

A New Building For Mount Greylock?

By Paige Belanger



Most students here at Mt. Greylock seem to notice the outwardly deteriorating nature of our school. Whether it be a quick glance at the unattractive surface of the gym locker rooms, the chill within the building during the winter months, the incredible, threatening holes in the parking lot, or just the vast sameness of the interior itself, every student notices that Mt. Greylock is not quite the affluent building that it was in the 1960s and 70s. Students see the mechanics of education reform taking place, but are unenlightened in the measures being taken to provide a new and well-equipped building.

However, improvements are being pursued by Mt. Greylock, in particular its building committee, which was appointed two years ago by the school committee. The building committee consists of approximately twenty parents and residents from both Lanesboro and Williamstown who have backgrounds in engineering and architecture. This appointed committee hired a consultant from the company Dore and Whittier

to inspect the school and report on its current condition. After going through every room of the school in order to see what is in need of replacement or repair, the consultant determined that the major issue the school possesses is its boilers, which are so old that, if they were to break, the parts would not be replaceable.

This idea of an irreplaceable boiler system was tested recently this winter, when our bodily comfort solely relied on one of the three boilers. Theoretically, two boilers heat the school while one sits as backup. This winter, not only was one of our boilers broken, but so was the backup, only making noticeable the aging technology of Mt. Greylock.

Not only were the boilers found unreliable, but the locker rooms were discovered to be archaic and the single-paned windows to be outdated, as they allow more usable heat out of the building than does double-paned glass. Due to these discrepancies found within the building, the consultant from Dore and

Whittier deemed our school in need of renovation or replacement.

Even after these findings, a new school is not in the process of being built. According to Dr. Travis, Mt. Greylock's superintendent, "we are in a state of limbo." In order to receive not only allowance for, but funds for the project of creating or renovating a school, a request must be approved by the state. An appeal has already been submitted by Mt. Greylock to the Massachusetts School Building Authority. Last year, our school competed with 320 other claims, from which the MSBA chose 180 to focus its money and attention on. Mt. Greylock was one of these schools. From here, the schools were ranked in order of most need to least exigency, and the top 80 were given funding for their individual projects. Mt. Greylock was not one of these schools. The current status of our would-be construction is now awaiting another examination by the MSBA.

Yet, as close as the school is to being allotted funds for renovation or

Considering Standardized Tests

By Tori Wonderlick

The importance of standardized testing to high school students has been a hot-button issue in the news lately, with some colleges removing SAT scores from their lists of entrance requirements, and other institutions increasing the amount of importance they place upon these tests. President Bush's No Child Left Behind Act requires that every state issue some form of compulsory standardized test (the test here in Massachusetts is the all-too-familiar MCAS), and high scores on Advanced Placement tests earn students college credits at some schools. All of these different forms of testing can seem overwhelming to students, and ultimately leave us wondering "How much are these tests really helping us, anyway?"

The chief goal of most standardized tests in this country is to predict student success in settings beyond high school—whether those settings are collegiate or in the workplace depends upon the student and the test. SATs and Accuplacer tests gauge a student's likelihood to be successful in college, a measurement that is highly useful to admissions offices. The controversy surrounds the accuracy of the tests. Many students, parents, and teachers feel that SATs do not accurately represent the capability of a student to perform in college, because they only test certain narrow areas of academic ability. Students who are poor test-takers or who benefit most from project-based assessments are at a distinct disadvantage under the current format of the SAT. "But," says Guidance Counselor Beverly Maselli, "those students are a clear minority." For most students, Maselli states, "the SAT is accurate. Kids who take the test generally know where they stand [academically]; it's a good gauge." As for alternate forms of assessment, such as projects and portfolios: "I don't think it's practical...obviously, there is that group that would benefit from projects, but it would be difficult to standardize." The benefit of using the SAT is that it is the same across the country, with little regional bias in the formatting of the questions, and eliminating biases in a project-

**Standardized, Continued
on Page 3**

Building, Continued on Page 7

A NEW SCHEDULE FOR NEXT YEAR

By Marta Kowitz

The schedule at Mount Greylock has undergone many changes in the past few years, in areas such as extended period, class length, and rotation. Though extended period had a warm response throughout the school population, it did not meet state requirements for Time on Learning and had to be dropped from the schedule in the Fall of 2006. But the School Council still wanted to provide a specific time in the day for students to meet with teachers, so over the course of this school year, they began the search for a new schedule.

After examining various schedules from across the country, Mount Greylock is planning to use the Palo Alto High School model for next year. This model involves seven classes, keeping with the current number offered at our school. In the proposed schedule students go to all seven classes on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays, while students only go to four classes on Wednesdays and Thursdays. On Wednesdays students go to one normal length period and double periods of Blocks Two, Four, and Six. On Thursdays students go to the same single period but double periods of Blocks Three, Five, and Seven.

These six double periods will allow students to work on longer projects or do labs in science classes. Sports enthusiasts will be happy to know that in the proposed schedule students will no longer be pulled from gym

class to participate in science labs. Unfortunately, there will be one class that meets five times a week but never has a double period. Science classes will not be scheduled during this period because of the lack of lab time.

As of yet, it is unknown if the new schedule will rotate or not. The rotating schedule helps many students who are more focused at certain times of the day and, as an added bonus, makes more teachers available for the coveted job of Lunch Duty. Mr. Payne agreed on the fact that a rotating schedule has been a favorable choice for the school, saying, "I think everybody likes at least some part of the day rotating. That's been a Mt. Greylock tradition since I've been here . . . There was only year where we had a fixed schedule, and I remember people not really liking it."

Even with the many attributes of the rotating schedule, this year's stationary morning periods have had positive effects as well. Teachers have had a simpler time with class attendance at the beginning of the day, and Mr. Payne has noticed an increase in the number of students on time for first period. But whether or not the schedule will rotate, students should prepare themselves for some lengthy classes next year.

INSIDE:

New Policies At
Greylock

See Pages 4, 8

The 8th Grade Trip
to Gettysburg

See Page 2

Graduation

See Pages 5-7

Western Mass Wins

See Pages 9, 10

The 8th Grade Trip Back In Time: Gettysburg

Compiled By Cate Costly



8th Grade students crowd around Mr. Gibson who used to teach history at Mount Greylock. On the battlefields of Gettysburg, the 8th grade class learned much from teachers like Gibson who shared knowledge about the American Civil War.

On Tuesday May 20th, the eighth-grade class left on a four-day trip Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

This trip was the product of an entire year's hard work on the part of teachers, parents and students alike. In the following excerpts, four students reflect on the trip: "Mount Greylock's 8th grade class took a four-day trip to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and it was worth all of the eight-hour drive. Everyday was a new site, each with a new sense of the Civil War. From Devil's Den to the site where Pickett's Charge happened, the battlefields got better and better each day. The scenes were very inspiring. The emotion and spirit could be felt by each student, knowing soldiers had fought in their footprints for their country. On the lighter side, back in the cabins, new alliances were formed, friends became stronger, and teachers got to know their students better. It was a great experience." -Quentin Anderson

"Although there was plenty of fun on the trip, the main objective was to learn. Each day our class split into three bus groups and went on excursions around the battlefields. During that time, three guides, Mr. Blackman, Mr. Gibson, and Mr. Singleton, taught us on a rotating basis. They told us stories of the battle, explained events, and showed us monuments, which made the battle of Gettysburg come to life. Mr. Gibson's recitation of a ballad that told one regiment's story was a favorite of many students. In addition to visualizing what we've learned, our class experienced perhaps the single most important days in our country's history. It is true that reading a book about the events could teach us the facts, but the experience brought a side to the Civil War in our minds. Now we know the plot, setting and characters of the story that took place on three days in July of 1863." -Grace Singleton

"Our mornings were filled with excursions to the battlefields. We examined monuments from different brigades and corps, including the Black Hats and the Irish Brigade. We looked out over the town of Gettysburg from Little Round Top and clambered over boulders at Devils Den, as many soldiers did when the rocks were covered in blood instead of tourists. My classmates and I also learned the ways of an army, how to form ranks and march. Being in Gettysburg, we were able to understand the battle much better than if we had been in a classroom reading from a textbook.

-Luke Costley

"And for those final moments, as we passed the familiar towns of New Lebanon, Hancock and Williamstown, I really did not want to leave our crowded bus that for the last few days could be called home. I looked at the tired faces of my friends, packing up and trying to locate their stuff on the dark bus. I realized something had changed. We no longer just tolerated each other. We had made friends with people we never thought of. The trip had done more than enhanced our knowledge of the subject, it brought our class together as we prepare to head into high school."

-Kelsey Goodwin

This exceptional trip would not have been possible without the hard work of all those involved. Congratulations to the eighth-grade for making this trip a true success.

Again, Gibson gives another valuable lesson to young scholars on the battlefields of Gettysburg. He is depicted here in traditional Civil War-Era garb.



Photos:
Ed Bishop

NEWS IN BRIEF

Language Department Acquires New Equipment

After contacting Mount Greylock concerning a surplus of language laboratory equipment in March, Williams College has donated all of the furniture and technological materials of its former language laboratory to the high school's language department. In addition to the furniture (carrels, shelves, chairs, recording stations), Mount Greylock also received V.H.S. players, tape recorders and monitors. This generous donation also included blank V.H.S. tapes, blank audiocassettes, a scanner, a tape cleaner, and amplifier and a control center. Although the exact monetary value of the lab components has not been estimated, the presumed cost of such equipment would be significant.

Greylock's language department has suffered lately with students at a significant disadvantage when competing against other students with language laboratory experience. Department head Susan Murray claims that the department will use the new components to "adjust [the] entire foreign language curriculum" at Mount Greylock to "maximize [students'] language learning experience. The new furniture and technology is currently being stored on the South side of the building.

Williams Offers Junior Class "Where Are We" Seminars

On Wednesday, June 11th, Mount Greylock's junior class participated in a series of seminars to provide an opportunity for students to get outdoors, appreciate the beautiful setting that Mount Greylock resides in and offer the opportunity for student and teachers to learn side by side with Williams faculty and community members. Sponsored by the Williams Center, a series of programs aimed at fostering collaboration between Williams College and the High School and Middle School, the program entailed various exercises in environmental science, environmental art, nature journaling and local history. One feature was former Mount Greylock teacher Martha Dailey's workshop entitled "Magical Places.....Off Limits at Greylock," which explored "the magical nooks and crannies" of the Greylock campus with a special focus on institutional memory and local history.

Greylock Students at Boy's State Summer Leadership/Citizenship Program

After a series of interviews, juniors Dylan Dethier, Ian Jones, and Matt Vaughan have been selected to attend the 2008 Boy's State. Boy's State is a program sponsored by the American Legion and the American Leagion Auxiliary for high school students between thier junior and senior years. The Boy's State is a week long mock government program where students learn about the government election process. It will take place from June 14-20 at Stonehill College.

Classics Continue To Thrive at Mount Greylock

The Mount Greylock Junior Classical League continued its statewide success this May, finishing second overall at the State Convention. The trophy is awarded on the basis of a series of contests, regarding academic prowess in the field of Classics and school spirit. Though significantly lacking in numbers, the Latin program performed just as well as it has in recent years and will celebrate its achievement in the fall with the annual Parentalia banquet. The largest student-run organization in the school and the second-largest national club (behind only the boy-scouts), the J.C.L. is a fundamental part of the school. Next year they look to continue their success with greater numbers, and hopefully bring the coveted State Convention trophy back to Mount Greylock. For several consecutive years, the Mounties had brought home the trophy but falter against powerhouse Boston Latin Academy the past two springs.

Additionally, the club continued it's remarkable success at the national level on the National Latin Exam, a test administered to over 150,000 students annually. Nearly half of all Mount Greylock students in grades 8-12 who completed the test received an award. Awards ranged from "Cum Laude" to "Gold Medal Summa Cum Laude." 10 students in grades 8-12; 8th graders Josh Harrington, Ned Kleiner, Mary Laidlaw and Rebekeh Packer; Freshmen Cal Brooks and Dan Phelps; Sophomore Sam Shuker-Haines; Junior Amanda Karamatsos; and Seniors Lizzie Fox and David Rosenthal all received the highest honor within their respective levels.

Middle School Puts On Production of Willy Wonka

During the past month Mount Greylock middle school students have been working rigorously on their annual musical production. The production was directed Kathy O'Mara. The classic novel, written by Roald Dahl, was first published in 1964. It has since been produced as a movie as well as a theatrical piece. This year's performance is a rendition of "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory," and is being performed at 7:30 June 12-14.

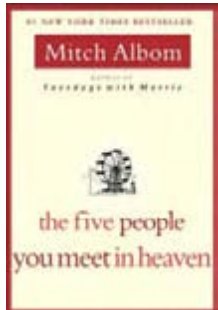
English Department to Restructure Freshman Curriculum

Former 11th grade Advanced Placement English teacher Trudy Ames will return to Greylock after a one year hiatus to teach the 9th grade English courses in collaboration with second year teacher Kelly Houle after concerns regarding the widening gap between good writers and poor writers at Greylock had caused curriculum leaders to decide to revamp the freshman program with a stronger focus on writing.

After considering several options in term of pilot programs, the department opted to refocus the program with a greater emphasis on writing to offer students in college preparatory and honors courses wider opportunity. While department head Blair Dils stresses that the curriculum will still include literature, grammar, and vocabulary and will not abandon classic novels, he also claims that the program will focus more on writing stronger sentences and paragraphs, the basic units of quality writing. Within the new program, the incoming freshman class will be divided into eight sections with each class containing 15 students or fewer. Additionally, each class will be assigned a Williams college fellow, one of eight paid students who will visit one or two times a week to aid students in developing their skills.

Chorus Performs Commissioned Piece

As yet another graduating class celebrated its four years of splendid achievements on this past Saturday at the annual Commencement Ceremony, the Mount Greylock Chorus serenading the seniors with a song commissioned for the chorus by local composer Stephen Dankner. The performance of Dankner's piece, entitled "A Familiar Dawn," featured solos by several members of the senior class. Dankner, displaced from New Orleans to Williamstown by Hurricane Katrina in 2005, has now composed two pieces for the chorus directed by Marlene Walt. The chorus debuted the piece in May as a part of Greylock's annual spring concert.



The Five People You Meet In Heaven

By: Mitch Alborn
Price: \$ 19.95

**the five people
you meet in heaven**

“The Five People You Meet in Heaven” is a heartwarming story about the people who pass through your life and the lessons they give to you. It shows how you, as an ordinary person, can change the life of anyone you interact with. The book takes place around a man named Eddie who dies on his 83rd birthday in a tragic accident. The accident took place in the amusement park that he grew in, while he was trying to save the life of a little girl. Then, readers follow him as he travels through Heaven.

When Eddie gets to Heaven he learns about its' five levels, in each of which he meets someone from his life who has a message for him. These people range from a person who worked at the amusement park when he was a kid, whom he barely remembers, to the love of his life. Also, at each level his health follows the track it did in his life starting with feeling like a little boy again in the first level.

Throughout the novel readers also get to see Eddie grow up from back flashes of his birthdays. This gives glimpses into his relationships with his parents, which helps to draw connections to why Eddie became the adult he grew into.

Overall, this book really gets its' audience thinking. It provides you with a portrait of an adult, worn from experiences. Then, it gives glimpses into his past, both ones that he was aware of and others that he was not. Readers then can see what things can form a person's personality and thoughts. Furthermore, Eddie is a very relatable character who has gone through experiences that everyone does, but these scenes are written from a direction that can make someone pick out what is important.

The book's lessons for life are inspirational and no matter what a person's opinions on Heaven are the book's core is truly about what a person can give and take from their life. In particular, the novel emphasizes a type of cycle. Everyone has people who influence their lives but then, everyone goes back to meet the people whose lives they influenced. Anyone can take away a sense of importance and a desire to pay more attention to the people who pass through there life.

This book is a great read, but it has to be approached with the right state of mind. While it can be entertaining, be prepared to do some reflection. A lot can be taken from it if looked at openly. It is not long, at 196 pages, and it is spilt into small parts that make it easy to read in a way to understand its' messages. Amy Tan, author of *The Joy Luck Club*, describes this story perfectly, "This is the fable you will devour when you fall in love. This is the tale you will keep by your side when you are lost. This is the story you will turn to again and again, because it possesses the rare magic to let you see yourself and the world anew."

The Five People You Meet in Heaven by Mitch Albom would be a great relaxing summer read for people of all ages and interests. Also, Mitch Albom is the author of Tuesdays with Morrie, but there really is not another book that can compare with this novel that is almost in a genre of its' own.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

*The Echo Editorial Staff invites you, our readers, to let us know what you're thinking! If you have comments about the Echo, Mount Greylock, or life in general, let us know! Please submit any letters to us at mountgreylockecho@gmail.com, or give them to Mr. Niemeyer.
Thanks for your submissions, The Echo Editorial Staff.*

Thanks to America

My suit case is packed, filled with gifts from America, ready to go back to Afghanistan. Not the gifts that you can purchase from a store or a shopping mall, but the experiences that I have gained this year from Mt. Greylock, from my host family, and from my American friends and from an American community. The gifts that I have received are many; the care and kindness of my teachers who have treated me as their own child during this year; the friendship of my American friends from my American high school, which has been placed in my heart and will remain until its last beat; the gift of love of my American host parents, in the deepest bottom of my heart. The gifts that I am taking with me are the experiences and fond memories of this year that I had in America. This year was a gift for me that I can carry with me for the rest of my life. I can't even imagine that the year is ending and I have already spent almost tenth months of my life here. Now I have realized the meaning of the saying, "Time flies, before you know it, it is tomorrow." I have lived a part of my life with you all, a golden period of my life which won't be forgotten.

I want to thank Mt. Greylock for accepting an exchange student in the school and for giving me the opportunity of studying and integrating me as a member of the family. Words are not enough to show my feelings and gratitude toward what Mt. Greylock has given me. I want to thank all Mt. Greylock students for accepting me as a friend and not letting me feel isolated and far from my family and other friends. I want to thank my teachers for teaching me the lessons that have brightened my future. These lessons will help me lead my country into the future. I want to thank my guidance counselor and the guidance office staff for being helpful to me and working with me. I want to thank the bus drivers for being kind and patient and the kitchen ladies for making delicious food for us every day. Being in America and especially in Mount Greylock has been a golden opportunity for me. I have many fond memories that I will never forget. All these things happened only because my host family made the bridge for me to come to America, where I found luck and happiness. I want to thank my host family for opening their house and hearts and doors for me, the Afghan Exchange student. I want to thank them for accepting me as a member of their family and sharing their food and love with me. Being far from home for a year, having a new town and family for a year, experiencing all new things for a year is not easy, but Mt. Greylock and my host family have helped me face this challenge.

From America I have learned the meaning of freedom and the ability to face challenges. I have learned how to make new friends. I learned motivation and leadership, which I will use throughout my lifetime to help my poor people and country. My host father always says that, "this year is a gift that you will take through your whole life." This year has been a gift and a wonderful opportunity of my life and I promise that I will pass this gift to give others. Wherever in this world I go, I will take a little piece of Mt. Greylock with me.

Abdul Samad Sadri, Class of '09

The Greylock Family

I am Ahmadshah Hazrati from Afghanistan. This year has meant a great deal to me; I have felt like family among all of you. Coming here and living far away from my own family and friends was such a challenging experience for me; things were strange and very difficult, but I got used to them over a period of time. I found American people and culture to be so kind and respectful to my culture and me. Students at Mount Greylock are very friendly and helpful. Now I am pretty much accustomed to almost everything.

Learning at Mount Greylock from intelligent, respectful and open minded teachers has been my favorite thing. Teachers have always been capable and generous about giving me help, and offering lots of different ways of learning to students. Rose- Marie Pelletier is a very intelligent, talented, and experienced math teacher. She has a way of explaining math that is very clear and understandable. My English teacher, Robin Lehleitner, has a teaching style characterized by integrity. She is respectful and sympathetic to her students, despite the fact that she is busy. The administration and other staff have always been willing and able to give me help as well. Thanks to Dr. Travis, the superintendent, who has been especially kind.

My second favorite thing at Mount Greylock is athletics. I had not been involved in any kind of sports before coming here, but I participated in athletics here because Mount Greylock has a great sports tradition. There are so many sports here that selecting an athletic activity is very simple. Mount Greylock has talented coaches. I started cross-country running at the beginning of the school year. It's a great physical sport and I really enjoyed it, especially because this wide and greenish area of Massachusetts is a beautiful place in which to run. I am really grateful to my cross country running coach, Scott Burdick, who helped me when I first started sports here. This is also a great place for skiing. Last winter I joined the cross-country skiing team, which was challenging for me. I had never been on skis in my whole life. People encouraged me to join the team, especially Hillary and Hiram Greene, my coaches, who helped me a lot in both cross country running and skiing. We had practice after school every day, and at least one meet per week. It needed lots of patience through the season which we finished. Currently it's the same with track and field. It is still going on and it's fun so far. Brian Gill is my coach; he is a great teacher. I am really grateful to my coaches and all my teammates. They are all my brothers and sisters, sweet and nearest to my heart; I love all of them. I had a good time and it was a lot of fun being with you all. It is like a souvenir of this school year for me.

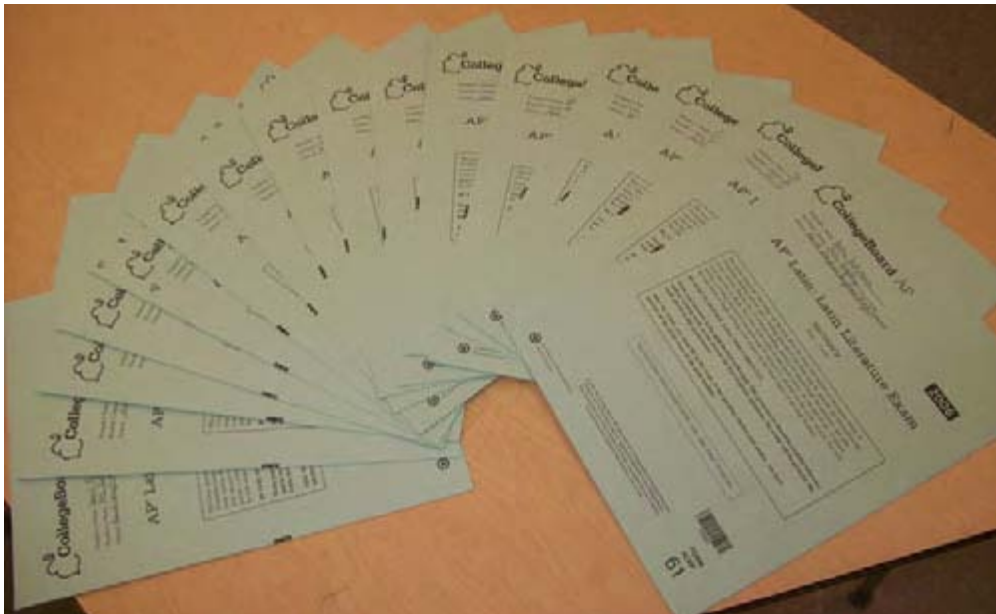
I learned a lot at Mount Greylock this year; thanks to all of you. It has been an unforgettable part of my life. To meet new people and understand who they are and what they are doing is the simplest and most wonderful method for making great friends and sharing ideas with them. American people are such kind people. It has been so great to know you all. Thanks to all of my Mount Greylock brothers and sisters; I appreciate your help. I am proud of all of you. Thanks to all of my teachers. This school has educated me. Congratulations to all the seniors; I hope you reach your goals and have success everywhere.

Ahmadshah Hazrati, Class of '11

Standardized, Continued from Page 1

based assessment would require an increased amount of work from graders. Additionally, such assessments would cause prolonged stress on students: "It's almost easier to just take a test," says Maselli.

Standardized tests are also reportedly causing increased amounts of stress among high school students. Students feel pressure from parents (as well as teachers and other school personnel) to perform well on exams, and many fear that their first choice colleges may not accept them based upon test scores. This stress can lead to illness, as well as general exhaustion that can build up to actual "burnout" before students even reach college. In an effort to relieve some of this stress, several schools in America have eliminated the use of base line SAT scores as admissions criteria. Unfortunately, this policy may just be too good to be true: while it is true that submission of SAT scores is not required for admission to these schools "it is a misnomer



There are a plethora of AP tests offered by the college board. Here is a spread of many of the AP Exams from previous years.

that they don't use SAT scores—they have to have some kind of standard," states Maselli. "They look at the grade-point averages, and if a student has a solid B, then that person probably has SAT scores around 500, which the admissions officer knows," she adds.

One of the major faults that people find with standardized tests, and the state exams mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act in particular, is that they lower the quality of material being taught in public schools. "Teaching to the test" is a phenomenon that has been worrying parents and community members for some time, as some state governments base school funding and teacher salaries upon student performance on these tests. With many schools feeling the pinch of low funding, the incentives to center curricula around multiple-choice standardized tests in order to boost scores can seem very appealing to teachers and

IS ABSENTEEISM A PROBLEM AT GREYLOCK?

By Tijana Samardzic

What exactly is the attendance policy here at Mount Greylock? While it may be clearly written in the student handbook, we all know that, in reality, many students do not read the handbook word for word. In fact, the policy has undergone various changes over the past few years. Whether absent or tardy, students may be confused if they do not know the true policy. Being unaware of the justification for punishment is seen as unfair in the eyes of the truant. With that said, ignorance is always a fallible excuse. The entire situation begs discussion. So, where do these policies fall? And what is the punishment for not following them?

According to the student handbook, the attendance policy is as follows: "School policy is that a student who reaches 12 absences in a semester course and 24 absences in a year-long course will receive no credit for that course. When a student reaches this level of absences from school, an assessment of absences may take place. Absences that are accepted by district policy and are appropriately documented may be removed from the count.

For this reason, parents should send documentation for absences accepted by the district to school after absence occurs, or should keep a folder of them at home. Documented absences allowed by district policy are: serious illness, bereavement in the family, religious observances, interviews for college or work, court-mandated appearances, and school sponsored activities. Family trips, general illness, or non-emergency family situations are not accepted by district policy and will not be removed from the absence count. While school-sponsored activities are allowed, teacher permission to be absent for other reasons will not be removed an absence from the count. Three tardies will be considered an absence. Teachers may also factor tardies and absences into a student's participation grade." "It's a pretty clear policy," says Ms. Penna.

Students, however, tend to have diverse opinions regarding what they believe the attendance policy is. Many were confused and showed that they never really thought about it. On middle school student asserts that he or she "just goes] to school." Although the concept of simply attending every possible day of school and avoiding the possible consequences of truancy is admirable, it is not a reality at Mount Greylock.

Aside from their own beliefs, students' parents greatly influence their children's attendance in school. Some parents allow students to skip school every so often, either to catch up on schoolwork or to catch up on sleep. There are some parents, however, that do not allow school skipping. One sophomore, Cleo Levin, shared her parent's beliefs about her attendance at school. "My parents want me to go to school every day. They only let me stay home if I'm really sick. But otherwise, I'm in school whenever I should be." Cleo thinks that this a good rule, both at her school and at home. In terms of tardiness, Cleo has a different belief: "Students



A Greylock student arrives late to school and receives a tardy pass.

Photo: Chris Densmore

accomplished in 4 minutes. Many students assert that teachers must consider students' schedules. A student 30 seconds late is not as bad as giving the student a detention every day for coming 30 seconds late to class. Most classes do not even begin within 30 seconds of the bell.

Once highschoolers begin to take AP courses, tests and homework become more difficult. Officially, of course, teachers must be in line with the school rules, but, in actuality, according to several juniors, some teachers of AP Courses recommend that students take a day off from school before their AP exams. Is this allowed? Some students believe that this is an unnecessary recommendation. Theoretically, students should be paying attention in class as the teacher reviews material and studying every day of the year up to that test day, necessitating minimal "cramming" on the last day.

In the eyes of the administration, this year's attendance policy is much better than last years. "Last year there was no set quota for the number of absences a student could have," says Ms. Penna. This year there is and that set number for the whole year is 24 absences. "This number makes kids conscious about their absences," and therefore, more students attend school. Ms. Penna proudly states, "There has been a major improvement of the number of kids who get to school on time from last year."

Next year, the policy might slightly change. There are no definite answers on how it will change but Mr. Payne and the Handbook Committee are discussing this very topic. Ms Penna believes "24 days is a lot of days. I think the number of days should be reduced." Her opinion will be taken into consideration and the new policy will be finalized.

should be able to come to school late if they're tired, because, otherwise, they won't perform at their highest ability." In reality, there will always be some controversy because students may take advantage of this. Students have taken advantage of the policy to some extent this year. Each student has a total of 6 days of unexcused absences per semester until they have to face the consequence of court involvement. Due to the set limit of days, some students miss just under the limit of school days, but not enough to face the harsh consequences.

Many seniors, admittedly renowned for truancy, are displeased by the manner in which teachers deal with tardiness. One senior thinks that all teachers should mark a student tardy within the same time frame. For example, only if a student is over 30 seconds late, should a teacher mark that student tardy. This would only apply to the first class of the day. Students should be able to get to their classes within a 4 minute time period. Unless, for instance, a student has gym, located in the northern portion of the building, 1st period followed by Spanish, located on the south side of the building, with Mrs. Fernandez 2nd period, which entails a significant amount of walking not easily

Standardized, Continued from Page 3

administrators. Teaching based upon the SAT is also becoming more common, as colleges place an increasing amount of importance upon test scores. Does Mt. Greylock feel pressure to "teach the test?" "Not really," says Mrs. Maselli, "Some schools emphasize the test, but we don't really do that. Sometimes parents will call and complain about their children's low scores, but they never really blame the school." Mt. Greylock's average SAT scores are roughly thirty points higher than the Massachusetts average, and higher than the national average by an even larger margin, despite our lack of an SAT Prep course sponsored by the school. The main source of our success, Maselli suggests, is a strong English program, because the test is mainly reasoning-based.

Some controversy has surrounded our own state standardized test, the MCAS. Many students, after sitting the exam, have been heard to remark that the MCAS is far too easy. Should the test be made more difficult? Mrs. Maselli thinks not: "as it is, 20 percent of students finish four years of college over the course of six years. If we make the test more difficult, then the only thing we would accomplish is preventing kids from graduating high school, which isn't right." The only option with regards to the difficulty of the MCAS at present is to view it as a necessary hassle and complete it.

Advanced Placement testing is also a source of disagreement among parents, teachers, and students. Many colleges accept AP scores of four or five as com-

pleted college courses and offer credits, cutting down the number of classes in certain basic subjects students who perform well on AP tests would have to take in college. With this incredible, money-saving incentive to perform well in AP courses, many students feel the need to take courses in subjects that they do not like, but in which they perform well, in order to earn college credits for them. Many parents also fear the inverse—that their children will choose to not take AP courses in subjects for which they are passionate, simply out of fear of performing badly on the test. At Mt. Greylock "we do counsel kids that if they take AP courses, they should do well because colleges look at how well you do in college courses," Mrs. Maselli explains. "AP courses are expensive...and we do get students deterred from courses based upon fear of not scoring well," she adds. Taking the most in-depth courses in subjects that they love seems obvious to some students, but the fear of the test can sometimes be so great that others stay away from their favorite subjects, which is a tragedy.

Standardized tests have many benefits for students, but, as the old adage states, too much of a good thing can be harmful. Moderation with regards to testing is important—not becoming over-stressed, not becoming so preoccupied with the test as to ignore other topics in school, and remembering to take breaks from studying are all important goals for students, because, like it or not, standardized tests seem to be here to stay.

The Greylock Echo

The Mt. 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 student photographers, writers, and editors. Any Mt. Greylock student is welcome to submit articles, come to meetings, or join the Echo staff.

See You Next Year!

Editor-in-Chief: Chris Densmore
Associate Editor: Matt Baker-White
Echo Staff: Patrick Madden, Sam Sokolsky-Tifft, Taylor Foehl

Mt. Greylock Regional High School
1781 Cold Spring Road
Williamstown, Mass, 01267, USA
413.458.9582
mountgreylockecho@gmail.com

GRADUATION

GREYLOCK PRODUCES ANOTHER GREAT GROUP OF SENIORS

By Sam Sokolsky-Tifft and Patrick Madden



The graduation ceremony this past Saturday was representative of the Class of 2008; it was unique, with great amounts of talent and intelligence, perhaps lacking a little polish, but all the more interesting for that. This year's class was not only exceptionally gifted and very diverse but also, as Lizzie Fox commented in her speech, distinctly rebellious. Their ability is undeniable, the question instead being how they choose to use it, and Saturday underlined the class's unconventionality. The speeches were excellent but unorthodox and very different in tone from one another, the band and chorus revealed the musical ability Mount Greylock has to offer, and the half-hour power outage in the middle made the event all the more memorable.

Walking in to the school, spectators were greeted with some impressive classical music played by members of the Mount Greylock orchestra. These dulcet tones sharply contrasted the Green Day music blaring over the speakers inside the gymnasium. Throughout the ceremony, the band songs guided the graduates as they proceeded in and out and the chorus sang two beautiful pieces, one composed specifically for the Greylock chorus by Dr. Stephen Dankner. The diversity of the school was apparent just from a glance at the audience, with people of all ethnicities, or a glance at the graduates themselves, their graduation caps adorned with everything from glowing LED's to popsicle stick piano decorations. Even the towering arch of balloons was representative of the class's unique rebelliousness, not perfectly symmetrical as in prior years, but instead more unbalanced and off-kilter, pushing outwards in places away from the other balloons.

Dr. Travis's opening speech fit the theme, choosing to abandon the more traditional graduation format of how far the students had come and what abilities they had absorbed for the future and instead delivering an impassioned speech on the difficulties that lay ahead for their generation because of the environmental problems that his generation had inadvertently or selfishly created. The slightly dismal, but enlightening, speech on environmental activism and the need for change seemed to have an unusually cynical message for such an occasion: primarily that his generation had left the world with irreplaceable damage for the graduating students to deal with.

The two student speeches demonstrated once more an underlying theme of unconventionality. Though the speeches were vastly different, both discussed the rebelliousness and uniqueness of the class. Lizzie Fox's "Something Special" was far from ordinary, as much a negative statement about the infrastructure of high school itself as it was a farewell address. In her speech, Fox condemned the way in which the nature of high school, and Mount Greylock in particular, can inadvertently create divisions and barriers between students, forcing them into their own small social and academic bubbles rather than creating unity and mutual understanding between them. She praised her classmates on their ability to bond together as one unit through the stresses and joys of the final weeks of school while lamenting the fact that such comradery was not achieved earlier. She also mourned the loss of friend and classmate Geoff Lewis and expressed deep sadness that she and many others did not know him as well as they would have liked. A large component of the speech was simple pride to be in a class filled with dynamic instigators and leaders and individuals who are willing to fight for change, a legacy the class of 2008 will proudly leave.

Anthony Bellmon's speech "The Real World: Mt. Greylock," a play on the well-known MTV series, took the audience on a hilarious journey through his four years at Greylock since transferring here from Philadelphia through the ABC program. He described coming from a bustling city to a small town in western Massachusetts where cows grazed in fields on his way to school. He went on to say how accepting certain individuals were on his first day at the school and how much he appreciated the fact that his class trusted him enough to choose him as their graduation speaker. He, like Fox, discussed the individuality and rebelliousness of the class of '08 and took some humorous anecdotal stabs at classmates and teachers alike. Bellmon ended the speech with an anticipatory statement about the next episode of "The Real World," set in a changing world and including a cast with incredible influential power. The class officers also presented the prestigious "teacher of the year" award to Larry Bell for his steadfast commitment and energy.

Mr. Bell gave a brief speech in which he expressed his honor as the recipient of such an award, how fun the class of '08 was to teach, and how much he will miss them in the upcoming years.

Saturday's ceremony was, overall, as quirky and dynamic as the graduating class itself. The movement of fans brought the room alive in the stifling heat, the music was loud and clear, the speeches were powerful and defiant, and the lights flickered on and off, ensuring that the Mount Greylock class of 2008 did indeed go out with a bang.

In addition to graduation the Class of 2008 had a week of fun-filled events, including Class Night, Prom, Afterprom, a Class Trip to Great Escape and Lake George, the Class Picnic, and a class breakfast.

Photos Provided By: Sra. Murray
Above Center: The class of '08

Top Left: Mr. Payne presents awards to the seniors at Class Night

Top Right: The Great Escape awaits the Seniors on their class trip

Bottom Left: The Senior Class chose to have a theme of "Hollywood," and constructed a set, seen here

Bottom Right: Students and parents alike enjoy the Class Picnic

Page 6: The water park at the Great Escape

Page 7: Seniors enjoy a wild ride!



GRADUATION



Something Special

By: Lizzie Fox, Faculty Choice Speaker at Graduation

There's something special about this class. It's not that we're brilliant, which we are; it's not that we're funny, which we are; it's not that we're talented or kind or athletic or really great at coming up with senior pranks—it's that we're different. We are a class of individuals, and across the board, from whichever angle you look at us, certain people stand out—not because they are especially attractive or obnoxious or popular, but because they cannot be classified. People like Sean Peltier, who was home schooled until 11th grade but came to Greylock and took charge immediately, or Tierney Carlson, who seems shy but will always take time out of her day to tell you to smile, or Sofie Brooks, who proves that it is possible to be incredibly gorgeous and get into Harvard, or Will Gale, who is...from Cheshire. We don't let other people define us, and though we do have our cliques, as all high school classes must, they have smudged border lines, which makes our class all the more cohesive.

And somehow, combined with these great elements of individuality and unity, it seems that every member of this class also possesses a certain rebellious streak, a certain characteristic that embraces defiance and loves to see positive change, and the voice to express it. We are a class of doers, of initiators. Maybe it's because a lot of us seem to have outgrown high school by the time we were 14 or 15; maybe it's because this class, for some strange reason, just has a lower tolerance for crap than other classes. Either way, it makes us stand out. Time and time again I've heard teachers say they have never seen a class like ours. Sometimes they mean that in a flattering way; other times, they lament that we're "the smartest, but also the laziest class" or the "whiniest class." But if we were truly, purely, whiny and lazy, we would just sit around complaining about everything without ever getting up and doing something about it. And we do not do that—when something moves us, there's hardly a single person left sitting, because on top of this tendency to challenge is a sensitivity. We can see outside of our own social spheres. We are the class that despises absurd rules, that hates to see some people have unfair advantages over others. When we think that something is wrong, we seek to change it; instead of waiting for high school to be over, we try to make our experience better, and instead of suffering by following those rules, we just tend to ignore them, and then work to create better ones. We stick together, and when our understanding and our influence are combined, we create the best organized protests ever.

Last year, over sixty members of this class attended meetings of the Strategic Planning Committee, which sought to give all Greylock students equal educational opportunities. The motions of this committee, which include eliminating class rank—our valedictorian, Maria Dunlavey, fought the hardest for this—and opening enrollment for Advanced Placement classes would not have passed without the efforts of the committee member's from this year's class. When several students lost their driving privileges due to an attendance policy that was not in the student handbook, we wrote letters of protest; Gina Iannitelli and our class officers met with the administration; we fought against it.

We fight against a lot—so much, in fact, that when we parade out of these doors in thirty minutes the administration will probably breathe a deep sigh of relief—but we've mixed our really rebellious actions, such as challenging the validity of most assignments and tests we've been given, reviving the impromptu senior barbeque in the school parking lot, and orchestrating an extremely successful senior skip day earlier this year, with really noble ones. We have hearts; we have sensitivity. In our years at Greylock we've experienced an unfair amount of pain and tragedy, yet in the intimacy that comes from many people dealing with the same grief at the same time, we've learned to respect each other, and we've all risen to support individual students as they faced struggles and to support each other as we mourned the loss of our classmate and friend, Geoff Lewis, this December.

But now, as our time as a class comes to a close, even as I praise the actions and the spirit of this class, that praise is tinged with regret. We have voices, and we've used them. Maybe we've done all that we can do, all that it is possible to do in four years. My time here has made me believe that it is the nature of high school to keep the students separated and stratified—maybe to keep them from being subversive—and, certainly, unfortunately, that nature has had its impact on us. It's amazing that we were able to achieve what we achieved, but I can't help but think that, had we not been inhibited by the structure of high school, of Greylock, we could have achieved so much more.

Six years ago, most of us sat in the same auditorium, waiting for seventh grade to begin. Two years later, we crossed over the same two lines of masking tape, signifying our entrance into high school. But somehow, in the intervening four years, we seem to have been allowed, encouraged, even, to forget that in the end we would all be on the same stage, hearing the same things, being handed the same diplomas. Why is it that it is not until the bitter end that the senior class is really thrown together?

A couple weeks ago, as we all waited in the hallways to find out our Senior Project Oral Presentation scores, I was shocked by how close the class grew, immediately, once we were all being graded on the same things. We stood together, dressed up and anxious, comforting each other when we feared failure and celebrating when one of us had passed. We all spoke freely with one another; we were all in the same situation. And though this class certainly feels more like a class, and has more of a class identity, than other classes I have seen, it pained me to feel how unified we were in those simple hallway conversations, and to wonder what high school would have been like had we all been together more often, had it not been that throughout high school it felt every day that we were being pushed away from each other, into our different circles and classes and clubs, when in fact we would all end up on the same stage together in the end.

I know that it's foolish to imagine the nature of high school changing; I know there will always be division. But I also know that I, and many in this class, realized that there is something truly wrong with the nature of the divisions in our high school when Geoff passed away and those of us who didn't know

him well enough began to discover all the amazing things about him—that he was so brilliant he never had to try hard, that he loved hiking and exploring caves, that he was an incredibly nice guy. Why did I allow this person to be kept a secret from me all this time? Why do we allow so many people to be kept secrets? Are we going from day to day, waiting for high school to be over, and by just doing what is easy, that which allows us to stay in our little bubble of social comfort, unwittingly sacrificing friendships, sacrificing potential, sacrificing people?

I don't know what we'll remember when we graduate from here; I don't know how many of us have already blocked out the entire experience. It's impossible to tell now whether it will be the days when we were able to convince Mr. Welch that we already knew enough about history and too little about his days of eel-murdering; or Whit Montgomery-Nassif's voice, booming announcements across the cafeteria; or Mrs. Keeley's wild and somewhat upsetting antics; or the entire week we got off from school in 7th grade when they discovered perchlorate in the water; or Dan Weiner's amazing gymnastics at the pep rally. I'm not interested in sermonizing about time or memory, but I hope that whatever we learned, whatever regret we feel, we will remember. I hope we will remember Geoff; I hope we will remember what it feels like to wonder "what if." But I also hope, most importantly, that we, and the rest of the Greylock community, will remember this class. We aren't perfect; even we have division. But we have come pretty close to overcoming the barriers that high school has inflicted upon us. Because of what we have done, what we have the potential to do, this class of firebrands, of individuals, of initiators, we can be proud of the fact that we haven't let other people define us, that instead of reinforcing our borders, we have sought to tear them down, and that this spirit and mission has not only shaped Mt. Greylock, but has also shaped us, hopefully to remain in our individual actions forever.



GRADUATION



Real World Greylock

By: Anthony Bellmon, Student Choice Speaker at Graduation

Before I begin I would like to acknowledge a few people. My mom who, along with my aunt and uncle, drove in a car for five hours just to be with us today. My ABC family and friends who supported me throughout my four years here and the class of 2008 for giving me this opportunity to speak at our graduation. I know that most of you have known each other since you were little. A majority of you have been at Greylock since the seventh grade, and the fact that you would trust me enough to speak on this day shows how close we have come over the years.

Wow I can't believe that we made it to graduation. Let me rephrase that, this class is brilliant, but I can't believe that I made it. In 2004 I chose to come to Williamstown, Massachusetts for "A Better Chance" in the educational aspects of my life. I signed a contract saying that I would be a four year cast member of the Real World Mt. Greylock, where eight strangers, from major cities along the east coast, are picked to live in house and to go to Mt. Greylock Regional High School. We were picked to learn, grow, and survive in a community that was deemed unfamiliar territory. I was the cast member all the way from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Originally, I didn't want to be part of this show, but my mom accidentally checked off the boarding school box on the application and the rest was history. The first day of the first season of the Real World Mt. Greylock had me asking my veteran cast members, what did I get myself into? I went from Philadelphia, which is the fifth largest city in America, to a town in Western Massachusetts with a population of about five thousand people. I went from a place where on the morning bus ride I saw a city waking up with noise, movement, and liveliness to start its day to a place where my bus ride now consisted of mountains, hills, and cows grazing the land right across the road from the school, and it was then that

I realized that I was no longer in Philly.

The first day of school I felt like a new creature. People came to me and examined my hair, asked me what happened to me in the summertime, and interrogated me about my life back at home. I was different from them and they were different from me, and the whole time I was wondering how was I going to survive this place that pushed me out of my comfort zone. Later on that day I met Whitney. Whit showed me what being in a small town was all about because by third period, without having been previously introduced, Whit knew my full name and where I was from. He was taller than most people in our grade and was the only person in the ninth grade that had the potential of growing a full beard. His hospitality on that first day of school let me know that everything would work out for the best.

In the second season of the Real World Mt. Greylock, I was listening to another one of Mr. Dils's grammar lessons when I realized I was sitting amongst some of the greatest minds of our generation. I watched how Maria, Io, David Rosenthal, and Dan Whatley challenged any way of conventional thinking. Half the time I did not understand what they were saying, but the way they said it called for my immediate agreement. It was also in the second season that I had one of the biggest season shockers to ever hit Real World Mt. Greylock. I, Anthony Bellmon, could not play the great game of basketball. Now I know what you are thinking: Anthony how can you come from where you come from and look as good as you look and not be able to shoot threes like Allen Iverson and dunk like Michael Jordan? Then it became apparent to the Greylock community that I was not the typical Real World Mt Greylock cast member.

In season three I was launched into celebrity status, I founded one of the most infamous groups to ever grace the Real World Mt Greylock: JAH! For those of you who have not kept up to date on current events JAH J, A, H stands for Josh, Anthony, and Henry. With Josh's name known to people all over Berkshire County, my good looks and charm, and Henry's sense of humor and great sense of style, JAH was the social scene and partied like rockstars twenty-four seven. School dances started when we got there and ended when we left. And let me tell you when JAH was on the scene, the ratings were at an all time high. Season three is when we formed JAH; season three was when I gave a moving speech about race relations in the annual Martin Luther Speech contest in the auditorium, and season three is when I took an amazing trip to Washington, D.C. with one of the coolest kids in Mt. Greylock....Mr. Murray. He was so cool that while in D.C. he walked 10 feet in front of our group the entire time as if he didn't know us. Now I never personally had Mr. Murray as a teacher during my Greylock career, but after that week in D.C. I finally understood why girls love him and guys want to be him. This trip to Washington, D.C. also solidified my decision to run for office some time in the near future, as well as influenced my college selection process because I will be attending The George Washington University in the fall with the beautiful Ms. Katy Markland who along with me won best personality and best smile of the class of 2008.

In the start of the fourth season of the Real World Mt. Greylock, I became sick. The senior project needed to be completed, college applications needed to be done, and my grades had to be maintained. After an appointment with my academic advisor and looking at the diagnostics, that is to say, my report card, I was diagnosed with a serious case of senioritis. Daniel Weiner described this disease in the February edition of the Greylock Echo as the "lack of motivation in all things related to school caused by the excitement of finishing high school and the reality of the impending four years of college or entering the work force." I believe that this disease crippled me so that it negatively impacted my reading, writing, and yes Mr. Bazzano, my arithmetic skills. But what kept me going was that I knew someone who had the disease worse than I did, and ladies and gentlemen that's Nick Karampatsos. Now Nick, a proud Greek and the self-proclaimed fastest man alive, didn't mind writing papers the morning they were due, being number two on Mr. Payne's infamous top ten tardy list, and defying any boundaries that were set by the Mount Greylock administration. Nick's case of senioritis got so bad that he deemed reading in a twelfth grade honors English class as unfruitful.

As the year progressed, more and more students came down with this terrible disease. By May 2008, approximately ninety percent of the class tested positive for senioritis: kids stopped doing work, showed up late for classes, and several individuals came up with the bright idea of putting tables and chairs on the school roof. And before I go any further, I am going to ask that those seven individuals would please stand. Senioritis might have plagued the class of 2008 and crippled my academics, but it did wonders for my social life. In season four, my love life flourished. I had three facebook marriages with three of the most beautiful blondes in our school. Marichal's sky blue eyes, Brigid's luscious long hair and Lindley's most aesthetically pleasing looks captured my heart immediately. This bitter square of love throughout season four makes for great entertainment but all the relationships sadly came to an end, though and as much as Brigid says she doesn't...I'm pretty sure she wants me back.

As we come down to the final episodes of the Real World Mt. Greylock I begin to see the true depth of the class of 2008. I was watching my favorite movie, Coach Carter, the other day, and in the movie one of the basketball quotes Marianne Williamson: "Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure." As I look over the class our great class, I can't help but find people who are powerful beyond measure. We're powerful in the class room, we're powerful on the field and we're powerful in the community. All you have to do is touch John Lucido's shoulder and every muscle in his body will begin to flex to show how powerful he actually is. Anna's voice is so strong that it overshadows almost every alto singer in the chorus, and Nick Fogel's ability to lead his sports teams to state championships, shows his effectiveness as a leader. But what makes our class so great and so powerful is that we fell in line with, what I believe, is the theme of the year 2008: defiance. This year is the year that Senators Barack Obama and Hilary Clinton defied the political norm. This is the year that Danica Patrick was the first woman to win the Indy 500, and when global warming is heating up everything on the earth, this is the year that Mt. Greylock had so many snow days that instead of closing June 18th its doors will be open until June 24th. When I tell you this is a powerful class, believe me, we are powerful.

So, to the graduating class of 2008, I encourage you to continue to be powerful beyond measure, and defy the limitations that others may set for you or at times that you may set for yourselves. Now, we just ended the last season of the Real World Mt. Greylock. As this series comes to an end, a new series, the Class of 2008 College Years, is just beginning. So stay tuned, because this is going to be another unpredictable, life changing, and powerful show.



HEALTHCARE CHANGE FOR TEACHERS

By Melody Edwards

As some of you may know, the Mount Greylock teachers' three-year contract is up at the end of June. In order to agree on a new contract, the faculty and the school committee have been meeting since November. It is a reasonably simple process on the surface, with representatives from the two groups assembling and making their desires clear. The reps come to a tentative agreement, and then bring it back to their parties to vote. In reality though, it is a grueling operation, especially because of our small budget. "If there was money to spare, negotiations would be easy", stated Mrs. Bradley.

When it comes down to it, the school committee doesn't have very much to work with—just tax dollars and a small allotment from the state. So, despite being aware that good teachers both deserve and require good pay, there is only so much they can do. "They can't invent money", explained Superintendent Dr. William Travis. There is the option to go to the town and ask for an override to

the budget, but even that is no guarantee. Back in 2003, an override vote passed with 62 percent approval, but when the school committee came back with another request in May of 2004, it faced significantly greater opposition, and in the end, it failed. Dr. Travis also pointed out that the size of our school system makes things more difficult. In a larger one, where there are multiple schools and more teachers, the challenges can be shared: One science teacher might teach in three different schools for example; in times of budget crunch, an underutilized building could be shut down. We don't have those options.

The current lack of funds is not the only complication. The lifespan of the contract is also an obstacle. We have no way of knowing what will happen over the next three years, and so, there is a lot of projection and conjecture. The predictions that are being made are leading to more brows furrowed, because with gas prices at historic highs and

living costs continuing to rise, the budget doesn't seem to be rising with them. Furthermore, we don't know whether the size of the student body will necessitate more or fewer teachers.

Another issue that every student in the school is aware of is the condition of the building. At first glance, it might not seem to relate to the contract negotiations, but in reality it does have an impact. Given the age of the structure and its many systems and parts, a certain amount of money must be set aside each year in case the need for major repairs should arise. Not only does this reduce the funds available for salaries, but it also impinges on the issue of working conditions, which is another factor in the negotiations. So while the infamous Room 59 isn't a topic of debate in the meetings per say, the sickness that resulted from it is likely at the back of some people's minds.

One question which has been front and center in people's minds of late is health

care. Anyone who works for the district more than twenty hours a week is entitled to this benefit and the current provider is Blue Cross/Blue Shield. The teachers have refused to switch to the state provider for reasons of money and coverage. At the moment, the district pays 80 percent of the plan, but with growing rates, the school committee wishes for the faculty to pay a higher percentage themselves. However, the teachers make the reasonable argument that without some compensation in their paychecks, they cannot afford to do this.

Given all these stumbling blocks, it is not surprising that no resolution has been reached, nor (as Dr. Travis admitted) is it surprising that, "As time goes on, the frustration on everybody's side can grow". In fact, despite an increased number of meetings in the next few weeks, it is likely that a conclusion won't be reached before school begins again in September, though all are hopeful. We'll just have to see...

Building, Continued from Page 1

replacement, the project's success is not solely contingent on the state's piggy bank. The state of Massachusetts will only pay a portion of the total cost of whatever is being done to our school. This means that the taxpayers of both Lanesboro and Williamstown will have to provide finances for the uncovered portion of the project. Put simply, the towns would have to decide if a new or renovated school is high enough on their lists of priorities to dish out that much money. If they decide that it is not, Mt. Greylock is put back on the bottom of the list of requests.

If all was to go our way; if the state and local governments gave us the proper funds, a renewed or completely different building would approach shortly after. Designs have been put in place for the project, including a "Do Nothing" plan, getting the school up to date with maintenance and code upgrades and costing \$22 million all the way to the building of a new school on the hill behind the current one, totaling about \$50 million. All the designs, however, are similar in more ways than one. All the propositions include the use of the same facilities, higher technology, a new or renovated parking lot, and greater energy efficiency. A few of the designs include wings that face the rising sun, employing the use of solar power. These would be the location of all the high school and middle school classrooms, while the cafeteria, gym and library would be placed in the center of the building. Others use less overall surface area, which would lead to the usage of less energy being used. This would lower electricity and heating bills, as well as create a shorter distance between teacher's rooms, helping students be on time for even the classes that are longer distances from each other. New technology would include motion sensor lights and Smartboards in classrooms, new boilers with better regulated temperatures, automatic sinks in the bathrooms, tinted windows that cause a warmer school in the winter and a cooler one in the spring, and new labs in the science rooms. The middle school and the high school, in all models, would remain separate from each other, yet a sense of uniformity and community would be developed by any entirely new construction. Each of the proposed designs do have one major element in common; to improve upon the school not only technically and structurally, but by creating a more desirable ambience. According to the consultant from Dore and Whittier,

- The building is sprawling resulting in an institutional and fragmented image and feeling.
- There is no sense of hierarchy in order to create a welcoming feeling and a sense of place.
- Occupants are not aware of the cafeteria as the social "heart" of the building or the library/media center as the learning "brain" of the school as would be desirable.
- The architecture dates from the late fifties and the sixties, which has a sterile image with no specific relationship to its context within the Lanesborough-Williamstown community.
- The interior colors are not pleasing and coordinated throughout, which increases the sense of fragmentation vs. a coordinated, sophisticated, "adult-like" scheme as desired.
- The main entrance especially, is poorly defined, lacks security, lacks prominence, lacks a reception area, adequate display space and TV monitors with announcements of school news.
- The building designs and layout fail to take advantage



Photos From Report to School From Architects Dore and Whittier

While the issues seen here (Broken bricks on ornamental buttresses and degrading bricks near the from entrance) may not be health or safety issues, there are considerable concerns about the school building's condition. The School Committee is looking into options such as building an entirely new school or renovating the old building.

tage of the views, setting and natural daylight opportunities.

Both the consultant from Dore and Whittier and the building committee feel that outward appearance and a condensed, organized school are essential for learning. These comments on the current state of Mt. Greylock provide context for the changes that will occur that don't have to do with structure, safety, or technology. A new school would provide the students with the advantages of a concentrated, arranged building that provides both a central place for social activity and for learning.

The advantages of a new school are clearly laid out: better technology, a more "green" building, and a cleaner, more attractive internal environment. Less noticeable disadvantages, however, lie beneath the appealing surface. When Mt. Greylock was built, it was created for a larger population of about 1,100 students, not the current student body of approximately 680. Proof of this lies in the enormous amount of lockers left empty in the west and east hallways. Building a new school would make up for the discrepancies between the intended and actual amount of students by making the school smaller. The gym, auditorium, and cafeteria would be two-thirds of their present size.

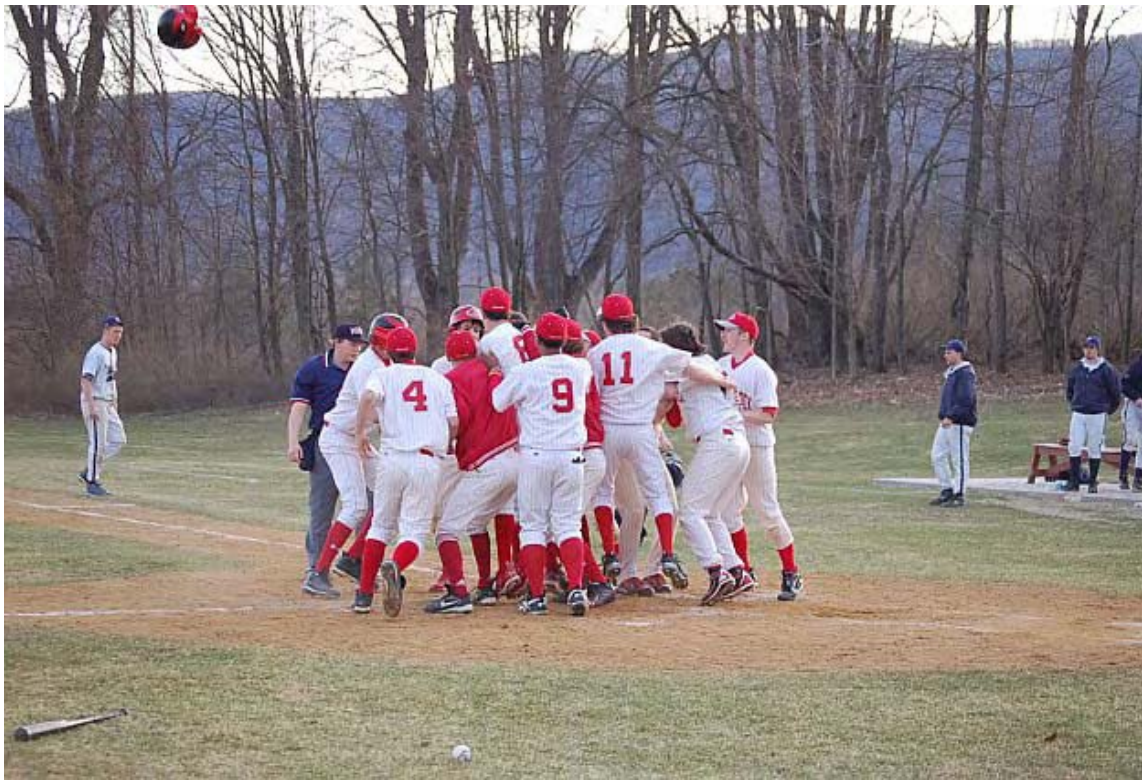
Yet, would the desires for larger facilities such as

these make up for the additional safety that a new or renovated school would grant its students? The new construction would include an efficient fire alarm system, while the current system in place is considered "inadequate." Also, it would provide exit signs, an emergency lighting system, and a sprinkler system, if renovation was the only option put into place. However, if an entirely new school were to be built, the "sprawling plan" of the school would be replaced, creating fewer entrances in need of monitoring and the main administration office would be given a view of the main entrance for more successful security.

As of right now, the reconstruction or renovation of Mt. Greylock Regional High School is not set in stone. The materialization of the plans which have been discussed by the building committee is not only conditional on the state's donation to the effort, but the willingness of the towns of Lanesboro and Williamstown to raise their taxes to pay for what the state will not cover. If an improved or new school were to be put into place, it would most certainly be beneficial to the students. A few things are a guarantee if this is to happen: an amended parking lot, greater energy efficiency and new technology. If a completely new school were to be put into place, its benefits would outweigh the disadvantages. While any improvement is not under warranty at this point in time, it is not impractical to look towards the future.

GREYLOCK BASEBALL ASTOUNDS

By Than Finan



Photos Provided By: Than Finan

Above: Chris Koch is welcomed by team at the plate after a walk-off homerun against PHS.
Right: Jeff Remejko wrecks Wachonah's catcher at the plate.

The Mount Greylock Boy's Baseball team's season came to a close last Tuesday with a 2-1 loss to the top-seeded Greenfield in the Western Mass. quarter-final match-up. Mount Greylock's roller coaster season climaxed with a near upset of the 19-1 Green Wave. Greylock advanced to the quarterfinals after upsetting Wahconah 4-3 in the first round. Greylock had previously lost to Wahconah twice, once 8-7 and the other 19-3. Greylock experienced sweet justice Monday, however, when they rallied from behind in the sixth inning to score two runs that would win them the game. The fourth and final run crossed the plate when Dylan Dethier laid down a textbook sacrifice squeeze with Than Finan on third. Finan beat out the throw to the plate as the Greylock bench celebrated. "It's always nice to beat Wahconah" coach Steve Messina, also a Wahconah history teacher, remarked after the game.

Although Dethier struggled at the plate early in the season, he finished the season's last eight games batting .300 and it was all too fitting that he should win the game by way of a bunt, something he did often early in the season. Where Dethier lacked at the plate he made up on the mound finishing the season with a team high four wins. David Jones contributed three wins including a no-hitter, the first in Coach Messina's seventeen year tenure at Mt. Greylock. Jeff Romejko contributed two wins himself, including the win verse Wahconah, surely his best outing of the year. Than Finan rounded out the pitching with one win.

Greylock's hitting was rather hit or miss throughout the year. They were shutout three times in a row but also scored as many as 24 runs in one game. They took advantage of the new fence this year netting five home runs on the season, one each by Corey Nichols, Chris Koch, Jeff Romejko, and two by David Jones. Although not a power hitter, Than Finan ended the season on fire raising his final average to just below .500. Chris Geannelis also aided the effort with some big hits down the stretch. The 5-6-7 combination of Geannelis, Finan, Dethier, rarely failed to come through when the heart of the order was having a slow day. In the first-round playoff game against Wahconah, the 5-6-7 combo combined for all four runs and two RBI's.



The other two RBI's in that game came from Jeff Kucka. Hitting in the nine spot, Kucka was essentially a second lead-off hitter. He had speed on the base paths and by the end of the season was hitting more doubles and triples than singles.

Although the Mounties ended with a 10-10 record, there was plenty of excitement and highlights to go around. In the very first game the Mounties battled from behind to within two of PHS in the last inning. With two runners on and Pittsfield brining in their closer, Chris Koch stepped up and hit a first pitch walk-off home run over the left field fence. The walk-off homer was also a first in the long career of Coach Steve Messina. In their second game Greylock beat Drury 8-7, a feat that had not happened for a few years. David Jones's no hitter against Everett will surely not be forgotten anytime soon. Greylock's hard fought victory led my Jeff Romejko's stellar pitching at Sci-Tech to clinch a birth in the Western Mass tournament was also an exciting game, not to mention a fun bus ride home from Springfield. Greylock's unexpected upset of Wahconah in the first round of the playoffs shocked the Warriors and maybe even surprised the Mounties a little. Either way, the victory it gave them the idea that they could keep the dream alive, despite facing Greenfield in the next round who had won nineteen straight games.

The stage was set for one of the most exciting games of the season. With Dylan Dethier pitching for Greylock, there was no question that the Greenfield hitters would be off balance thanks to Dethier's plethora of off-speed pitches. Greenfield struck first scoring a run the first inning, but could not manage to break the game open. With one out and the bases loaded in the fifth inning Dethier knocked a fly-ball to left giving Chris Koch plenty of time to tag from third and tie the game. Greylock could not score again in the inning and it was Greenfield's turn to respond. They finally strung three weak hits together and with two outs and the bases loaded, a Greenfield player knocked a tailing line drive to right-field just in front of Chris Geannelis. Although they only managed to score one in the inning, Greylock could not get another run across and Greenfield moved on to face, and lose to, Hoosac Valley in the Semi-finals. Hoosac Valley would go on to beat Monument Mountain 8-3 in the Western Mass. championship game.

Greylock has nothing to be ashamed of this season and only can look forward to great things to come. Retiring only one senior in shortstop Corey Nichols, the Mountie squad can look forward to returning eight starters as well as its full pitching rotation. With many young Greylock names finally becoming comfortable at the plate and in the field, while most teams are trying to figure out how to patch their holes in the off-season, Greylock is trying to figure out what they can do to improve, given that they have no holes.

Track: Boys Struggle, Girls Shine



Greylock Runners Abby Bishop (Junior) and Nick Fogel (Senior) compete during a track meet at Greylock's home track at Williams College. Fogel and the boys' team had a rough season, while Bishop and the girls blew away all the competition, going undefeated for the season in a row.

With so many good young runners, Greylock's prospects in upcoming years look good. When asked for a comment, Coach Gill (one of the track coaches, in addition to being a gym class coach) put it quite simply: "We're AWE-SOME!" Next year however, the team may have a tough time because Williams is resurfacing their track and Greylock's own facility is in relatively bad condition.

Photos: Matt Baker-White

TUNNEL

CITY

COFFEE

NORTH ADAMS
115 STATE STREET

413-458-5010

WILLIAMSTOWN
100 SPRING STREET

MOUNTIES TENNIS REACHES STATE FINALS

By Chris Densmore

Junior Matt Vaughan steps back and stares at the diagram on the whiteboard in Mr. Stanton's classroom and contemplates for a moment. Junior David Nolan simultaneously glances up from his A.P. United States History homework to observe Vaughan's curious behavior. Mr. Stanton's Honors Pre-Calculus class won't begin for about five minutes, yet Vaughan is busy performing trigonometric calculations on the board.

As students file in and leisurely take their seats, they notice the diagram on the board. Vaughan, renowned for his simultaneous obsessions with vacuums and tennis, is meticulously calculating the height that he must achieve to slam his first serve into the court at a downward angle with significantly more pace. According to his math, Vaughan still has a few more inches to grow before he can achieve this feat. This situation, this juxtaposition of math and tennis, is exemplary of the tradition of combined academic and athletic excellence that has endured at Mount Greylock Regional High School for decades. Yet despite his academic penchant for math, Vaughan's true passion, excluding his desire to become a pilot, is tennis and, as the number one singles player and co-captain of the MG squad and arguably the best high school player in Berkshire County, he has thoroughly enjoyed his teams undefeated season and playoff success. With a 5-0 win over top-seeded Belchertown last Friday in the Western Massachusetts Tournament's Championship Match, the team moved on to the State Tournament and faced the Central Massachusetts Champion, Sutton High School.

Tennis is, at best, an underrated sport at Mount Greylock. While the struggling football team continues to draw massive crowds to the Friday night lights every week in the fall, many of the so-called "Super Fans" has failed to attend a single tennis match this spring. Despite this annoying lack of a fan base, the team has qualified for the M.I.A.A. Western Massachusetts Division II Tournament for several consecutive years and currently eyes a state title. Perhaps the lack of consistent support can be attributed to the fact that the sport doesn't foster boisterous fans in the manner of a football or soccer match. The immense concentration required in this gentleman's game is easily dismantled by loud shouting and cheering. In tennis, silence is truly golden. Another possible reason for the lack of fans is the complex nature of team tennis. At the high school level in Massachusetts, five individual matches are played at every tennis "meet."

There are three singles slots and two doubles slot and a team is awarded one point for each win at one of those slots. The team that wins the majority of those points wins the match. Greylock has weathered a few 3-2 victories but achieved predominantly 4-1 and 5-0 wins on its way to the state tournament.

Bolstered by transfer students, freshman Matt Riley from Ohio and seventh grader Rohan Shastri from India, who compete at the 2nd doubles and 2nd singles slots respectively, and newcomer Taylor Foehl, who competes at the 1st doubles slot, Greylock ran the table in 2008. With a key win over last year's Co-Berkshire County Champion, Taconic High School, in their first match of the season, the Mounties confidence has been high from the beginning. Nevertheless, the Mounties remained levelheaded and continued to focus on one match at a time. As the season progressed, the possibility of a perfect record began to tempt the players and a classy confidence overtook them. When the Western Massachusetts individual tournament swung around, the Mounties' then 2nd doubles tandem of sophomore Foehl and junior David Nolan, unseeded at the beginning of the tournament due to being buried low on the Greylock depth chart, cruised through the competition en route to a semi-finals appearance



Photos: Sarah Crosky and Matt Baker-White
Left: Team Co-Captain Matt Vaughn slams a serve at number one singles.
Bottom Right: Vaughn considers the team's outlook.
Above Right: Junior David Nolan rips a backhand during practice.

against Division I Champion Longmeadow's 1st doubles team. The tournament was a huge confidence booster for the tandem, who, as their coach Mary Vaughan asserts, "have worked harder than most and have been at every practice," gutting it out. In fact, Foehl and Nolan upset Junior Nico Walker and Riley in a tantalizingly close challenge match to take over the 1st singles slot. Foehl and Nolan's rise to prominence has featured a 16-1 record in regular and postseason play to date with their only loss coming to a Lenox team whom they eliminated from competition in the Western Mass. Semi-Final Match. Foehl, a squash player, has become renowned across the county for his spectacular reflex volleys and "impeccable hand-eye coordination," while Nolan, arguably the most modest player in the county, routinely uses his sizzling ground strokes and picture-perfect placement to scatter winners all over the court. One of their biggest assets as a team is their chemistry, with "each picking the other up" as Matt Vaughan says. As chemistry is widely considered to be the key to doubles tennis, the duo has rarely been challenged and anchors the lineup with senior co-captain Dan Whateley, who has also lost only one match on the season.

Whateley, whose remarkable style has seen him play as high as 1st singles in his years at Mount Greylock, has been an emblem of consistency in his six years on the team. Beginning his career playing doubles with the fiery Clayton Johnson (Class of 2006), Whateley has been a hallmark of the tennis team. A quiet yet concerted competitor and an excellent student, his nature as a human backboard is known to frustrate opponents to no end. While his strokes are not as developed as some of his teammates, his ability to run down nearly every ball and his unique arsenal of spins, drop shots and general delicacy is unparalleled throughout the county. He modestly refuses to coach his teammates on the team but leads by example, seeming to throw his very heart into every point. Watching Dan Whateley exhaust his opponents with points lasting minutes on occasion is a thing of beauty and an inspiration. In Coach Mary Vaughan's words: "Dan is a kid that is easy to overlook. I might have even been guilty of it at first. He quietly goes about his business, but he plots out his strategy, sticks with it and never gives up. That's why he is a captain."

As the Mounties practiced in the scorching heat on the Chaffee Tennis Courts at Williams College on Saturday, June 7 in preparation for their State Semi-Final Match, there was an air of relaxed intensity. Senior and soon-to-be graduate Torrey Brenner jokes about the merits and demerits of actually trying to play well. Senior Dan Weiner's brilliant red hair glistens in the sunlight as he and Brenner face Junior Ryan Ericson and 8th grader Andr j Samardzik in a casual match. The players guzzle down gallons of water and Powerade and beat away at the fuzzy yellow balls as head coach Mary Vaughan, also Matt's mother, watches her players from a bench between the courts. She has led the Mounties to splendid success with a collected yet fun-loving demeanor that has earned her the respect of veterans of Greylock tennis from before her time. Once rated as a 5.0 by the National Tennis Rating Program (a rating of 7.0 designates a professional), Coach Vaughan has won National Tennis Association tournaments at the regional level in New England. She emphasizes the winning philosophies of approaching the game one point, one game, one set, one match, one meet at a time and never giving away points. While this may seem to be common sense, tennis is, more than any other sport, a mental game. Coach Vaughan explains that "it's great to dream [about winning a Western Mass. or State title], but it's also easy to look ahead of the match in front of you. When that happens, you lose the ones you should have won." Players who lose the mental game nearly always lose the match. The Mounties are a testament to the strong mental game with few exceptions, playing with dignity and rarely losing faith in their abilities. Her son thinks "she has done a good job" as coach of the Mounties.

"She never screams at her players and she's a bit more interactive with us players than former coach Blake Johnson," he explains. Nevertheless, the coach credits her players as the reason for the team's success, considering that "Greylock turns out smart kids and it's easy to coach such [studious players]. They all listen to whatever I tell them and are extremely coach-able. That's why I love coaching at Mount Greylock," and with this year's Western Mass. Championship trophy on display in the case in the gym lobby the Greylock, the pairing appears to be appropriate.

As Coach Vaughan observes in the blistering sun, her players batter the ball back and forth and she offers advice to both her doubles and singles players. On one court, Shastri, the teams only true "baseline basher" and his astoundingly powerful groundstrokes contest Vaughan and his versatile serve-and-volley game. Shastri, equipped with the game and the intensity of a far more experienced player, still lacks the composure of a veteran, occasionally shouting at himself even in a practice match. The sweat drips down Matt's reddening face as he works for every point against the 7th grader for whom he has essentially become a mentor. Vaughan has often admitted that Shastri, whose father is an assistant coach, has far more potential than he does, but for now, he continues to hold down the top spot for Greylock. "I can't teach him too much; I have to maintain my own spot," Vaughan chuckles. Strikingly, Rohan idolizes Spaniard Rafael Nadal, the recent French Open Champion who is ranked as the 2nd best player on the Association of Tennis Professionals Tour, and it is Shastri who emulates him on court. Utilizing both the same apparel and the same shouts of "Vamos!" after winners, he is often jested with by his teammates for his obsession. Nevertheless, his level of play merits the obsession. Matt Vaughan asserts that Shastri "has the best passing shots [he] has ever seen" at the high school level. As far as Rohan's potential, Matt thinks "the pros might be a stretch for him, but a good Division I College is certainly in his future."

When asked how it felt to be a Western Mass. Champion, Matt asserted that the team is "feeling pretty hot. We have a police escort back to Mount Greylock after our Championship win; everybody was grinning on that bus ride." As the only member of the team who was pushed to three sets in the finals, Vaughan stakes pride in his mental toughness and ability to rally from a deficit. Having lost only two matches on the season, both to reigning Berkshire County Most Valuable Player Andrew Dorr of Taconic, whom he beat in casual play, Matt "spearheads the team and organizes a lot" in the eyes of his coach. Matt is a student of the game having picked up the sport three years ago. He develops his strokes in the off-season at the Berkshire West athletics club in Pittsfield and at Nike Tennis Camp at Williams College, where he may coach this summer. He was joined in Pittsfield this winter by teammates Shastri, Riley and Walker on occasion, the latter two rounding out Greylock's lineup as the best 2nd doubles duo in the county. Vaughan has partly been inspired to compete at the Western Mass and State Tournament level by his sister Meghan Vaughan (Wahconah, Class of 2002), a two-sport standout who lead the basketball team to a state finals appearance. The season and its splendid success have been a pleasant "surprise" to Matt and he and his mother look forward to the state tournament. In the Coach's words: "At the level we're at now, it's more about what is in your heart and your head than what is on your racquet." With only one member of the regular starting varsity lineup having graduated on Saturday after that grueling practice, it appears that the Vaughan-laden Mounties will be using their hearts on a regular basis in years to come.