



Photo: Sarah Crosky

Coach Gill prepping students for their next activity in gym. This is the first year that actual letter grades have been assigned in gym class at Mount Greylock.

Grades in Gym

By ISABEL KAUFMAN

Although "school" can be synonymous with "stress" on any given day, there are a few things that it has never felt natural to worry about; the stigma of gym class is that it has always been one of these things. Instead of being viewed on the same level as an academic course, in the minds of the students it has often been considered a healthy reprieve from academia. Blowing off steam in gym was easily done in years before: the pass/fail system that anchored Mt. Greylock's physical education department kept any given person, athlete or klutz, from fretting about their performance too much. It thus surprised some students when, on the first day of school, students were informed that gym class would now be a part of their GPA.

As of this year, the physical education department will be giving their students letter grades that will be counted into the overall grade point average which is sent to colleges. Remember your sneakers, the department says, or it will show up on your report card. Failure to apply effort in athletics has the same weight as a failed test, and the same potential for discouraging results on your transcript; at the same time, if you're willing to have a good time and try hard, it can boost that GPA. The prevailing mood is an indignant one: the sort of reaction that might come from any major change in a class such as this. Certainly, the announcement seemed to come out of nowhere to students. It was revealed abruptly to the gym classes on the first day of school with no preamble whatsoever; that the main reaction is resentment cannot be surprising.

The curious fact is that this decision is about as far from spontaneous as possible. In fact, it has been pending for 11 years. "People have wanted to give letter grades since I got here," says Coach Brian Gill, head of the athletic department, who has been at Greylock for eleven years. "It wasn't feasible then, but it was always something we were working towards." Other coaches agree and reinforce the amount of time and thought that has been put into this. "We've been working for ten years," seconds Coach Lynn Jordan, "and we've finally been able to justify it."

It is only now that scheduling and technology have finally made this possible: students are with the same teacher for a full quarter, and thus can receive a grade from a teacher who knows how they have progressed. Peer pressure, too, is at work: Mt. Greylock was the final holdout to apply the pass/fail system to physical education for years, while every other school in Berkshire County gave letter grades. In the end, this is the result of a long, hard lobby.

The motion passed within the physical education department first before getting external approval. It has now come to pass externally; co-principal Tim Payne says simply, "We have grades in gym now." Some question has been raised, however, why this change was not proposed to a larger governing body such as the school committee or student council. While there has been no prior material about this decision released, it is thought that there will be some released in the near future. While it may seem that gym class shouldn't be stressful, if any other department in the school had changed from pass/fail to graded analysis, there would not have been this surprised reaction.

When asked why the department wanted grades, Gill says, "It's about the philosophy. Can you put a letter grade on the way someone performs in gym class? I think you can."

To achieve this purpose, a rubric has been developed to go with the new system. It aims to judge how well the student being graded meets the creed of the physical education department: "has, is, knows, does, values." Gill makes it clear that the grades should stem more from effort than skill; however, the rubric expects the students to "perform effectively" and

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PEER TEAM MAKES COMEBACK

By PAIGE BELLANGER

Every day during seventh period, a group of juniors and seniors congregates to talk about helping other students. This assemblage of students constitutes Mt. Greylock's Peer Team, which, as defined by member Gina Riggins, is "a way to communicate with younger children and to help them face obstacles." However, the aspirations and expectations of the Peer Team span a far greater spectrum than just aiding the middle schoolers in a time of harsh transition. While the convergence of the disparate middle and high schools is important, the reach of this group of upper classmen is to be, says Alvand Hajizadeh, "the other outlet to go to."

PJ Pannesco, Guidance Counselor, recollects the Peer Team from years ago, saying that they "helped with boyfriend/girlfriend conflicts, issues outside of school, [and aided] kids concerned about friends." The present group plans to carry out much of the same deeds, yet they need preparation before they undertake their mission.

In order to be successful in their task, the Peer Team is currently undergoing training, so that they will be able to deal with issues ranging from "venting to pregnancy, substance dependency and depression," says Bri Morrison. This stage is probably the most critical step in the process of peer counseling, as the aid that members of the Peer Team will provide will be grounded in knowledge, not opinion. However, this does not mean that personal skill in mollifying and encouraging is not factored into

the equation; each of the 10-12 members of the Peer Team were recommended specifically for the job.

Yet, just because the administration knows who should be and is a member of the Peer Team does not mean that the student body has the same wisdom. Rest assured, posters with each member's face will be posted somewhere within the school, so that students in need will quickly and easily be able to find someone to talk to. And more, if this said person does not have the fullest capacity to support the student, they have the ability to "link troubled kids to professional help," says Lisa Jennings, the Peer Team's advisor.

Peer Team, Continued on Page 3

Our Schedule

By NATALIE HOGELAND

Throughout this past summer, our administration and guidance counselors struggled with the difficult task of scheduling. As most of us may have heard, the famous Palo Alto schedule that was on the horizon to be the basis for our schedule this year. The Palo Alto structure would have set our schedule so that on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays, our first period be the "regular" 48 minutes long, followed by blocks 3, 5, and 7 as doubles, consisting of 90 minutes each. Then, on Wednesday and Thursday, the structure would have been period one being 48 minutes long, and blocks 2, 4,

and 6 becoming doubles.

There would have been several positive results from the Palo Alto schedule. The ongoing conflict of science labs would be resolved. Students would not have to be taken out of gym, and the students would have more time and not be rushed. Another positive point would have been that classes would not be crammed into just 48 minutes. Instead, classes would have more time to go in depth on research in the library, prolong their lab time, and not have to take up two or three classes just

Scheduling, Continued on Page 2

NEWSBRIEFS

A monthly column written by the editors to let the Greylock community know what to look out for. See page 2.

The Book Worm

This month, Krista Mangiardi has delved into *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, a novel about gender oppression in Afghanistan. Read her review and get a feeling for the book on page 3.

New Faces In The Greylock Community



Have you seen all those teachers and staff members who you do not know yet? Get a leg up in knowing names and some quick facts on page 4 where our writers have interviewed new faculty and staff members. In this two-part series, we will introduce 3 new or returning faculty or staff members this month, and 3 more next month.

This year, we welcome 4 new teachers and 3 new staff members. If you see these new members of our community definitely give them a smile and say Hi! See Page 4

An Opinion On Summer Homework

Patrick Madden expresses his views about the amount of summer homework upperclassmen receive. While many students feel that this homework is excessive, teachers feel that it is the only way to keep on schedule. Read about this dilemma on page 3.

Sports Preview

Our new sports editor Janelle Van Luling gives an overview of all the fall sports and their seasons outlooks. See pages 5 and 6.

Crossword

Senior Dylan Dethier has yet again created a crazy crossword. See page 6.

Gym Grading, Continued From Page 1

make "few observable errors." Skill seems an inevitable weight: prior knowledge and ability will inevitably support those more athletically inclined. The gym classes are sorted into electives which begin with an expectation that the students are somewhat inclined toward whatever activity they chose to participate in. While gym coaches explain rules, some feel that the rules of any given game are not explained thoroughly in every unit. Some students feel that the game simply begins, and the students' prior knowledge is an important aspect as to how they perform.

Yet the physical education department says unanimously that their subject should be graded, and have been striving for this for eleven years. The new system will presumably convince students to participate more, and overall the new situation seems to demand that the subject be granted greater respect. As for the grade's presence in the GPA, "P.E. is just that important in life," says Coach Jordan. Last year, and years previous, students could be seen not changing, sitting out, and simply refusing to participate in gym; this new system is put in place in order to combat those issues.

Physical education is called "Wellness" on report cards and schedules, and health is indisputably an important factor in life. As a subject, it should not be disrespected or neglected. Coach Gill compares it to the arts, citing that music and visual art classes are given letter grades and always have been. It's true; however, the students who take those classes are doing so by choice while gym is mandatory. If a student is a poor athlete, they will in all probability remain so; yet all students, proficient in athletics or not, may apply him- or herself to a game and attempt to perform well at it.

These other classes also produce tangible results. In academic classes, students are tested and their knowledge is applied on paper. In visual arts, the students have what they create; in music, there are performances to show the world the progress made within the class. In physical education, however, there is no such easy evidence. There are no tests other than what is done on the playing field; grading is based on attitude and participation. However, in music or visual arts classes, is you do not play well, do not sing well, or paint an ugly picture, it does not mean you get negative grades, so long as you apply yourself to the task at hand. These factors supplement grading in any subject, but

Coach Gill compares it to the arts, citing that music and visual art classes are given letter grades and always have been.

here they are the focal point: a fourth of the grading rubric is "personal and social responsibility", and the factors of effort and participation are present in "applications of skill and strategy". Therefore, three-fourths of the rubric hinge on the student's state of mind. Objectivity becomes a significant question with such a lack of concreteness, especially when the instructor-student ratio is so unbalanced. The grading system is based firmly in how the student behaves in the class and how much he or she is willing to apply him or herself.

The rubric has been received in gym classes now. It may be the product of many years' work by the physical education department, but it is very new and still unnerving to the students who have to fit into it. Reactions are often furious and mostly unprintable. "Nobody can remember gym being anything but pass/fail," senior Rachel Sheppard says. "Not even the teachers." To some students, this is-in the grand scheme of the grade point average-just another thing to stress about, and it comes on top of a pile of potential stresses that were already taking up space on the report card.

While most appreciate the PE department's diverse curricula and hard-working instructors, its new ability to tarnish an academic reputation strikes an jarring chord for some of the student body. "We should have just one period in a day where we do something athletic, not academic," says Coach Jordan of her subject, but the specter of poor grades could make it increasingly hard not to think of gym with an academic mindset for some.

Others see it as an opportunity for all students to succeed, regardless of skill. You do not have to be the star of a soccer team or the starting quarterback to succeed at athletics now; seeing an A+ on the report card because you tried hard in gym, because you put in the effort, because you learned a game and played as best you could is a very encouraging thing to students. If someone is taking high level courses, APs and Honors, even college courses, they may not have time for extracurricular athletics; gym is now providing a way for these students to see success in athletics as well as academics.

The motion has passed. It has made its way out of the locker rooms and into serious relevance-and it makes it difficult to play for love of the game.

Peer Team, Continued From Page 1

The Peer Team this year seems to have put an expansive focus on the middle school, specifically in helping them into their place among high schoolers. As the last incarnation of the Peer Team existed before this year's seniors entered the seventh grade, it is certain that this group of middle school students will receive far more advantages than anyone in the last six years. To enforce this goal, the Peer Team

seventh and eighth graders and the rest of Mt. Greylock, the Peer Team will offer encouragement, and simply, an extra pat on the back.

As previously stated, the Peer Team is not limited to this direct focus on the middle school student body. Jessi Payton says, "we will contribute [our help] to a range of problems, from 'I don't like my teacher' to 'I'm pregnant' and everything in between." It is the

Jessi Payton says, "we will contribute [our help] to a range of problems, from 'I don't like my teacher' to 'I'm pregnant' and everything in between." It is the philosophy of the Peer Team that, in certain instances, another student can be equally, if not more, helpful than an adult.

will be accompanying seventh grade students to the Clark Art Museum on September 18, fostering peer relations. "Middle schoolers feel more comfortable knowing upper classmen," points out Jessica Moreno. This mere contact has the ability to bolster younger peers into seats of confidence. And since middle and high school gym classes are combined this year, it allows for more of this strengthening communication. In order to close the gap between the

philosophy of the Peer Team that, in certain instances, another student can be equally, if not more, helpful than an adult. That is why they are willing to help others in a time of depression or crisis during seventh period everyday. Naomi McCarthy sums the peer team's up: "Anybody, anything, whenever we're around. We won't completely solve the crisis, but we're someone to listen to."

NEWS IN BRIEF

The News in Brief column is written by the Mount Greylock Editorial Staff. If you have an event you would like us to cover, please let us know

National Success in Classics

This summer, freshman Ned Kleiner was a member of a Massachusetts Certamen team that won a gold medal at the National Junior Classical League Convention at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. The Junior Classical League, whose Mount Greylock branch has seen great success at the State JCL Convention in recent years, is an organization dedicated to inspiring appreciation for classical civilization among young Latin scholars. Certamen, the activity in which Kleiner's team took national gold, is an academic contest akin to team jeopardy with one exception, all of the questions concern the classics.

A.P. Fees Due

All students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses are required to pay the \$85 test fee per A.P. course by Oct. 1. Because district policy dictates that students at Mount Greylock enrolled in Advanced Placement courses must sit for the corresponding exams in order to receive credit for the course, the district must receive payment in full from all students who wish to remain in their A.P. courses. Students should make checks payable to the Mount Greylock Regional School District and submit them to Mrs. Rioux in the Guidance office.

Lunch Prices Increase

After stagnating at \$2.50 for five years, the price of a standard hot lunch at Mount Greylock has increased to \$2.75 due to rising production costs. Students are generally disappointed by the change. The \$0.25 price increase, if extended across the majority of the student body for the entirety of the year, could result in the student body's spending of as much as \$20,000 more on lunch this year than it did last year.

Improvements at the School Over the Summer

While this may be old news to many of you, there were a lot of improvements done to the school building over the summer! The chorus room, pictured right, was moved and completely revamped, several hallways (primarily in the middle school area) had all the lockers repainted, the library has added two new offices for various projects, the Echo office (back of the library) was repainted, and the meeting room next to the administration office was yet again improved. Many of these improvements are due to student volunteerism and effort.

Students to Perform for Obama

On September 28, The Shoes, a local world music group comprised primarily of Mount Greylock students, will perform a free outdoor concert and gala to support Democratic Presidential candidate Barack Obama. The Shoes will perform on the green across from Tunnel City Coffee starting at 2:00 P.M. All donations will be transferred to the Obama campaign. The group features junior Sato Matsui on the violin, junior Patrick Madden on the clarinet, junior Rufus Paisley on the bass, junior Ashlyn Moors on percussion, and former Mount Greylock student Isaiah Day on the cello, and will perform styles of music ranging from Klezmer to Brazilian to Japanese.

A Capella at Mount Greylock

Senior Camille Robertson has organized a student a capella group for her senior project. The group, which she will also direct, will be performing at senior high concerts and benefit events throughout the year. Robertson's individual work will primarily entail the arrangement of music for the group. Her advisor Eric Kang is a senior at Williams and a member of the Williams a capella group. The goal of the group is to foster opportunities for enjoyable singing amongst a diverse group of students. Olivia Tousignant-Pienkos, another senior, will fill the role of the assistant director. The project is a continuation of Robertson's a capella endeavors in Spain over the past academic year and the project, Greylockapella, from her freshman and sophomore years.

Tutoring Options Available

After-school tutoring at Greylock begins for middle schoolers this coming week (September 22) on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, from 2:30-4:00 PM. Limited one-on-one tutoring will be available in any subject including math, english, science, social studies, Spanish, French and Latin. In addition, a new drop-in Homework Club will be offered this year and monitored by 1-2 Williams students on these days as well. Come meet get your home work done early and meet some cool Williams students. Please contact Liza Barrett, after-school coordinator for more information.

High School Tutoring will be offered on Wednesday afternoons from 2:30-4:00 PM, starting next week (October 1st), and will include all subjects as well as SAT prep and college essay writing prep. Athletes: Arrive early and you will be out to practice, by 3-3:15. Please contact Tracy Finnegan, after-school coordinator for more information.

Annual Workday Scheduled for October

The first PTO activity of the year will be our annual workday to spruce the grounds and the interior of the building. Join an enthusiastic group of parents and students on Saturday, October 18th to paint, weed, and generally clean up for a few hours - this has been a fun event for several years now and it really makes a difference to the appearance of our school. To sign up or learn more, please contact Lisa Hiley: 458-3077, or John MacDonald: 458-0151.

Activity Fees Payable Online

UniPay is now available for on-line payments for students in all grade levels. Please note you will need your child's ID number, which was included on his/her schedule, in order to process a payment via UniPay.

If you need assistance, please contact Michele Conroy at 458-9582, Ext. 149.

The views expressed in opinion or editorial pieces do not reflect the collective Views of this newspaper or the administration, but of the individual authors.

What Happened to Summer?

By PATRICK MADDEN

I was surprised, upon my return to Mt. Greylock at the beginning of September, to see that most of my fellow students retained full heads of hair, as I had spent the last three weeks tearing tufts of my own locks out of my bleeding scalp in frustration as I stared at math problems, latin translations, the philosophies of Thoreau, and thousands of pages on the American colonial era. Contrary to popular belief, school did not start on September third this year; it started far earlier. In fact, it would not be altogether erroneous to claim that school never left us as we departed the building for summer vacation last year. It hung over our heads, manifested within the nauseating pile of books, papers, packets, and worksheets that would require untold hours of our time in the coming months, months that were, once upon a time, devoted solely to mental recuperation and relaxation. Instead of relaxing this summer when I wasn't working, however, I was forced into a much more undesirable activity. During the time I could have and should have spent outdoors in the sun, with my parents, with my brother, who was leaving for college soon, or with my friends, I was cooped up inside doing hours upon atrocious hours of school work.

Hysterical reports from fellow students have been rippling through the school such as, "I killed a man this summer . . . just couldn't do any more math problems," and, "I attacked my desk with a hatchet like a rabid animal; I just couldn't take it anymore!" A sample course load for an upcoming junior or senior this year included reading four books, doing hours of Latin translation and interpretation, reading hundreds and hundreds of pages about US history (don't you wish I were exaggerating), and doing over 160 math review problems (plus over 70 problems that reviewed the review work). The level of mental decrepitude induced by a single summer day filled to the brim with such odious labor is downright perturbing, not to mention absurdly counterproductive.

All murder confessions aside, it's mostly because of the excessive amount of summer homework we receive going into the higher grades that many students have to take Tums so as not to vomit at the thought of September. The time for rethinking summer homework policies at Mt. Greylock has arrived. I refuse to believe that with all the intelligence within Mt. Greylock's staff, administration, and student body, no one can come up with a better system than the one currently in place.

The sticking points, as many will no doubt point out to me upon perusal of this month's Echo, are those infamous AP courses. Since the AP test is in May, there is a constant rush to fit the curricula into a significantly shortened school year. Our solution to this dilemma is to assign a solid two or

three weeks worth of AP work during summer vacation, almost negating the title of that blessed period from late June to the end of August. Students are expected to know the material (which hasn't been taught to them) and be prepared for a test on the first or second of school. Welcome back.

How do we solve this problem? Some have suggested careful examination of curricula and the deletion of unneeded units or projects to fit everything into one year. Unfortunately, this solution might perpetuate the already prevalent and suffocating feeling that AP classes are not about intellectual challenge, but solely about acing The Exam (it's in caps for a reason). Others have suggested quickening the pace of the class as a whole just a tiny bit for the duration of the year to offset the summer homework period. Another solution, a bit more radical, would be to move the entire school year forward two weeks. This would provide two extra weeks in which to teach all necessary units before the AP exam in May, it would eliminate a good portion of that lag time once the exam is over but there is still a month of classes, and it would give us all two beautiful weeks at the end of June to enjoy the weather (a time when most of us are questioning why we're in school anyway). Whatever the difficulties, other options are out there, options that are more healthful for students than two weeks of self-taught school before we even enter the building.

To those devil's advocates who would say, "If you don't want all the homework, don't take AP courses", I would respond that ever since ninth grade, the idea that colleges want to see us take challenging course loads has been drilled into our brains far too much for that option to be completely feasible. On top of that, many non-AP courses have just as ridiculous a summer regiment as AP courses (even without the feeble excuse of a consolidated school year). To those who would say, "Teachers have to work just as hard over the summer to prepare for the year as students", I would respond that teachers have salaries and are working professionals. And to those who would say, "There are children all over the world who would kill for a high school education, so stop complaining about a little extra work", I would concede that he or she had a fair point but then ask how any of us could possibly be advocates for global change with our oppressive workloads to concentrate on.

To top it all off, teachers recommend right before the summer that we complete the homework as close to the start of school as we feel comfortable in order to keep it fresh in our minds. With this bout of paradoxical and procrastination-inducing advice, it's no wonder students come to school the first day with circles under their eyes and bitter countenances.

I'm sure I speak for the entire student body when I implore the Mt. Greylock teachers (of all grades, seven through ten, and of all courses, college prep through AP) to cease and desist all encroachment on our summer vacation, one of the precious few times we have to explore those essential parts of life that don't include school work.

Most parents are appalled at the amount of summer homework upperclassmen receive because they remember a time, when they were in high school, that kids actually had time to be kids. Somehow it seems that in our progression towards academic excellence, we've left behind something infinitely important. We've left behind the time to relax, the time to be human, the time to have Lord of the Rings movie marathons. We've left behind the time unwind and take care of ourselves. We've left behind the notion that a grade point average or the College Board's rank of one to five has no jurisdiction over the strength and depth of personal character. Let's reminisce; let's reconsider; and for the sake of all our sanity, let's at least give students their summers back.

The Book Worm

By KRISTA MANGIARDI



Title: A Thousand Splendid Suns
By: Khaled Hosseini
Price: \$25.95

The novel, A Thousand Splendid Suns, by Khaled Hosseini is a contemporary work of historical fiction that is told in a haunting and touching manner. Hosseini was born and raised in Kabul, Afghanistan before he moved to the United States in 1980. Since his time here he has written A Thousand Splendid Suns in addition to The Kite Runner to help tell his country's story from a different per-

spective than what American audiences see in the news. Both novels have had enormous affects on readers and risen high on the best-seller lists.

A Thousand Splendid Suns tells the connected stories of three individuals that span through the thirty years from the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Taliban reign, and finally leading to the rebuilding that followed. Readers first meet the character Mariam as a young girl, an illegitimate child of a wealthy man. She was raised by her mother who commits suicide when she is fifteen. At this point, her father marries off his young daughter to a forty-year old man. Later, the audience is introduced to Laila, another young girl, a bit over a decade later. Laila is raised in the belief that women can be strong and intelligent, and has a promising future. Her plans, however, are dreadfully affected by the horrid and gruesome violence that has become common in the streets. Furthermore, Laila's best friend Tariq's life story becomes a major role in the plot. Tariq was affected very young by violence when he stepped on a land mine to lose one of his legs. He and Laila grow up together inseparable, inevitably discovering love.

The plot follows Mariam through out her marriage and how she grows within it. Laila's story eventually follows into line with Mariam's and readers see their relationship and how they try to improve their lives. It presents a brilliant perspective of two generations of women. Tariq's touching narrative goes in and out of view, but mainly shows his climaxing relationship with Laila and the affects of the violence on him and his family. The complex and turning plot involves war, love, hate, nurture, and much more of raw and pure human emotion.

As the historical events of Afghanistan unfold around these people's lives they become unbelievably relatable and riveting. Some relationships are torn apart while in other cases, people are brought together. Horrors that become an everyday affair physically destroy people, wreck plans, separate families, and emotionally terrorize their minds. In contrast to this, the story remains beautiful in its' language and how everything is so blatantly narrated. Readers can easily fall in love with some of the characters and relationships, despise some, or even find themselves within the minds and lives of others.

This novel is definitely worth reading and highly recommended. It is relevant to the world today and gives an ignorant society a glimpse into what life is like on the other side of the globe. Also, it is easy to form opinions and get entangled into the story in a way that will keep the book off the shelves, and into eager hands. It might not be as enjoyable to those that cringe easily at certain parts, but is a great eye-opener. It is hard to find something negative about a piece of work so drawing that it can certainly promote outward expressions of disgust, shock, laughter, and love.

Khaled Hossieni's other work The Kite Runner is another amazing specimen of contemporary literature for those that enjoy his style and story-telling. This is told more through a male perspective than A Thousand Splendid Suns. It is also slightly less gruesome, but has a similar affect. The Kite Runner was recently made into a film as well. Overall, Khaled Hossieni is an astounding author with great power to affect people. All of his works, especially, A Thousand Splendid Suns, prove and demonstrate this ability wonderfully and give illustrations of a country so popular in the news by someone who truly deserves to be the one to illustrate it.

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. Meetings are held in Echo Office at the back of the library, typically after school on Mondays after publication.

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The Echo Editorial Staff invites you, the MGRHS community (teachers, parents, administrators, and students alike), 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.

Be aware that the editorial staff reserves the right to run or not run your letter depending on what we deem is appropriate. We also may elect to run an excerpt of a letter or invite other writers to reply.

Thanks for your submissions, The Echo Editorial Staff.

COMMUNITY

New Faces at Greylock

By MARTA KOWITZ AND MELODY EDWARDS

Rebecca Green

A graduate of Smith College, Rebecca Green attended the Union Institute and University, as well as Vermont College to receive her master's. She comes to Mount Greylock with six years of experience to teach Honors Biology and Ecology.



ECHO: When did you decide you wanted to be a teacher? Were there any other professions you considered as a child?

Ms.Green: I knew I was interested in teaching at the end of high school. I didn't decide I wanted to be a teacher until I graduated from college and began substitute teaching. As I was growing up, I also being a musician, a doctor, and an ecologist.

ECHO: What initially attracted you to the subject you teach?

Ms.Green: I have always been interested in science, ever since I was a child. I have always loved being in nature, and have always been fascinated with how the natural world works.

ECHO: In retrospect, what stereotypical clique do you think you belonged to in high school?

Ms.Green: I wish there weren't cliques.

ECHO: How do you think high school has changed since you were a teenager?

Ms.Green: The big change I see is in technology. We didn't use the internet when I was in high school, and we didn't have cell phones, digital cameras, etc. I think this technology has allowed students to be much more creative in their work, and has empowered students in their ability to gain new and diverse information.

ECHO: Do you have any life long goals that you are working towards now?

Ms.Green: Chickens and goats! I want to have chickens and goats!

ECHO: Did any specific teacher have a memorable impact on you as a kid? Why?

Ms.Green: The teacher that had the biggest impact on me as a teenager was Mr. Backiel. He was my high school biology teacher, and helped to foster an interest in thinking deeply about why the living world works the way it does. He was great at asking good questions.

Trudy Ames

Trudy Ames, the 9th grade Honors English teacher, is no stranger at Greylock. She is returning after a year-long leave of absence, and 20 years of prior MG service. However, in the past she has taught AP, so this recently redesigned curriculum, is a new thing.



ECHO: What initially attracted you to the subject you teach?

Mrs. Ames: I am an analytical person – I enjoy uncovering the layers of meaning found in really good writing. I've also written poetry for many years and wanted to pass on my love for reading and writing to others.

ECHO: What life lessons do you try to instill in your students?

Mrs. Ames: I hope my students will discover how important it is to write well, but also to work hard toward what they feel passionate about – there is no such thing as a cookie-cutter mold; helping each student figure out their individual strengths is important.

ECHO: In retrospect, what stereotypical clique do you think you belonged to in high school?

Mrs. Ames: Hmm...I wasn't really in a particular group – I was kind of nerdy but also very friendly and loved sports, particularly track and swimming.

ECHO: What is the biggest risk you have ever taken?

Mrs. Ames: I've taken many different risks on varying levels of danger (and/or stupidity). I spent six months traveling in India with three other women when I was 19; I spent a night in the Great Gulf Wilderness near the top of Mt. Washington in a blizzard; I used to swim a mile every day in the Atlantic (almost year round), and, well, there are other, wilder exploits, but the hardest thing about them all is coping with type one diabetes, which I've had for 30 years – so everything I do subjects me to extra risk.

ECHO: Do you have any life long goals that you are working towards now?

Mrs. Ames: I continue to write poetry, but don't have much time for it these days. I received my MFA from Bennington in 2005 – I'd like to finish the manuscript that I began there.

Jessica Storey

Spanish teacher Jessica Storey has returned this year to teach middle school Spanish, after having taught at Mount Greylock from 1999 through 2002. Ms. Storey received her bachelor's degree from St. Lawrence University and obtained her master's from Middlebury College.



ECHO: How would you describe yourself in one word?

Ms. Storey: Understanding

ECHO: When did you decide you wanted to be a teacher? Were there any other professions you considered as a child?

Ms. Storey: When I entered college I had thoughts of being a teacher, but then I changed my mind and thought I might want to go to law school. After graduating from St. Lawrence I really wanted to give teaching a try so I went back to school to focus specifically on education at the middle and high school levels.

ECHO: In your study of Spanish what foreign countries have you visited? Any unique adventures to recount?

Ms. Storey: I have studied in Costa Rica, Venezuela, Mexico and Spain. They were all wonderful adventures that included challenges as well. It was always hard, especially in Latin America, to be a blond, "Gringa." I was robbed a few times right on the street and both times chased down the person that robbed me and got either my belonging or money back...not sure if that was brave or dumb of me!

ECHO: How has MG changed since you last taught here?

Ms. Storey: There is seemingly no smoking outside the building or in the bathrooms....alleluia!!

The Community Page is devoted to furthering the Mount Greylock community as a whole. If you are interested in having a feature piece run in the Community section of the Echo, please contact the editorial team at mountgreylockecho@gmail.com

Scheduling, Continued From Page 1

to watch one film.

One problem with the Palo Alto schedule was that it would have placed some teachers teaching straight from 7:40 to 2:20. Some teachers would not have any time for preps or breaks throughout the day. The scheduling effort also ran into problems on how to deal with student requests, the number of sections per class, and also which teachers can teach certain classes. One of the bigger problems about the prospective new schedule was that the teachers would only be with their students two or three days a week. Also, our new technology, Power School, comes into play. Power School is a scheduling software program, which allows teachers to simply type in what the student wants, and the program will come up with the perfect schedule, although this can only happen if the teachers do not require any limitations. One problem with the program is that when a teacher teaches both high school and middle school students, the student's schedule with result in a conflict for the teacher.

The school administration decided not to use the Palo Alto approach. Mr. Payne says he believes "...for the years to come, I would expect the schedule to stay the way it is now, with the top three stationary, and the bottom four rotating." Teachers and students may have a different view on the Palo Alto schedule,

but there was one thing that students and teachers did agree on. Mr. Payne also noted that, "Students would never be able to stay awake and pay attention for an hour and a half. Especially for lecture periods, the teachers wouldn't get their full attention after an hour."

A high school senior, Sherdyl Fernandez, agrees that the schedule being used is better. "It would be less confusing for the younger students who are just entering Mount Greylock, and also the longer class periods would be harder for students to sit through and decrease the amount of attention and learning that would take place in the class room." Most students have the same standpoint on the schedule. Some have thought it would be beneficial in some ways, but in more ways it would be detrimental. One high school senior, Kelsie Leon responded with the following. "Well, I like our schedule now because of the way it's spaced out. I like having two periods then break then three periods then lunch then two more till I get to go home. I also like having my first three classes stationary. The new schedule sounds intriguing though. It would indeed be very helpful to drop a class because then you can put the homework off a night and not get behind. Also, with more class time, it would be possible to have less homework because so much more would get done during class."

TUNNEL CITY COFFEE

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SPORTS

Fall Sports Preview

By JANELLE VAN LULING

Senior Danielle Gagnon, a new addition to the volleyball team this year.



Senior Than Finan, goalie and captain on the boys soccer team.



Freshman Siri Mason of the girl's soccer team.



Boys Soccer

After losing ten seniors, seven of whom were starters, the Boys Soccer team was expecting to have to rebuild this year. If the year that they're having at this point is a rebuilding year, maybe more teams should try it. They've gotten off to a 6-0 start, the best start in years, against formidable opponents.

Their first games came at the Hall of Fame tournament. The opener against Vallhalla HS of New York was encouraging as they came from behind to win 3-2. Playing at 9:00 the next morning against an intimidating John Glenn HS team, they played some of the best ball that any Greylock team has played in years, earning them a 2-0 win and the championship plaque. They got right into their league schedule quickly, playing rival Monument Mountain away, and winning 2-1. League wins against Hoosac Valley and Taconic followed. In their biggest game of the year on paper, the boys came away with 1-0 victory at Amherst High School, a division one team roughly 2 times the size of Greylock. After losing so many players to graduation last year, the Mounties knew that some new faces were going to have to step up. Stephan Danyluk, among others, has risen to the challenge. Stephan, a stud on the JV team in 2007, has scored 7 goals in 6 games. Others that have filled in nicely are Nate Nurmi, Chris Mahar, Nick Krant, Tommy Dils, Luke Costley and Sam DeMatteo. The team is led by captains Alvand Hajezadeh, Nico Walker, and Than Finan. Juniors Taylor Foehl, Tyler Grees, Jordan Tuboly, and Sam Tiftt also provide experience. They play tonight at 7:00 against Drury at home.

At time of press, we were unable to report what was perhaps the season's most anticipated game against Lenox High School.

Volleyball

The Volleyball team is off to a great start for the '08 season. With the current 4-1 record, the girls are gaining momentum. Captains Sierra Schultze, Bri Morrison and Chelsea Garrison are leading the way for a talented group of athletes. Each one a seasoned veteran of the game, the Mounties have nothing to worry about when it comes to strong leadership. Joining the three captains on the starting lineup are juniors Tijana Samardzic and Sam Radke, and eighth grader Emily Mortenson. Though only in middle school, Mortenson has showed great promise. "She's amazing at all aspects of volleyball" said Schultze. "She has a consistent serve, diesel serve, perfect sets, not to mention a positive attitude on the court." Other team members that are expected to be big time contributors are juniors Annabel Barrett, Regis Shanley, and senior Danielle Gagnon.

After losing nearly all of last year's starting lineup, the Mounties are showing just how deep their talent goes. "We're really getting better" said Morrison. "Our strong points are defiantly Sierra and Chelsea's serves, and Chelsea's spikes, but we're doing really well for having just lost six of our strongest players." With returning Coach Phil Paul pushing them to the limit, the Mounties are working harder than ever. Packing their game with even powerful spikes, better sets, and dominant serves, the girls are intent on keeping command of the court. They are enthusiastic about the upcoming season, and have high expectations when it comes to the Western Mass tournament. The Mounties next face Lee High School on Thursday, and their next home game is Monday, October 6th against Wahconah at 4:30.

The Golf team is well on their way to a repeat of last year's success. With the current 6-0 record, the Mounties are dominating in the league. Team leaders Dylan Dethier and Sam Garivaltis have improved over the past year, through more practice and playing. However, the team's success hasn't been solely due to the duo's outstanding performances. With a strong line up of juniors in Mitch Hebert, Andy Budz, and Taylor Dunn, and sophomore Collin Delano, the Mounties are looking at a bright future. With 32 team members total, (nearly as large as the football team) the sport of golf has taken over in interest. However,

with the main scoring seven all veterans of the game and the team, captain Dylan Dethier is confident that they will be successful throughout the season. "We've got a strong team this year. Our team has been the same guys the last few years, so we've got the experience. We're setting some high goals for ourselves and hoping for a good year." In nearly crushing the competition in five out of their six matches, Mountie golf has set a high standard for their level of play. Looking to repeat or even exceed their success of last year has driven the team to work harder

Golf

Girls Soccer

Much like the boys, the girls soccer team has had to deal with a tremendous loss in numbers. After graduating fourteen varsity players, the Mounties have had to fill some important positions. With senior captains Amanda Karampatsos, Scyrine DeVeaux, and Olivia Tousignant-Pienkos leading the way, the girls have begun to see some success

on the pitch. Some key underclassmen expected to make a huge impact on the team are juniors Courtney George and Erin Manners. George, a three-time returning Varsity player has gained some valued experience on the field, and should be a commanding force in the midfield. Manners, back for her second year, should also be a threat in the midfield and defensive positions. Other promising juniors that are expected to make contributions on the field are Monika Pandzic, Meredith Phelps, Emily Gamble, Johanna and Jeanna Tremblay, and Hayley Kelly. The Mounties also have a group of returning, talented sophomores in Kim Houston, Sarah Brink, and Siri Mason. Alongside this trio is freshman forward Caitlyn Riley, and eighth-grade keeper Margot Besnard.

Between scoring powerhouse Karampatsos and talented rookie Riley, the Mounties should have no trouble finding the back of the net over the course of the season. In an interview, Karampatsos commented on the season so far, and what can be expected of the lady Mounties: "So far the season is going really great. We have a lot of potential even though we lost 14 seniors. We still have a lot of the starting players from last year, so basically we are just starting where we left off. We've also gotten to know how each other plays pretty well by now." With a recent victory over Monument Mountain pushing their record to 2-0, the girls are enthusiastic about the outcomes of their games. "Being 2-0 is really exciting," said Karampatsos. "We're confident that we can play with the best teams this year, we just have to keep playing hard."

Football

Two years after an almost perfect season, the Mounties are in the stages of rebuilding. With a nearly entire new group of young athletes, the football team is finding itself facing many obstacles. However, despite the dwindling numbers and numerous position changes for team veterans, Captains Ian Jones and Kris Jolin are hopeful for the upcoming season. "We're going to be a team that can compete and do well in the league if everyone stays healthy" said Jones. "We have a lot of younger kids with a lot of talent that are going to see some Varsity time this year." One of the biggest changes the team has had to deal with is the change in position for Jolin, from quarterback to tight end. With two underclassmen, freshman Kent Hanson and junior Kyle Quagliano fighting for the starting Q.B. Position, Jones feels the struggle has benefited the team. "The daily competition forces the two to perform at their best, which drives the team to play with the same intensity."

On the transition from fullback to quarterback, Quagliano stated that it was "easier on my body physically. To play fullback I had to gain a lot of weight and workout a lot. With quarterback I don't have to be as big." Despite the current 0-1 record, our Mounties are hopeful to improve over the course of the season and come out with a strong finish.

than before. With modest and collected interviews with local press, the Mounties have given a professional image to the program. However, in the opinion of a team member who shall remain anonymous, their achievements should, on occasion, be blatantly spelt out. "We're the best there is, simple as that. We're bringing home the state title and might leave some other teams dead and dying on our way there. We're winners. If you're not first, you're last." The Mounties will hope to continue their winning streak against Pittsfield High School on Tuesday.

SPORTS

Boys and Girls Cross Country Running

The "Sea of Red" has maintained dominance so far in the '08 season. The lady Mounties have not only improved from last season, but by great measure. In an increasingly competitive league, the Girls cross country team has been determined each year to keep a modest, yet determined mind set. With an astonishing amount of talent, the girls have flown to victory against Monument Mountain, Lenox, and Drury, putting them undefeated thus far in the season. What many do not understand however, is the amount of hard work and dedication it takes to be successful in the sport of Cross Country. The Mounties wouldn't be nearly as talented if it weren't for the summer of base running, grueling workouts, and proper hydration and nutrition. For a runner's body to run (no pun intended) at the maximum productivity level, it isn't merely training as hard as possible. Getting in the proper balance of speed to distance workouts, and obtaining the right amount of sleep and vitamins is necessary for the runner. One of the keys to getting the proper nutrients after a hard workout: chocolate milk. It's taken over the girls and boys Cross Country teams by storm. Delicious and nutritious for someone who has just pushed their body to the limit in terms of a cardiovascular and physical workout. The calcium and added sugar replaces such vital nutrients lost in a hard workout. Some may say it's the key to the cross country teams' success, but the athletes beg to differ. Both teams work jointly to ensure not only great workouts, but also a good time. The boys' creative minds always keep the girls team guessing, and practice is never boring. But as usual, practice isn't all fun and games, and when it's time to work, both teams are always ready to get down to business.

On the girls side, the team is lead by Coach Larry Bell. Some may know him as the Biology, Anatomy, or Physics teacher, but the girls of the cross country team know him as one of the best running coaches around (now that's something you didn't know before). Senior captains Jackie Lemme, Katherine Wadsworth, Hannah Chenail, Meghan O'Grady, and Janelle van Luling are also leading the way, as well as fellow seniors Naomi McCarthy, Jessica Lemieux, Jenay Haskins, Abby Bishop, and Alicia Dilthey. Following the plethora of seniors is lone Junior Kathleen Dudziak, who has proven over her years to be a real threat in the league. The Mounties are also expected to see strong performances from sophomores Cate Costley and Amy Santella, and also freshmen Mackenzie Hitchcock, Kaylene Lemme, Laura Nolan, and Susie Shanley. The girls have been working extremely hard over the past month to prepare for the upcoming season, and will undoubtedly keep up the pace. With some of the most intense yet balanced workouts, the girls are quickly learning the importance of getting an adequate amount of sleep. Though difficult for many of the juniors and seniors overwhelmed by additional stresses, the team has shown a greater effort to obtain the right amount of rest. With upcoming races against various teams in the league, the mountie girls hope to continue their reign of success, and also hope to fly that success down south when a group of the team competes in the Walt Disneyworld Cross Country Classic in Orlando, Florida on October 10th.

On the boys side, success has not only come in winning. Improvements of many runners has been the trend



Seniors and captains Patrick Joslin and Jackie Lemme lead the boy's and girls cross country teams in warm up jogs at practice; not only is the XC team successful, they also know how to have a good time.

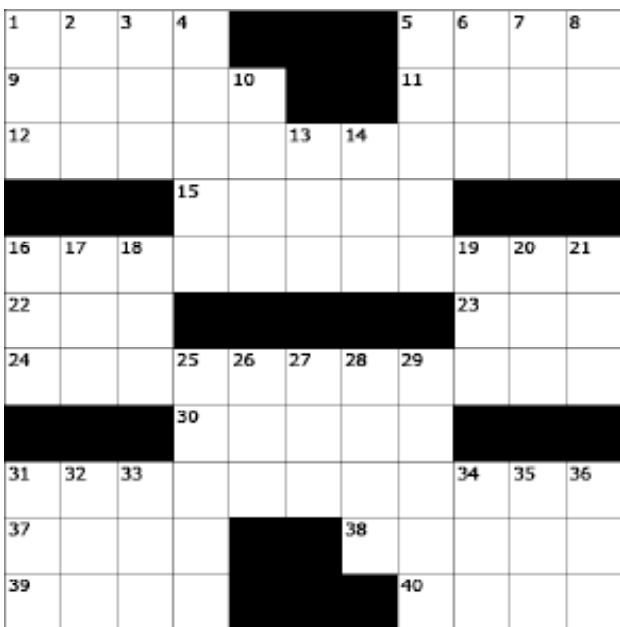
over the past month. With some thirty athletes, the team has seen a great expansion in numbers since last year. Captains Patrick Joslin, David Nolan, Cary White and Evan Grillon are enthusiastic about the outlook of the team. "Overall, the team looks really strong." Said Joslin. "We have almost thirty boys, so we have a much bigger team that last year, and we also have a lot of new comers." Strong performances from Matt Cheung, Tim Dilthey, and Spencer Rioux, along with many others from the team prove that the mountie boys will be a force to be reckoned with. Seventh and Eighth graders Ryan Wadsworth and Will Kirby have also impressed in early

standings, and will be expected to contribute to the team score in the near future. The main goals for the boys team this year will be to be one of the top three teams at Western Mass and qualify for the State race. Not a far reach for the young but talented mountie boys.

With impressive performances this early in the season, the boys and girls cross country teams will be fun to watch throughout the fall. Both teams next compete at BCC on Tuesday, before the girls head off to Florida on Thursday. Wish them luck!

CROSSWORD

By DYLAN DETHIER



Across:
1. Transcribe
5. Former Red Sox Wily Mo
9. Like Depp or Damon
11. Yankee known for failing in the

clutch
12. Home of Providence
15. Bizarre, and often creepy
16. Zoolander's Jacobim Mugatu
22. Trumps a king

23. She opposed Wade
24. Slowly fall apart
30. No. 9 on the Celtics
31. "The Audacity of Hope" author
37. Songs of tribute
38. Temporary home
39. U.S. skier Miller
40. Fail to keep secret

Down:
1. A Corolla, for one
2. Scottish interjection
3. School-related group of parents and teachers
4. A mountain yell
5. More white or pallid
6. Time period, like the Paleolithic
7. Prefix meaning "not"
8. Much ___ About

Nothing
10. A rock or sandbar dangerous to ships
13. Anger
14. Word used to address a noble
16. Clump of gum
17. Used for cooling
18. Allow
19. Pitching statistic regarding runs
20. Place for cars to park
21. Robert E. ___
25. Remove
26. Jay-Z record company ___-A-Fella
27. Accompanies a quill pen
28. Laker Lamar
29. Human imitation
31. Singer Dylan
32. Without further
33. Green's counterpart
34. Consumed
35. Actor Gibson
36. Every