

Building options narrowing down

By Shan Wang

Vermont design firm Dore & Whittier, chosen by the Mt. Greylock building committee to evaluate the condition of the building, concluded after a Nov. 30 examination that the school needs a "comprehensive renovation" or else a complete rebuild.

Lee Dore, who met with faculty, staff, and students on December 13th, identified the current school building's major problems in its heating and ventilation systems. He also said space was poorly allocated, with some classrooms taking up double and some only half-size.

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The cold corridor is also inadequately accessible to the handicapped, who must pass through the girl's locker room in order to reach the gym. Boys and girls' locker rooms are uneven in size and the toilets there are too few.

Dore also cited some safety issues in the single-pane windows and the lack of sprinkler systems. The fact that the school has not undergone major renovation that requires state approval for funding—roof repair last year is considered minor—since 1965 when it was built makes finding replacement parts for the outdated systems difficult for the maintenance staff.

The inspection of the school is expected to be finished by March; however, there is a moratorium set by the state on funding for public school building renovations until July of 2007. Dore predicts 2007 to be the earliest construction on the building could begin, as the issue needs to go to voters for funding approval, and possibly tax raises. Funding for official design work on a new school will also require voters' assent.

Building possibilities

Although D&W is currently hired to evaluate the school building, the firm may be considered to carry out the construction or renovation of a new school building. Dore said that D&W would design a new school building in "main street" form, in which core classrooms are bunched together in "houses" along a wide corridor while the gym and cafeteria would be entirely separate from an academic wing. Such a design would



Members of the school building committee meet Dec. 12 with architects. Discussion focused on how to best present publicly building condition analysis results.

make better use of space than the current classroom arrangement. "There are huge rooms without windows," said Dore. "In designing a new building, we would make sure the direction of the building is such that as many rooms as possible receive natural light." The simple design would greatly reduce energy consumption. Recently solar power, woodchips, and other renewable energies have been employed to heat schools, a possibility if a new Mt. Greylock school were to be built.

As a new well location and a new source of water are being considered for the school, the precise site of the new school would depend on the buffer zone around the well. The school must also steer clear of

the neighboring wetlands and the prime farmland near the soccer field. The builders would also be in charge of landscaping. Dore noted the poor water-drainage in the school's front field and also suggested a professional track to replace the current dirt one surrounding the football field.

"The firm rebuilding the school is responsible to even ordering the forks and knives," said Dore, "we would want as much input as possible." He also said he expected a better student turnout. Students who missed the December 13th meeting but have suggestions on a new school building or comments or complaints on the old should submit them to the principal's office.

Military recruitment: Are our students uninformed?

By Katy Markland

Military recruitment of high school students is becoming a growing issue in schools across the nation. In 2001, the Bush administration passed the No Child Left Behind Act, which requires all public high schools receiving government funding in the U.S. to grant military recruiters access to the names, addresses, and phone numbers of junior and senior students. However, if a student chooses to "opt out" by completing a simple request form, then the student's personal information will be withheld.

Though the "opt out" trend has become increasingly popular on a statewide level, the numbers for Mount

Greylock have remained about the same—only five students submitted a request form for the 2005-2006 school year. According to junior Danielle Collyer, "the students are uninformed. No one really knows about it." The request form is available in the Student Handbook, which all Mount Greylock students are expected to read. Students may send in the slip to the school confirming that they have done so. Often this important information is overlooked, and students unknowingly become recruitment targets.

The school is contacted by a variety of military recruiters about three or four times per year. When this happens, they are required by law to provide recruiters with the names of all juniors and seniors — except for those who made a specific request not to have their information released. The general consensus is that the students would be more likely to opt out if they were provided with more information about the subject. Says junior Sarah Burton, "They should make flyers. I've never even heard of [that policy]."

While students at Mount Greylock are uninformed, the school seems to stray from the statewide norm. In five of Massachusetts's largest school districts, approximately 18 percent of juniors and seniors have asked that their information not be released.

The relatively sudden opposition to military recruitment in schools is showing up in the Army's number—it fell about 6,600 soldiers short of its 80,000 goal for 2005—the greatest shortfall since 1979. Recruitment rates are continuously dropping: enrollment in the Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps dropped over 16 percent in the 2004-2005 school year.

The military is making efforts to keep their recruitment campaign alive. This fall the Pentagon launched

a \$10-million advertising campaign urging reluctant parents to "make it a two-way conversation" if their child should express an interest in joining the military. The Army has also raised the maximum age for new recruits from 34 to 39. Because of this, the number of potential recruits has risen from 60 million to 82 million.

As for the juniors and seniors at Mount Greylock, it seems likely that future classes will have a higher opt out rate. "As more students become aware of this issue and their options for dealing with it, I think most will decide to have their information withheld," says a sophomore at Mount Greylock. "I know that next year I'm going to make sure that my name doesn't show up on recruitment lists. Hopefully students will realize what's happening and do something about it."

Juvenile judge to speak at MG on bullying, harassment

Berkshire Juvenile Court Judge Judith Locke will spend part of Jan. 9 at Mount Greylock Regional High School for an assembly and meetings with students and faculty, Supt. William Travis said this week. Travis said the judge's visit is the first part of a stepped up effort to educate students on harassment and bullying -- and potential legal consequences.

Travis said the Massachusetts Department of Education may provide a small grant to Mount Greylock to bring in nationally accredited professions for in-school workshops. And this week, junior and senior advisors were scheduled to be meeting with middle-school students to counsel them on bullying issues.

INSIDE:

On the NEWS/ARTS page, Healthy Choice grant, a review of "Disney from the Heart," Senior Districts.....PAGE 2

On the NEWS/ARTS page, interview with super-comic Nate Wootters.....PAGE 3

On the SPORTS page, fall sports are recapped, a preview of the women's and men's cross country skiing teams....PAGE 4

NEWS/MUSIC

School receives grant to improve student health

Mount Greylock was one in four other schools of the nation who received the three-year health choices grant of \$9,000 that was awarded to them through the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts and the Mass. Department of Public Health.

The grant was for the middle school to promote students' health by healthy food and physical activity.

Sue Strizzi, Mount Greylock middle school teacher, applied for this grant. She said, "Last spring, the Mass. Public Health Department sent out to all middle schools in Massachusetts a notification for this grant. I worked with one of the parents to write the grant application and we got the grant at the end of June." The grant allows middle schools to promote 5-2-1: 5 fruits and vegetables a day, a limited time of 2 hours in front of screens (computers, TV, etc), and 1 hour of exercise each day.

"Disney from the Heart" heartens the audience

By Isa St. Clair

"Disney from the Heart," performed last Thursday and Saturday, was the senior project of Joe Sicotte. The ambitious musical encompassed thirty-six songs from everything from "Oliver and Company" to "Beauty and the Beast," performed by a wide array of singers of all levels both from the school and from Joe's own family. Joe clearly had an excellent vision, though the extensive amount of songs, some of which were not particularly well-known or popular, occasionally smothered the brilliance of the performances. Perhaps, at times, less really is more. Some highlights included a stirring duet between Paul Bergmann and Molly Mackin, singing "A Whole New World," a hilarious performance by Jesse MacDonald in "Les Poissons," and Davy Payne's turn as Abu from "Aladdin." The show was in the spirit of charity, as all proceeds were donated to the American Heart Association in memory of Joe's late grandfather. Unfortunately, the amount of money that could be raised was reduced by the fact that Friday's performance had to be cancelled because of the school closing. Individual songs were generally funny and well performed and it was overall a very entertaining production.

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During the next three years, different amounts of money will be given, though decreasing from \$5,000 to \$3,000 to \$1,000. More money will be awarded the first year to get started, and also to buy the equipments for the after school program.

There will be an after school program opened to both 7th and 8th graders that will probably start in January. Students will meet two days a week. On one day they will work on fitness, using pedometers and treadmills, and on the other days they will work on nutrition, having healthy snacks and talking about healthy eating.

A program called Planet Health, an interdisciplinary curriculum focused on improving the health and well being of sixth through eighth grade students, will be used as an advisory to train 7th graders. Some middle school teachers went through training to teach the curriculum to the students.



Photo by Roseanna Zarza

From left: Mitchell Galli (Chorus), Joseph Sicotte (Chorus), Sabrina Gogan (Chorus), Brittnea Frazier (Chorus), Christopher Densmore (Chorus), Keja Tang (Orchestra), and Dan Whateley (Band, not pictured)

Greylock students achieve success in senior district auditions, some statewide

By Mitch Galli

On November 12th, 2005, seven Mt. Greylock Regional High School students went to Westfield State College to audition for the Western District festival. Every student who auditioned made it.

Brittnea Frazier, Sabrina Gogan, Mitch Galli, Joseph Sicotte, and Chris Densmore made the Senior District Chorus. Keja Tang also made the senior high chorus, but decided to be part of the Senior District Orchestra, which he also auditioned for on violin. The other Mt. Greylock student to successfully audition was Daniel Whateley. He was accepted for his talented trumpet playing into the Senior District Band. Each of the groups will perform about five pieces at the concert, consisting of talented students all over Western Massachusetts. The senior district performance will be held at University of Massachusetts, in Amherst on Saturday, January 14th, with a snowdate of January 15th. Five of the students were given the opportunity to audition for the state competition. They were Gogan, Galli, Whateley, Tang and Densmore.



Sale of raffle tickets to win a quilt knit by Beth Nesbit raised \$400 for the PTO at the Williamstown Holiday Walk.

Citrus comes again to Mt. Greylock, along with \$2,000

By Shannon Young

On Dec. 8, the halls of Mount Greylock Regional High School were filled with the tangy smell of citrus once again, as boxes of oranges, and grapefruit, straight from Florida, waited to be delivered. Every year from mid-November to December the Friends Of The Arts hosts its annual Citrus Sale Fundraiser.

This Citrus Sale has become a favorite fundraiser of many over the years, and is very important to the Mount Greylock Arts Department. Over the past few years, budget cuts to the Arts Department have endangered many of its programs, such as the Orchestra, which was hanging on by a thread in 2004.

The Friends Of The Arts support programs such as this, to ensure their longevity as part of the Mount Greylock curriculum.

This year the Friends Of The Arts raised two thousand dollars with the Citrus Sale, which will be divided up into mini grants to support different art programs of the high school, such as the Orchestra, Band, Chorus, Art classes, and the Shakespeare & Company performance.

The Citrus Sale Fundraiser is headed annually by Carol Stein-Payne, the mother of two students, Rachel and Davy Payne, who are actively involved in the Mount Greylock Art Department programs. Stein-Payne said she was pleased.



Photo by Roseanna Zarza

Nearly 200 boxes of oranges, grapefruits and mixed fruit arrived Tues., Dec. 13 and were unloaded by parent

Nate Wooters - FAIL!

Interview with a comic artist

By the Echo Staff

Lucy: We're doing a special holiday piece on your comics, Nate. Could you answer a few questions for us?

Nate: Uh, sure.

Lucy: So, what gave you the idea to start a comic?

Nate: A combination of *The Echo* rejecting a few of my comics, and also my sister did one...I don't know, it was just something fun to do, a summer thing.

Lucy: This summer? And you already have about a hundred comics?

Nate: Yes, just barely.

Lucy: From where do you draw inspiration for your characters? I know some of them are actual people from Mt. Greylock, but what about the other characters, such as Livia, or Dwight?

Nate: Actually, they are sort of based on people we know. Livia in fact is based on a conversation I had with a girl [Olivia] I know, and Dwight is also based on Greylock kids. A little bit of Paul Bergmann, little bit of Jesse MacDonald, you know.

Lucy: I know that Dwight does like his pickup lines. Oh, and I especially liked you calling Kejia humorless blob. (Kejia in the background: Nate, I'm coming for you...and your sister!)

Nate: Thank you, I liked it too.

Lucy: How do you focus on specific features of people to recreate them into your comic?

Nate: It's all about taking a quick glance, because in a quick glance you

get just whatever stands out the most, in the person, or in the case of creating a character, you take what stands out most personality-wise

Lucy: Like with Dr. Burdick. Just the simple things you needed to illustrate to get across his personality. You could tell who he was without knowing Dr. Burdick personally; like the staff ID card, the purple shirt. Oh, and Phil is especially recognizable.

Nate: I have a lot of fun doing Phil.

Lucy: So what do you think of physics this year?

Nate: I love physics, Dr. Burdick is the man.

Lucy: Are you taking art? Because your depictions of characters such as Dr. Burdick are really eye-catching and so accurate. Does art class help?

Nate: Yes.

Lucy: Is this your fourth year taking art?

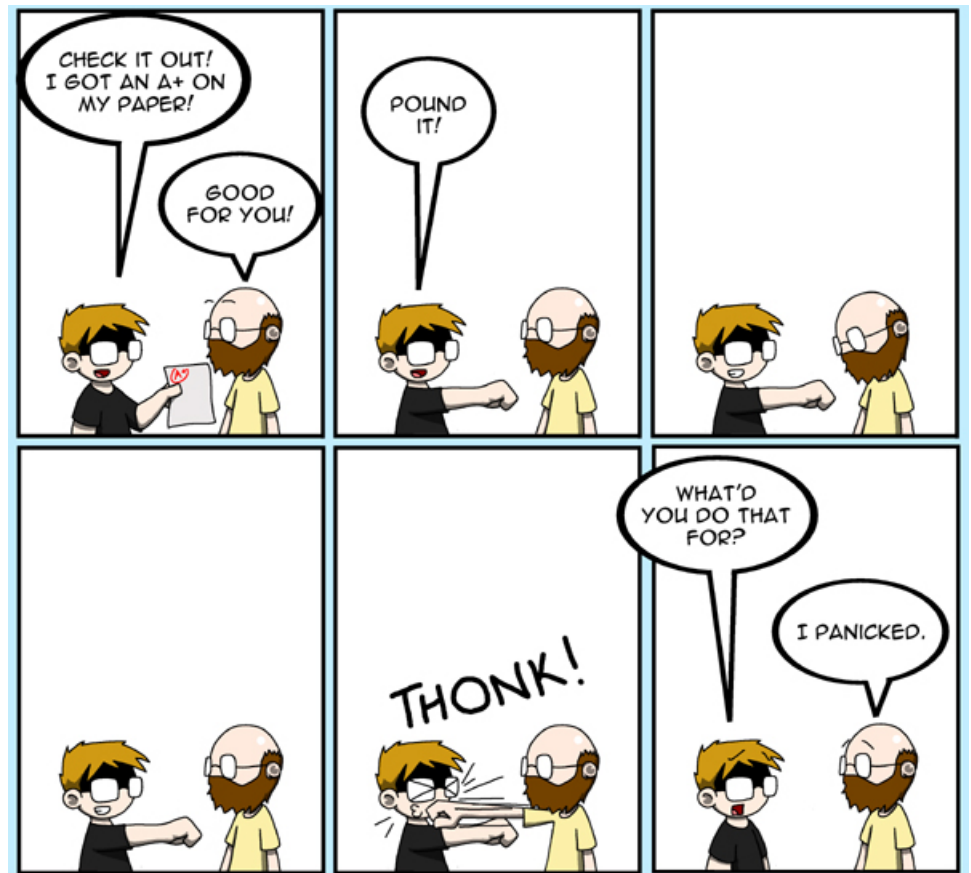
Nate: This is actually my second year; I'm in art theory right now.

Lucy: How did your art class affect your comics? Were you able to pick up basic drawing skills in class?

Nate: I like to think of art class as something independent of my comics, as it forces me to create more compositional stuff. You know, most of my comics don't have backgrounds, that thing.

Lucy: I especially enjoy the facial expressions of the characters in your comics. The expressions really drive your comics. How are you so successful?

Nate: In that case I have to credit



one of my comic idols: Scott Ramsoomar.

Lucy: And...let's see...what are you looking at for your senior project? Are you doing something with "FAIL!"

Nate: I actually didn't have the foresight to think of that; I should have signed up when everyone else did. No, I'm doing animation.

Lucy: It's sort of connected. Have you looked for any opportunities to have your comics advertised?

Nate: In a few ways. By word of mouth really, is the best way. I'm sure most people who read my comic go to our school, but also a few times I got really zealous and started buying up ad space for my website.

Lucy: Are you interested in continuing this [comics] as your career?

Nate: Um, yeah, it's one the things I wanted to do with my life, just comics in general.

Lucy: Neat. And has your senior project with animation at all helped you create your

comic?

Nate: Senior project has damaged it, if anything. Since senior project started everything has been going downhill, because it's just extra stuff to think about.

Lucy: Would you say that if you had made your senior project about "FAIL!", it would have helped or hurt you?

Nate: It would have helped me. I'm generally happy with senior project; I don't believe it is a completely worthless institution.

Lucy: So I guess that's all. Is there anything you want the public to know about your comic?

Nate: T-shirts are for sale, available online. There's a link off of <http://fail.keenspace.com>

Lucy: Well this concludes our interview. I look forward to future additions to your web comic and this interview in the paper.

Nate: Me too, thanks.



Photo by Rosana Zarza

Snow

By Ananda Plunkett

Effortless flakes descend upon us,
Bestowing numb hands and
Enlightened minds.
Can you find beneath the sheets
Tiny greens or sleeping stalks?
How wondrous the world becomes,
Blanched and light,
As silence talks.
Its voice is carried in wisps of
white,
The inaudible shush of cloud breath.

Slice of Joy

By Anonymous

Dog piss is yellowing on the snow.
Salt staining sidewalks bloody pink.
Icebergs choke Green River's flow.
Burned eggnog in the kitchen sink.

Frostbite claims a weak child's limb.
Wal-Mart steals what Santa brings.
No children leave out milk for him.
iPods claim what a choir sings.

Homeless man under the bridge.
Broken leg from sledding run.

Sick doe hunted down on Deer Ridge.
A month since we have seen the sun.

Merry Christmas they say, walking
on the path.

Our gift to you, is your education.
Whatever happened to third grade
math?

To subtract the problems, add vaca-
tion.

Teach us not to multiply
Debts in such a way we can't con-
trol.

And learn to divide the Christmas pie
A slice of joy amidst the cold.



Fall Recap: Football now copes with turnover

By Ben Just

You've got to respect our football team. No matter how many times they have a losing season they just get back out there, work hard, and try again. Their perseverance is astounding. This year it paid off as they finally made the playoffs, it seems like both the team and Coach Flaherty are hitting their stride.

The Girls soccer team also had a good season with a solid regular performance and a victory in the first round of the Western Mass playoffs over Mahar. Coach Cece and her team seemed to adapt to each other fairly quickly. With any luck she can rally the team after the loss of several seniors, including three all transcript starters.

The Boys team certainly faces a rebuilding year as they are losing Matt England, Seth George, Jason Silberstein, Clayton Johnson, Josh Grauman, Chris Spencer and several other players who have been instrumental to the team's success. Good luck Dilsey.

The Cross Country teams always mirror each other. Both were undefeated county and western mass champions and each took seventh at the State meet. Most of you have also heard about Cate Costley, a seventh grader, taking second at the state meet.

The boys team may be losing four of their top seven but with the young talent on the team expects another strong season next year. The girl's will likely be returning all of their top seven.



Boys X-Country team looking to regain state title

By Spencer Kowitz

Because MG had defeated Lenox in every race throughout the season, it came as a shock to everyone last February when the MG Boys Cross Country Ski Team finished second in the skating class to Lenox at the State Championships. Although the team did claim the State title in the classical race, the more coveted skating title somehow managed to elude the team's grasp.

The prospects for this year's Mountie squad to get redemption and reclaim the state title look good, though, as Greylock is returning all but two of its top eight skiers. (Although only the top four skiers' scores count

towards the team's score, the next four skiers can still have a dramatic impact on the outcome of races, as they can displace skiers from other squads.) The team will be led by a strong group of experienced tri-captains: seniors Kyle Flynn-Kasuba and Sean Condron and junior Evan Dethier.

Dethier achieved an amazing one-two combination last winter as he claimed both the classical and skating state individual titles, a stunning feat for a sophomore. The captains are great competitors, but they don't have to carry the load all by themselves. Sophomores Nick Fogel and Ben Ogden along with freshmen Dylan Dethier and Pat Joslin are capable of posting quality

times this winter.

The MG girls, meanwhile, will be looking to replace a talented class lost to graduation. Coming off a third place finish in the skating State Championships and a first in the classical form, this year's team will be captained by two veterans of the team: seniors Katie White and Caitlin O'Brien. The team will be looking for some younger skiers to step up into varsity roles. Freshmen Camille Robertson has shown great potential thus far and likely will be one of the team's top skiers this season. Junior Anna Hogeland and Shan Wang and senior Jen Rosenthal are among other skiers MG can count on to lead this year's team.

Coaches Hiram and Hilary Greene along with Matt Voison, have prepared the teams well so far by sending them through grueling pre-season workouts even before the trails were brushed with snow. The first race for both teams is approaching quickly as Prospect Mountain will hold season opener on New Year's Eve morning.



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.

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Deadline: Friday, Jan. 13

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