

Student Activism Grips MG

By KRISTA MANGIARDI

The students at Mt. Greylock have been very busy. Whether through sports, theater, clubs, or outside activities, people have been getting involved. Student activism is getting everyone out from behind the school desk and up contributing. They are learning by speaking out, giving back, and representing themselves in a big way.

Sports are one of the most popular ways for students to get active. They encourage team building, perseverance, competitiveness, and healthy exercise habits. Furthermore, teams are beneficial to the entire student body as they create spirit and a sense of community. Partaking in any sport from the three seasons, however, takes a lot of time. Daily practices and several home and away games, matches, or meets cut into homework and free time. So why do so many students get involved? Senior Ryan Ericson says, "I have fun and it makes me happy, but it mostly relieves stress in so many ways." Being on a team can create friendships and help students to step away from the chaos of school and home.

Theater at Mt. Greylock is another way many students get involved. This fall, over fifty students are working together to put on a performance of Henry V with the help of Shakespeare and Company. There is also a musical in the winter and a student-directed drama in the spring. Students here may learn new skills, creating light and sound to bring a performance to life or step out of their comfort zone to sing in front of large audiences. One student involved, junior Ashlyn Moors states, "it allows me to connect with people I'd never think to connect to before rehearsals start." Theater is only one of the activities available at Mount Greylock that provides students with the ability to meet new people. Whether at the school or at the town hall, students are given a chance to work with their peers and use their talent and creativity. In theater, cast and crew become a family that takes on acting, technical arts, publicity, fight and dance choreography and experiences the culmination of its efforts when the play is performed.

Besides joining sports and

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Mind-full of the Economy



Graphic: Rachel Sheppard

By TORI WONDERLICK

Everyone has heard about the troubles that have been affecting the American economy—the 'credit crisis,' the mortgage foreclosures, the downturn on the stock market. We hear about these troubles as we sit in our comfortable cocoon of student stress—after all, who has time to think about the economy when there's an English paper due in two periods and it's only half finished?—and we think that they can't harm us. We go to a public school, so paying tuition isn't really the average Mt. Greylock student's primary concern. We have excellent academic programs, and we don't believe that the economy can take away our teachers (they aren't exactly millionaires as it is). We just need to worry about passing that Physics test and everything else will sort itself out.

Unfortunately, our academic bliss is misguided, as many students searching for colleges know. Education is expensive, and in the event of economic trouble it is one of the first areas of American life to suffer, even when it is one of the most important tools for economic advancement. Low budgets are the root of many problems for students, from out-of-date textbooks to the lack of truly adequate heating in early spring, and, though those budgets are being supplemented by the bothersome Activity and Parking Fees, they still don't seem to stretch far enough. The truly frightening part, however, is that those budgets could shrink still more, leaving cash-strapped schools with even fewer resources than those few that are currently available to them.

When the economy hits a rough patch, the extra money in citizens' pockets naturally decreases, making it difficult to pay high prices for necessities. In order to make their money go farther, these citizens are led to ask their political representatives to cut taxes—the very taxes that are used to support the public education system. Tax cuts lead to school budget cuts, and with lower budgets, schools are forced to make diffi-

cult choices—should they pay the wages necessary to maintain high-quality teachers and continue using science textbooks from the mid-nineties, or should they drop a few teachers and pay for new Chemistry books instead? Neither option is very appealing to administrators or to students, but such are the choices that must be made in almost every public school when its budget's been cut.

Mt. Greylock is no exception to that rule, as its students know very well from their experiences with last winter's freezing classrooms and the lack of funds in the budget to repair the heating system adequately, and from rising oil prices making it almost impossible to refill the fuel tanks. The recent downturn in the economy could affect many schools, such as Mt. Greylock, negatively, and some students are worried. Ashlyn Moors, an eleventh grader, expressed her concern about economic troubles harming her education, stating that she hasn't "noticed a change [in her education's quality], but it is possible [that one could occur]."

One of the most crucial areas of education that the economy affects is that of college. Because of the current difficulty of lending to people without previously established good credit, many companies have ceased offering student loans. Many students are also finding themselves in the position of having to ask for increased financial aid, or to increase their federal loans, which leads to their having to graduate with thousands of dollars of debt. According to the New York Times, applications for federal student aid has risen 10 percent over the last year, and it is expected to rise as the year progresses. This is mainly because many lenders, having lost many profits as the mortgage market decreased, have decided that student loans, whether private or federally guaranteed, are just not

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Reproductive Health

Paige Bellanger investigates the new reproductive health classes at Mount Greylock as well as some of the national issues.
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Henry V.

Ned Kleiner previews the MG Shakespeare and Company Production of Henry V.
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The Book Worm

Our monthly book review has a new author, Isabel Kaufman. She reviews Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist.
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New Faces In The Greylock Community Part 2



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 5. In part 2 of our series, we hear from Lidsey von Holtz, Martin Walter, and Mary Wilson.
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A Cultural Comparison: Spain

After spending a year in Spain, senior Camille Robertson reflects on the differences and similarities in the cultures.
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Reproductive Health:

A hot-button national issue much closer to home than ever before

By PAIGE BELLANGER

The students at Mt. Greylock, particularly the juniors and seniors, are full of assumptions and perceptions, sometimes invalid, about the extent to which the Reproductive Education system is working. Whether upperclassmen are just more judgmental of their younger peers, or if their awareness is influenced by their higher age, or if the younger students are simply more promiscuous than ever are all very prominent questions within the confines of our school. The big debate is, quite simply, what exactly is causing the perceived problems of increasing sexual willingness and lack of self protection?

For Coach Miro, one of the health coordinators at Mt. Greylock, the problem could lie in the lack of maturity, both of the kids and, frequently, their parents. "My agenda is personal responsibility," he says. He threads this common theme through all the topics that a health class ought to encompass. While there is too little time to cover each topic in depth, he explains, the goal of the class is to provide students with a "good foundation" about the basic principles that they will encounter not only in high school, but throughout their adult lives.

To say that sex-ed at Mt. Greylock does not go into extreme detail is not to say that it doesn't cover a series of tough issues, not the least of which is the question, "how much is too much?" The age of the students filling the seats of the class dictates the extent of forthright information. However, it is stressed that students can learn whatever they want through the means of research via computer, bookstores and organizations. "It's not fair to assume that everybody needs the same information [in a classroom environment]," Coach Miro says. Health serves to provide basics to

some kids and specifics to others by letting kids know that more information is out there.

Despite all this effort and classroom time, there are still important factors of sexual education that are usually not provided within a school. "You need an adult with the best interest [of the student] at the root of everything," tells Miro. Most often, these adult figures can be found in the family. Parents "in denial" or simply lacking the time to converse with their children about important topics, such as sex, can often be the root of the apparent problem of young, sexually active kids. "Parents are such an important part of education," says Miro. It is this kind of support that cannot be conveyed in a classroom setting.

However, many important topics can be approached during class. This is why a health class at Mt. Greylock exists at all: to provide essentials to students. While "people have the option to opt out of this class," the knowledge gained can often outweigh the embarrassment. Technical facts such as the symptoms of a certain sexually-transmitted disease, or birth control and even the course of action when confronted with sexual assault are displayed. Support is most often found in the home, but tangible details can be most effectively offered in the classroom.

The important thing to remember is that the name of the class offered at Mt. Greylock is Health, not just Reproductive Health. In the little time that the course is provided with, a great range of equally imperative topics must be covered. Before teaching even begins, students are given a carefully organized, typed overview of the class. As well as "specific grade objectives," which narrate the goals of the class for both the

8th and 9th grade levels, there is a list of six general objectives.

1. To develop an awareness of the role of health in the lives of the individual, family and society.
2. To foster the development of self-awareness and self-esteem.
3. To allow students to explore, define and clarify values.
4. To provide students with the understanding and skills required to set goals, make informed decisions and solve health problems.
5. To enable students to develop coping skills and strategies to deal effectively with change.
6. To encourage students to take increasing responsibility for their health and consequences of their health-related decisions.

While each of these objectives can be applied to the context of sexual-education, they can also cover a plethora of vital subjects. However, this list is in no way set in stone. Coach Miro says that he will "always take suggestions, but people have to be more specific." According to him, the executives of Mt. Greylock have proposed that more sex-ed is needed. In fact, they have "spoke[n] to [the health department] a number of times." Yet each time they have failed to provide specifics, only recommending that there be more Reproductive Health.

While the discernments and suppositions of the student body—however critical—may be accurate, they could also be total misconstructions. In any case, the health department has been working for years to create a developed curriculum that will serve the goal as providing a solid basis for students. Both parents and educators must be held liable for the alleged problems within Mt. Greylock, and it is certain that the Health class is making an effort to hold up their side of the bargain.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Mock Election Encourages Political Awareness

On November 3, the day before the national presidential election, the Student Council will, in conjunction with history teacher Tom Ostheimer, conduct a mock election at Mount Greylock to encourage political awareness amongst students. The election will occur throughout the day in the library. In preparation for the election, James McAllister, an associate political science professor at Williams will conduct a forum for all high-schoolers on the election on Tuesday, October 28.

Epidemic of Poetic Passion Strikes Greylock

Taylor Mali, the renowned performance poet, stormed the Greylock auditorium last week for a rousing performance of both poignant and hysterical poems. Mali, invited under the auspices of the "Words Are Wonderful" program, also conducted a workshop with several student poets. The seminar focused on developing poems inspired by everyday experiences. Mali also performed at Williams College on Friday night to the delight of high-school students, college students, and numerous community members. Mount Greylock's native son, JoePro, alias Harris MacDonald, introduced Mali's performance at Greylock.



Famous Composer Visits Greylock

On Thursday, October 16, renowned composer Alice Parker visited the Mount Greylock High School Chorus, which, in conjunction with the band and orchestra, performed its annual autumnal "Get Acquainted" concert this Wednesday. The concert featured two choral compositions by Parker, who is a Smith College and Julliard School graduate. During her workshop with the chorus last Thursday, Parker engaged students in a vivacious rehearsal of her two pieces, "Johnny, I Hardly Knew Ye," an arrangement of the classic Irish folksong, and "I Want Two Wings," an American spiritual. Students also learned some improvisational technique in experimentation with several rounds.

Java Jive Returns A Success

Last Friday, October 17th, student performers showcased their talents at a rejuvenated Java Jive, originally a teen coffeehouse scene, which, after a two-year hiatus, has developed into a talent show encompassing poetry and music. Rock bands, rappers, poets and even a Blues mandolinist performed on Friday evening at the First Congregational Church in Williamstown. A strong turnout from students made the event a smashing success. Java Jive was been revived this year by Mount Greylock parent Moira Jones and will continue on a monthly basis throughout the school year.



Harris MacDonald performs at Java Jive.

JCL: Classics Day, November 15th

The study of the classics continues to thrive at Mount Greylock with the school hosting its tenth consecutive annual Massachusetts Classics Day on Saturday, November 15, in association with the Junior Classical League. The event will serve as the kick-off for a school year chock-full of numerous and varied J.C.L. events. The even will feature Mass. J.C.L. catapult (a sure spectacle) and certamen (Latin jeopardy) contests. Tours of the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown will also be offered.

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profitable enough. Others, such as the large company Sallie Mae, have, according to the New York Times, "tightened their credit standards and raised their interest rates yet again in recent weeks. "The current financial markets provide no other choice," Sallie Mae wrote to colleges last week. "When conditions improve, we hope to relax our underwriting criteria and serve more students." Unfortunately, until companies such as Sallie Mae decide that the time has come to relax their criteria, students will be left with far fewer loan options than they would have had even a year ago.

All of this is not to say that financing an education will be impossible for most of today's seniors and those that come after them. Many colleges offer large amounts of financial aid, and they are adjusting to the fluctuations in the economy. In an interview with the New York Times, Jon Riester, the associate dean of financial assistance at Hanover College, was quoted as saying "We're looking internally at our own budgets to see what we may be able to do in terms of providing additional assistance to students under various situations." Colleges do intend to do as much as possible to help their students pay for their educations, and they understand the difficulties being faced by students and applicants.

Even at the High School level, there is worry about what this economic trouble could mean to students. Arts and athletics are usually among the first programs to be cut when schools experience budget tightening, and Greylock's students certainly are

worried about the safety of their favorite activities. Brianna Jones, a Mt. Greylock eighth grader, worries about the amount of funding that Greylock receives decreasing, and states "I worry about the orchestra program, because I know it almost got cut before, and I really love it." Cassandra Sherman, a tenth grader, also worries about extracurricular activities being affected by budget cuts "there's been a cutback on how many volleyball teams can play this year... and I worry about it [the economy] affecting sports."

How do students intend to deal with the troubles of the economy, then? "I buy Staples brand products," says Moors, and Krista Mangiardi, another junior, notes that "I have to work a lot more, which takes away from time I could be doing more important things." Mangiardi also finds that she, like many other students, finds herself cutting back on some of the activities in which she participates because of the economy "It's frustrating," she says, "because there's nothing you can do about it."

The economy is suffering at the moment, and that could very well have a negative effect on education, but it will not be impossible to overcome these effects. As long as authority figures find themselves making sensible decisions relating to school budgets, and as long as we all remember that the current state of the economy is not a full-blown Depression, it will be possible to use money responsibly (no matter how difficult it may seem to do so) and to get the most out of our educations and contribute positively to the economy.

To Boston For Politics

By PATRICK MADDEN

Miraculously failing to crash their vehicles in the early morning gloom, about thirty of Mr. Murray's history students from various grades drove to Mt. Greylock at 6:30 AM on October 10th and hopped on a coach bus bound for Boston. They hoped to wake up in time for an intellectually stimulating political program. The J.F.K. Presidential Library and Museum High School Debate Program 2008 had three major goals (paraphrased here for the sake of brevity):

1. To captivate your interest in the current presidential campaign
2. To provide you with an opportunity to interact with peers from around the state and learn about their political views
3. To provide a forum for you to ask questions of and hear from Democratic and Republican representatives to better your understanding of the differences between parties.

Mt. Greylock (the token rural high school at the program) was slightly late in arriving, but after a bout of frenzied name tag collecting, seat shuffling, and pastry stuffing, everyone found a seat. After a brief introduction and welcome by Library employee Nina Tisch, the day's program was split up into two parts. During the first part, all the students were divided (not according to school) into small groups of about ten or twelve, each with an adult advisor. Students went to various meeting rooms throughout the library and proceeded to discuss any and all of the issues regarding the 2008 election. While most were shy at first, the discussions grew more animated as the morning went on (even developing into heated debates at times). Each student had gotten a "prep packet" listing various issues and the two 2008 candidates' views about them. Discussions ranged from the war in Iraq to the proposed southern US border fence to the bailout plan to school vouchers. Most students both gained a fair bit of political information and/or were able to express and uphold pre-existing opinions (or change them throughout the course of the morning).

The second half of the program consisted of a debate between Democrat John Walsh and Republican Avi Nelson. Mr Walsh is the

chairman of the Massachusetts Democratic party while Avi Nelson is a former radio talk show host, columnist, and political analyst. The debate was exciting, engaging, and quite intense at times. Questions came straight from the students, having just discussed many of the major party issues in smaller groups.

While there was the occasional prank question (much to the annoyance of moderator Nina Tisch) such as, "How important is a good breakfast for politicians?", most questions were earnest and well-thought-through (if sometimes pointedly biased towards Obama. This is, after all, Massachusetts). The debaters disagreed on most everything, opening with statements explaining basic philosophical differences between the parties and the current candidates. They clashed over the importance of character over the importance of issues with respect to the candidates, the best way to handle the economic crisis, the validity of school vouchers, the candidates' experience, the candidates' healthcare and tax plans, and more. Both debaters were very articulate and engaged, although Mr. Walsh had a more exuberant, energetic air while Mr. Nelson had a more cool and collected approach. Mr. Walsh even upped his closing statement a few more decibels than one normally hears at a formal political debate. All in all, the debate gave an accurate and intriguing view of both the parties and the 2008 presidential candidates. On the way out, students were given surveys regarding the day's activities as well as information about the J.F.K. Profile in Courage Essay Contest (which can be found at www.jfklibrary.org).

As interesting as the morning's program was, the day just would not have been the same without a little wandering around Boston for shopping, eating, and sight-seeing. Students were allowed to travel off in groups to eat at Faneuil Hall, watch acrobatic street performers, spend hundreds of dollars on clothes and other paraphernalia, or sit by the waterfront. Everyone did manage to get back on the bus in time for the return journey, hopefully having learned a bit about American politics and parties and having spent some quality time exploring Beantown.

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theater, students may become a part of the school community in several other ways. Eleven students make up the dance team that performs in an entertaining way to raise school spirit. Many students took part last year in the Gay-Straight alliance organized day of silence, which is just one example of students practicing their leadership skills to make a difference. Your elected student council represents the student body to try to create change and class officers give everyone memorable high school experiences. The largest club at Mt. Greylock is JCL. Typically made up of 60-80 students, our JCL club hosts the state kick-off event, travels to Boston for Classics Day, and represents Mt. Greylock in State Convention, in which it placed in second last year. Other equally effective groups include SMILE and the Echo staff. Furthermore, students now have the opportunity to be active throughout the school day through peer team. There are numerous opportunities for students of all different interests to get involved.

People are not just involved within the school, however. Some get involved at animal shelters, taking care of injuries. Others help out in their churches, alter serving or read-

ing. Clubs like 4-H, girl scouts, and boy scouts provide learning and service opportunities. Senior Moira Wentworth says of volunteering: "It really helps you to be aware of your community." Students record their hours of varying commu-

It is impossible to ignore the immense amount of students who donate generous amounts of time to activities. Students are learning life skills beneficial to their futures while contributing to the community.

nity service completed all year long. Some even create their own ways to get involved. Several students have organized their own musical ensembles or fundraisers. Current examples include The Shoes, who recently held a concert rallying for Barack Obama, and students last winter who took part in the Shakespeare fundraiser Food of Love. Many students also take lessons in different

areas like music or dance to make the most of their talents and potential or take advantage of opportunities the Williams Center provides.

It is impossible to ignore the immense amount of students who donate generous amounts of time to activities. Students are learning life skills beneficial to their futures while contributing to the community. It has been argued that the recent rise in extracurricular involvement is due to the college admissions process. Students may be joining a number of groups to fill the extracurricular activity box on their applications without being truly dedicated to the cause or goal their group pursues. While it may be one reason, it isn't the only one. There are many students in this school who are truly passionate about what they do, which hopefully shows through at the games, plays, and student organized activities.

It is easy to get involved here and everyone is welcome. The recent activity fair was created to help foster awareness about what is going on in our school. It clear that student activism is big at Mt. Greylock, that everyone is busy, and on their way to discovering the unique skills and talents that they can share.

The Book Worm

By ISABEL KAUFMAN



Title: Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist
By: Rachel Cohn (Author), David Levithan (Author)
Price: \$16.95

It's a troubled genre; young adult fiction is, as is the fate of writing with a specific reading age in mind. Too often, the result of this is patronizing; too frequently are the same old "teen" clichés recycled again and again to create a handful

of stock plots and characters. The thinly written popular fare would be enough to turn anyone away from the section. And yet, in ignoring Y.A., you ignore this book, and in that, you're missing something amazing.

Nick & Norah's Infinite Playlist is the best Y.A. book you've never read. It doesn't talk down to its readers; it doesn't speak loudly because it doesn't need to. It reads as effortless. If there is a message, it's only the most basic one imaginable: that of life, of living in the moment, of running through city streets when it's so late that it's become early, and that rush of adrenaline that comes with all of this. It's a love story, but not a love story. It's simply two teenagers, one night, one city maze, and the music that naturally underscores every moment.

Nick, the straight bassist in a gay band, has just been chewed up and spit out by his recent relationship; Norah is smart and sarcastic and confused about what she wants (from life, from love, from the future at large). They share taste in music and common friends. They share a love of New York City. And, in inexplicable circumstances, they share a kiss. If it sounds like a romance, it is, but that's neither where the story starts nor where it ends. They spend the night fighting and connecting and searching for bands. The novel coasts on insomnia and impulses. It's funny and sometimes vulgar and it rings true. Perhaps best of all, it captures the city exactly as it should be: romantic and gritty and unexpectedly bright.

That's not to say it's a perfect book: it isn't. The two authors each write different chapters (Levithan takes on Nick while Cohn writes Norah, giving credibility to both the novel's freewheeling plot and the natural gender gap between the characters), and at times it shows. Levithan's writing is better than Cohn's. Hers is witty and smart enough, but his shines. The most glorious moments of the novel are in Nick's chapters, whether they be dancing in the rain or furiously writing songs on Ludlow Street. The plot careens through the city, and it is occasionally clear when one author tries to wrest control over the other. As a book made up of spontaneous starts and ends, it is not surprising that some seem incongruous. The characters' voices remain true, though, and the characters themselves well developed—not just Nick and Norah, but the supporting characters too.

There's a decent movie adaptation out now—though the book is better—and perhaps as a result a greater number of people will pick this little book up. They won't be disappointed. Maybe they won't even expect much, and that's when they're most likely to be stunned. They will like it, and some of them, if not all, will love it.

It's not a masterwork of literature. It's just right.

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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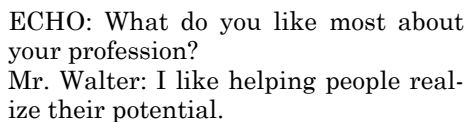
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The Echo Editorial Staff invites you, the MGRHS community (teachers, parents, administrators, and students alike), to let us know what you're thinking! If you have comments about the Echo, Mount Greylock, or life in general, let us know! Please submit any letters to us at mountgreylockecho@gmail.com or give them to Mr. Niemeyer. Be aware that the editorial staff may make decisions 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.

Thanks for your submissions, The Echo Editorial Staff.

By MARTA KOWITZ AND MELODY EDWARDS

Now teaching 7th and 8th grade Math as well as 8th grade Academic support, Martin Walter hails from Questar III in New York where he taught alternative education. However, Mr. Walter is a Massachusetts native, having grown up in Marshfield, MA.



ECHO: Do you have any children of your own? If so, how has that affected how you approach your job?

Mr. Walter: Yes, having kids of my own helps me to remember that every student is unique

ECHO: If you weren't in special education, what would your dream job be?

Mr. Walter: Professional hockey player.

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

Mr. Walter: If they can grasp the spirit of the Chinese proverb: "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step," and apply it to their own lives that would be a good thing.

A New England native and huge sports aficionado, our new Athletic Director Lindsey von Holtz has lots of coaching experience in everything from swim to lacrosse. She has also taught math at Keene High School in New Hampshire. She is clearly well-suited for both of her positions at Mount Greylock.

ECHO: What sports did you/do you play?

Ms. von Holtz: I have played soccer and lacrosse in high school as well as running track. I also participated on a club swim team. I did soccer, swim, and lacrosse in college and since then have played on the national tournament lacrosse team and the USA World Cup Training Team. I currently play on a adult soccer team and compete in triathlons for fun.

ECHO: How would you describe yourself in one word?

Ms. von Holtz: Two very different words but: Determined or Feisty

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

Ms. von Holtz: Beginning this job as an athletic director is the first stage in one of my goals. If they ever bring lacrosse back into the Olympics, I will have another goal.

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

Ms. von Holtz: I believe every student should learn how to easily communicate with peers, adults, and groups of people. I would be very happy to learn that my students are able to show themselves and others more respect after being in my class. The most important thing I think any student (or athlete) should learn is confidence.

ECHO: Do you see the glass half full or half empty?

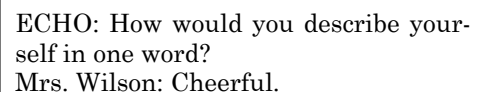
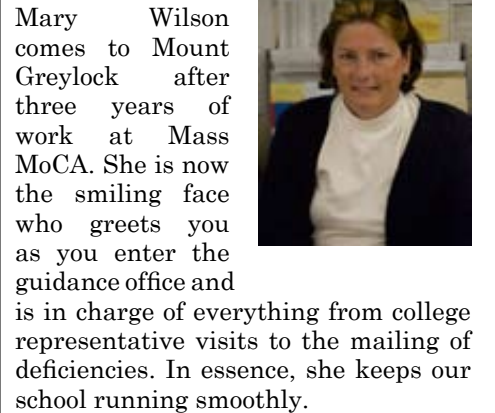
Ms. von Holtz: I used to be very pessimistic, but have been trying to subscribe to the half full club recently. I have been very positive and energetic lately.

ECHO: Are you an avid supporter of any particular professional sports teams?

Ms. von Holtz: I have been a Buffalo Bills fan since middle school, but I honestly don't even know anyone on the team now, so I would have to say no.

ECHO: How would you describe yourself in one word?

Ms. von Holtz: Two very different words but: Determined or Feisty



ECHO: What do you enjoy most about MG?

Mrs. Wilson: I enjoy the students and their humor.

ECHO: Do you see the glass half full or half empty?

Mrs. Wilson: Half full. Optimists generally believe that people and events are inherently good, so that most situations work out in the end for the best. I really believe this.

ECHO: Do you have any life long goals that you are working towards now?
Mrs. Wilson: Retirement – on the ocean in Maine or I'll even settle for a home on a lake. Another goal would be to continue my love of watercolor painting and drawing.

We have the heavy gold chains.

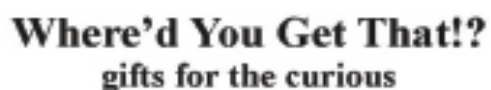
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SHAKESPEARE AND CO. RESIDENCY THRIVES AT MG

By NED KLEINER

William Shakespeare is, in all likelihood, the most famous playwright of all time, a prolific author of the some most timeless plays of humanity. This November at Mount Greylock, students will perform a rendition of one of the Bard's histories, Henry the Fifth. For the seventh year in a row, Jonathan Croy, a professional actor with Shakespeare and Company who has appeared in many plays with the company, such as *The Tempest*, *Othello*, and *Henry V*, and is universally beloved by Greylock's thespians, will direct them. His co-director is Josh McCabe, also a professional actor with Shakespeare and Company. The show will be performed through the Fall Festival of Shakespeare, part of Shakespeare and Company's education program. Nine other schools throughout Massachusetts and in upstate New York also perform in the festival, which is in its twentieth year.

This year the performances will be held in the Greylock Auditorium at 7:00 pm November 13th and 14th and on the 14th at 9:00 am for the middle school. The performances will, as always, be preceded by tech week, a week of rehearsals until 9:00 pm during which the cast a crew will iron out the wrinkles in the play. One week after all of the students involved in the festival have performed at their local schools, they converge upon Founders' Theater at Shakespeare and Company in Lenox to perform in a marathon of Shakespeare's plays which is open to the public. The performers, in fact, receive passes to view all ten shows for free. Those more involved, enthusiastic thespians, however, have already picked up bits and pieces of the different performances through a unique event known as the "common class." Throughout the fall, common classes are held on weeknights at various schools participating in the Festival. At a common class, students from all of the schools in the festival come together and engage in numerous activities relating to different aspects of theater, such as stage combat, movement or performance. Also included in the series is a class on technical theater, at which, in the words of Ashlyn Moors, a junior, students are able "to see the inner workings of [technical theatre], like the costume crew or the set crew."

One of the most unique aspects of the Shakespeare program at Mount Greylock is that it includes the middle school. The directors even ensure that all who audition will be involved in the play in some capacity though Shakespeare and Company, due to a limited number of costumes, limits the number actors in costume to thirty. One tool for evasion of this limit is the "Shakespeare Group," a collection of students who engage in a series of short acting seminars, serve as managers during rehearsals, and perform in the curtain speech. The curtain speech is an introduction to the performance that encompasses some basic plot synopsis and an entertaining series of an-

nouncements regarding the show. In previous years it has included rapping, staged fistfights, miming, and a range of other intriguing activities. Charlie Sutter, a freshman in his second year in festival, asserts that one of the best things about the show is this "way that Jon gives everyone a part, with the curtain speech [for instance], so that no one is left out."

This season's play is one in a series about the English kings, consisting of Henry IV, Henry V, Henry VI, Richard III, and others (often collectively referenced as "The War of the Roses"). In many ways, Henry V is a set of juxtapositions. Some pundits consider the play to be a jingoistic celebration of conquest—in this case, Henry's invasion of France—but others consider it to be anti-war. The play is about the deaths of thousands on the field at Agincourt, but includes a troop of clowns. Its title character spent his youth partying, thieving, and hanging out with, in the words of Shakespeare, "that villainous abominable misleader of youth... John Falstaff," but now leads his army into war as a sober, valiant warrior. Additionally, Henry V is not one of Shakespeare's most-performed plays, not subject to the microscopic criticism of the more renowned titans like Hamlet, and should be an enriching experience for those unfamiliar with it. Those great Shakespeare aficionados might notice that the ninety-minute performance at Mt. Greylock will not be quite the same play as the hours-long show at the Globe. Considering the short attention span of the typical high-school audience, the directors consolidate the play into a condensed version that emphasizes the basic themes of the play without eliminating any of the well-renowned scenes. The au-



Photo: Sarah Crosky

Director Josh McCabe instructs Patrick Madden, Ashlyn Moors, and Sherdyl Fernandez during rehearsal for Mount Greylock's production of Henry V.

dience may take solace, however, in the fact that the battles of Agincourt and Harfleur will be performed in full broadsword-wielding glory.

Another unique feature of the Fall Festival theatrical experience is the amount of rehearsal necessary. Professional actors might spend three weeks rehearsing, before doing twelve weeks of performances; by contrast, Greylock's actors will rehearse for about six weeks in preparation for their four performances. Rehearsals, however, prove quite intensive and often highly abstract. The direction is more adequately described as advising and is often question-based. Consequently, the final performances are primarily a function of the ideas of students, who engineer every aspect of the play from performance to set design. Patrick Madden, a junior in his fourth year as a Festival participant, loves rehearsal because he "can let loose, be embraced in a solid support system, and have a ton of fun." During rehearsals, the actors play theatrical games, build sets, rehearse fights and perform text, enjoying every minute of the six weeks.

Cultural Comparison: Education v. Educación

By CAMILLE ROBERTSON

What does education mean? Is it getting on the bus every morning and making the most fun out of six hours of rules and teachers until the safety of home is again reached? Is it doing enough homework and studying to get into college? Is it a search for enlightenment? Webster defines it as "the process of receiving or giving systematic instruction." Interesting. Enduring the daily grind is always a more pressing issue than analyzing it, which makes the method behind the madness at times an abstract.

Until some jolt puts it into perspective again. For me, it happened in Spain. I spent my junior year studying in Zaragoza—the fifth biggest city in the country, though relatively unknown due to its origins as an industrial military city—with the School Year Abroad program. I attended classes with sixty-one other American juniors and seniors and therefore was not subject to the bewilderment and lost credits of a year in a Spanish public school. However, I did get a local perspective from a variety of experiences in different schools and conversations with my Spanish friends, but most importantly from my weekly volunteer position in a nearby English classroom.

Every Tuesday after Mediterranean Art History class, I left my school and walked ten minutes to Colegio Montessori and up to the third floor junior hall. I would arrive to the general con-fusion of passing time. However, this confusion did not take the familiar form of hundreds of students bending over lockers and brushing past each other in an attempt to make it from Mr. Murray's U.S. History class to chorus in the four minutes allotted by the bell system, but rather a group of thirty or so kids my own age talking, shouting, rough housing, and throwing makeshift balls outside their classroom, not a book in sight. The teacher would show up ten, maybe fifteen minutes later, and the students would begin to wander back into the same room they had been in all morning.

The only time I saw the class remain attentive for the entire fifty minutes I was there was the first day, when the excitement and novelty of la americana merited respectful cooperation. My goal was not to show my nervousness, but I can only imagine it was as apparent during those first few minutes as their initial self-conscious shyness was to me. Mamen—students call their teachers by their first names in Spanish schools—had the class rearrange the rows of tables into a big circle, asked me to introduce myself, and opened the class up to questions and discussion. No one said anything until one boy haltingly offered,

"What should we make questions about?"

Mamen, a Spaniard with excellent, though not perfect, British English, replied that they surely must have some curiosities about America. And once they

warmed up, they certainly did.

The questions mainly focused on social matters, the kids trying to figure out 1) if we do normal teenage things just like them and 2) if life in the USA is really like it is in the movies and the news. The answer to the first question was a pretty straightforward yes, though the concept of a house party to these apartmented, city-savvy, late-night merry-makers didn't make much sense and they couldn't see why anyone older than thirteen would get caught dead at a movie theater. Question two was much harder. Yes, I do go to school every morning on a bright yellow school bus (though it's really not that exciting), but the bridge that collapsed in Minnesota? Is it possible you know more about my country's current events than I do?

"Is there a problem with everybody bring guns to school?" How do I answer that?

"No... no one comes into my school with guns but well, yes, I suppose it is a problem in other places. I know there have been shootings and in some schools ev-

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SPORTS

Boys Soccer Romps Into Western Mass. Tourney

By THAN FINAN



Photo provided by Than Finan

The MG Boys Varsity Soccer team celebrates after scoring a goal in the Hall of Fame Tournament. The Mounties returned home with the Championship Plaque.

After losing eleven seniors to graduation at the end of the 2007 season, seven of whom were starters, everyone expected this to be a rebuilding year for the Mount Greylock Boys Soccer team. The season has been anything but that so far as the Mounties have posted an 12-1-1 record thus far and are currently tied with Lenox for first place in all of Berkshire County.

The young squad started their season by traveling to Oneonta, NY for the Hall of Fame tournament. The 2007 Mounties, the self proclaimed “dream team,” attended the same tournament and ended the weekend with one win and one loss. Although this worried the Mounties a little, it had no effect on their play and they returned home with two wins and a championship plaque. Junior Stephan Danyluk lead the team with three goals while fellow junior Taylor Foehl and Senior Captain Alvand Hajizadeh each contributed a goal of their own.

Danyluk kept up the momentum he gained in the tournament scoring goals four goals in the next four games including the only goal of the match for either side against division one power house Amherst High School, Greylock’s toughest opponent.

After their upset over Amherst, Undefeated Greylock returned home to play Berkshire County power house Lenox High School. Although the Mounties defeated and tied the Millionaires last season, it is always a tough match up. Come game day, Lenox brought their A game scoring early in the match and then again to break a 1-1 tie in the second half.

Although the Mounties mourned the loss, it took the pressure of being undefeated off their shoulders and sparked some fire in the squad who came back with a vengeance, annihilating rival Drury 8-0. The sound victory over Drury sparked a five game winning-streak in which the Mounties outscored their opponents 24-0. Playing their best soccer of the year, no one could slow the Mounties down, and yet the Mounties seemed to be able to stop everyone.

The starting defense, consisting of juniors Chris Mahar, Sam Tiff, Nate Nurmi and senior captain Nico Walker, was playing as well as any Mountie defense had in years. With senior captain and goalkeeper Than Finan behind them and junior Nick DelNegro coming in seamlessly off the bench, the Greylock defense recorded an unprecedented six straight shutouts, four of which came against strong North

Division teams.

The Mounties had also fallen into mid-season form on the offensive end of the pitch as well. Central midfielders Foehl and Hajizadeh continued to control the field the way the had all season while wingers Jordan Tuboly and Nick Krant (juniors), Sam Dematteo (sophomore), and Tommy Dils and Luke Costley, (freshmen), became more and more comfortable serving balls in from the flanks for the forwards to finish into the net.

During the five game run, junior forward Tyler Grees recorded three hat tricks on his way to becoming the teams leading scorer. Also during the stretch, juniors Hayden Kuhn, Roman Kleiser, Nick

After losing eleven seniors to graduation at the end of the 2007 season, seven of whom were starters, everyone expected this to be a rebuilding year for the Mount Greylock Boys Soccer team. The season has been anything but that so far.

Krant, as well as freshmen Luke Costley and Jesse Foehl each recorded the first goal of his varsity career.

The five game streak of Mountie dominance led the team right into the biggest game of the year: a rematch with the Lenox Millionaires. Lenox’s having lost to Monument Mountain earlier in the season and Greylock’s having lost to Lenox meant that the winner of the rematch would be the out right leader in Berkshire County and the potential Berkshire County champions, a title the Mt. Greylock Boys Soccer Team had not earned in seven years. Although playing under the lights in front of the home Lenox crowd, Mt. Greylock brought the momentum of five consecutive definitive victories into the match.

As Coach Blair Dils said “It was a tournament game come early.” It was nothing short of a battle. For eighty minutes the two Berkshire County forces locked horns. At the end of the night both teams had refused to back down and the game ended in a 0-0 draw, a score very appropriate of the match that had

just taken place. The Greylock defense played one of its best games of the year, recording its sixth straight shutout. It seemed as though every time a Mountie defender stepped away from his position there was someone there to cover for him. This led to limited chances for the Millionaires and left the Lenox forwards bitter and frustrated.

While Lenox controlled play in the middle of the field, the Mounties played classic Mountie soccer, working the ball to the flanks where the wingers dominated play and served balls into the box all night, scaring the Lenox faithful with every cross being the potential winning goal. In the first half Lenox broke through the defense and the beat the goalie, only for the goal to be called back for a late offside call. Greylock got even in the second half when a header by

Alvand Hajizadeh that landed in back of the net was called off because of a push prior to the goal. Appropriately enough, the two evenly matched teams left the field tied for the lead in the county. Greylock plays Wahconah, Pittsfield, and Lee to close out its county schedule while Lenox will face Hoosac Valley, Pittsfield, and St. Joe. If both teams win their remaining games they will end the regular season as Berkshire County co-champions.

After their tie to Lenox, Greylock got back into the win column with a 3-1 victory over the division one Mount Anthony Patriots. This was the last game of the season for the Patriots and they game the Mounties a much harder challenge than expected. With the game a 1-1 tie at the start of the second half, the Greylock squad came out hard and about fifteen minutes into the half Junior Taylor Foehl sent a bouncing ball into the upper corner from outside the eighteen yard box to take the lead. Defender Nick DelNegro iced the victory with six minutes left in the game. Dribbling down the right side line, he sent a ball into the box from about forty yards out. It didn’t matter that there were no Greylock forwards there to receive the cross, as it sailed over the goalie and fell just inside the back post for DelNegro’s first ever varsity goal.

Greylock’s last home regular season game is against Pittsfield High School on Tuesday, October 28th. They also hope to have a home play off game in early November. At the level the Mounties are playing now, it would be no surprise if they made a run deep into the Western Mass. tournament.

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everyone has to go through metal detectors and security to enter.” Why don’t I remember specific facts about all those famous shootings?

And on and on. The confirmations of our crazy schedule (wake up at 6:00?! eat lunch at 12:00?!?), my familiarity with new movies and pop songs, and the fact that I really have gone to New York City were all incredible. I don’t think I have ever taken a more comprehensive test. It was fascinating. All of a sudden the old familiarities were turned on their heads and looked as odd to me as the five-year-old children out on the streets past eleven on Saturday nights had seemed to me at first. The full weight of what the representation of an entire country by one per-son

feels like hit me in one strong blow.

But having verified that the people on our two distinct countries are, at the base of things, still just people, what accounts for the differences in culture? From what I have observed, Span-ish students tend to not pay huge amounts of attention in class, do a cursory job on assignments, then cancel all plans—athletic, social, familiar—the day or even weekend before a test to study, and then celebrate a barely passing grade, a five on their one to ten scale for example. I can only assume that were these students to have gone through the American system their entire school career, the majority of the class would not be content to accept C’s on all tests. So why the different

results if we assume the people are no less intelligent or capable?

The system. If class grades were based only on infrequent examinations, would general attendance, participation, and homework completion slip? If college admission were conducted solely on the results of one multi-faceted test, would we freak out about it? If unchangeable sub-ject-specialization were initiated in eleventh grade and college only a career prerequisite would we too consider a liberal arts education a waste of time and money? Based on what I have ob-served in the Spanish educational system, I would argue yes.

Why is the Spanish system the way it currently is? That is the real question. The answer doesn’t just lie

in teachers’ teaching styles, or the parents’ expectations, or even the administrations’ policies. To come up with a thorough answer, you would have to conduct a large-scale his-torical-sociological-anthropological-economical-political studies of the Spanish culture; you would have to understand how and why the country arrived at the values it holds today at hand. And there is no doubt in my mind that the answer will be fascinating. And though it would cer-tainly be easier just to do a cause-and-effect analysis of testing systems and disciplinary policies, the answer to the big question would without a doubt be a better explanation of why Spanish stu-dents perform the way they do and far more interesting.