermore, should school be turned from a place of learning about citizenship to a holding ground for police searches and investigations?

Walking down the hallways, I have never seen someone slip into the bathroom to smoke a joint. Perhaps this is because of recent law-enforcement, or perhaps Mount Greylock students are smarter than that. It undermines the intelligence and respectability of the school to assume that a police officer is needed to patrol the halls, or, as I have seen, enforce school rules. Should a fully-loaded officer really be telling a kid to quiet down in the halls? If so, I'm not sure this level of intimidation creates a safer learning environment.

In a commencement address I heard once, students were told that we should leave Greylock as better citizens, questioning authority and using our knowledge to better society. The students here are strong-minded individuals who do just that, only we aren't waiting until we graduate.

With such inflexible law-enforcement, I'm not sure that students are more submissive, nor should we be if we wish to fulfill Mount Greylock's mission statement.



Officer Rathbun and Nitro, the drug dog, during a Sept. 27 presentation to parents.

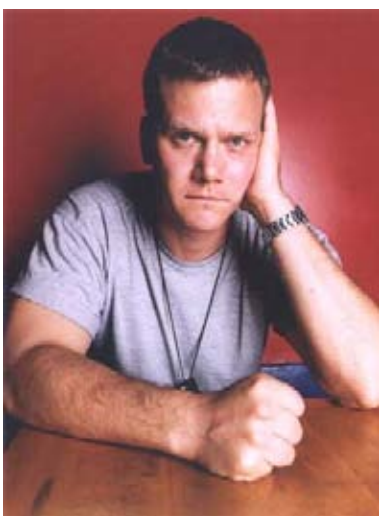
The author is a MGRHS junior who lives in Williamstown.

ARTS

http://www.slampapi.com/new_site/background.htm

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taylor_Mali
<http://www.taylormali.com/media/whateachers.mp3>

Nationally renowned "slam" poet at MG next week



Four-time National Poetry Slam champion and celebrated dynamic teacher advocate Taylor Mali will perform at Mt. Greylock Regional High School Thursday, October 20 at 7 p.m. Jake Snow, 2005 Mount Greylock grad and MCLA freshman, will

open for Mali performing two original pieces.

"Slam poetry" describes performance poetry, delivered orally in front of an audience. It originated in 1984 at a Chicago jazz club and has expanded into a worldwide competitive phenomenon. Typically a "slam poetry" performance integrates music and improvisational movement in a classroom, workshop or club environment.

Described in the *New York Times* as "a ranting comic showman and literary provocateur," Mali is a classically trained Shakespearean actor and a forceful education advocate, who spent nine years in the classroom teaching everything from English and history to math S.A.T. test preparation.

Mali led six of his seven national poetry slam teams to the finals and won the championship itself a record four times.

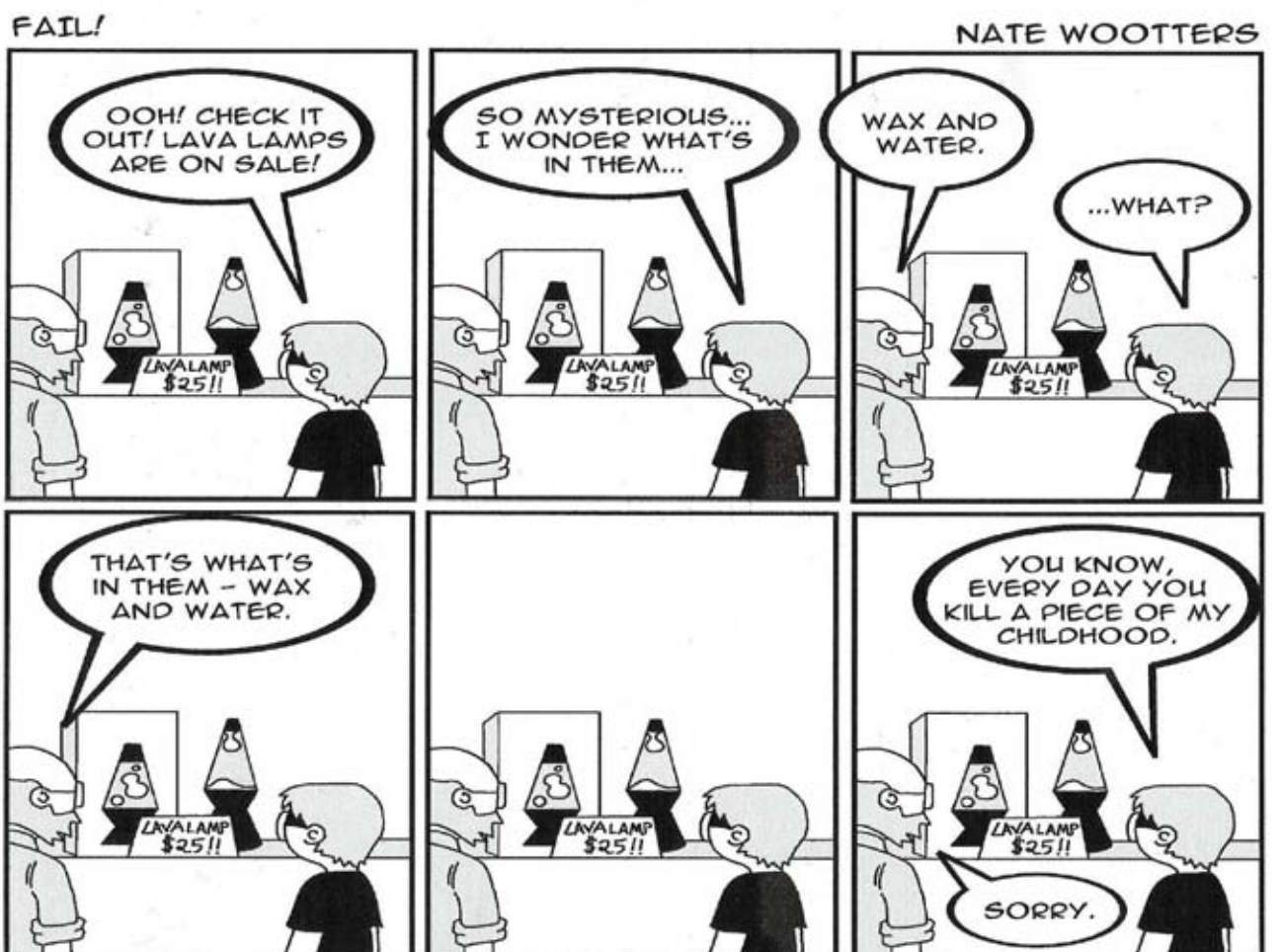
He appeared on HBO's *Russell Simmons Presents Def Poetry*, and his one-man show *Teacher! Teacher!* recently aired on NBC. The author of several books and CDs, he has narrated audiobooks, including *The Great Fire*, which won the Golden Earphones Award for children's narration.

Mali sees his work as serving the greater cause of teachers and students.

"I want to be the individual responsible for making an entire generation of college graduates consider teaching before business or law school," he says. "I want to make it easier for smart, successful, and qualified people in their 30s and older to become teachers as well. I want to get America ready for an Education Tax if that's what it's going to take. But most of all, I

want to be the spokesman for teaching's nobility, the poet laureate of passion in the classroom."

Supported by a Williams College Olmsted grant and performed during the week of Words are Wonderful, Mali's performance is geared for students grade 7 - 12. Seating is first come, first served at Mt. Greylock Regional High School auditorium. In addition to his evening performance, Mali will meet earlier in the day with groups of MGRHS students and faculty.



Boy's X-country was undefeated as of midweek

By Ben Just

The Boy's Cross Country team is amazing. As of Tuesday they were undefeated with a 7-0 record and are looking to increase that to 9-0 on Wednesday.

Over the last four years the team has gone 43-3, all three losses to Taconic, and has not lost a league meet since 2002. This year they are Western Mass favorites.

This is to be anticipated, however, since they came in second to South Hadley last year and are returning six of their top seven runners while South Hadley has graduated their Western Mass champion, Zach Hein.

Nick Fogel, who broke into the top fifty fastest runners ever to race on the Mount Greylock course, is the

top runner this year; he has been close to the best runner in the league, Zach Gordan, in several of the races in which they have run against each other, and is likely to lead the team for years to come, as he is only sophomore.

Junior Evan Dethier and senior Seth Kelley make up a two-three punch that is hard for other teams in the county to come back against and is likely to do well at Western Mass. Seniors Kyle Flynn-Kasuba, Simon Reinhardt, and Carl Kubler may have been plagued by sickness and injury but by the end of the season they ought to be back into form and ready to run their best at Western Mass.

In the meantime sophomores Zach Yarter (who

will toe the line at Western Mass as the team's seventh man) and Andy Wolf along with freshman Patrick Joslin, senior Dan Robinson, and eighth graders Charlie Besnard and William Alimonos have turned in strong performances to keep the Mounties on top.

Those of you who think that Mount Greylock's reign at the top of Berkshire County will end after this year because they will be graduating four of the top seven are sadly mistaken.

The strength of the program built up by Coach Scott Burdick and his predecessor Coach William Girard will help the Mounties to endure this setback along with the leadership of Fogel, Dethier and a crop of fast freshman and middle schoolers.

Football off to shaky start, but still has recovery time

By Spencer Kowitz

The football Mounties return home to host Monument Mountain tonight (Oct. 14) and Pittsfield High School over Oct. 21 "homecoming" weekend, before traveling to Drury on Oct. 29 to finish out their league schedule.

After losing at league powerhouse and undefeated Wahconah last week, the football team fell to 2-3. They had rebounded nicely with wins at home against Lee and at Hoosac Valley after losing their first two games of the season to Taconic and St. Joseph. They are not out of time yet, though, to turn their season around and finish with a winning record.

Greylock's offense centers on the running game. Backs Andrew Agostini (co-captain) and Jeff Brodeur supply the power while halfback Aaron Castonguay's quickness off the line complements them well. When the offense goes to the air, quarterback Preston Trites often looks for Agostini or tight end and fellow co-captain Dylan Schultz. Trites is capable of running the ball too, which provides another dimension for opposing defenses to think about.

Agostini anchors the linebacking corps on defense, while Schultz and Jake Phillips work up front to clog the middle of the line and prevent the run. Trites, Phil Sullivan, and Castonguay roam the secondary for the Mountie defense.

Sullivan, who played goalie on the soccer team last year, has done a good job on kickoffs and extra-point attempts for the Mounties. Back-up quarterback Greg Payton serves as the punter for a special teams unit that has already returned a punt for a touchdown this year.

Even though the season may have not started out as Greylock envisioned, they still have a chance to make some noise in the Berkshire County playoff hunt.



Football team members Luke Beverly, a senior, and Ryan O'Connor, a junior, sit at the Williamstown transfer station on a Saturday in September selling raffle tickets to support the Mount Greylock football program.

Your message could be in this space, reaching hundreds of Mount Greylock faculty, students and their parents -- and supporting the educational mission of the Mount Greylock Echo to teach students principles of journalism. The Echo is online as well as in print and your ad appears in both places. For information on publication dates, advertising and promotion options, and deadlines, email echo@newshare.com or call 413-458-8001.

The Greylock Echo

The Mount Greylock Echo is the student newspaper of Mt. Greylock Regional High School in Williamstown, Mass. Published monthly during the academic year, each issue is developed and edited by a team of editors and writers. Any Mt. Greylock student may join the staff, attend meetings and submit articles.

Next meeting: Tues., Oct. 25, 2:30 p.m.

Next issue: Fri., Nov. 18

Deadline: Friday, Nov. 11

Editors-in-Chief: Carl Kubler, Kejia Tang

This month's Staff: Rachel Payne, Shan Wang, Lucy White, Ben Just, Spencer Kowitz.

Mount Greylock Echo / Mt. Greylock Regional High School / 1781 Cold Spring Road / Williamstown MA 01267 / (413) 458-9582
all submissions: echo@newshare.com