

HOW DOES GREYLOCK COMPARE?



By PAIGE BELANGER

Have you ever wondered how Mt. Greylock compares with other nearby high schools in categories like attendance, afterschool activities, or class size? The Echo investigates a few of these categories.

Students at Mt. Greylock are naturally absorbed within their own school, be it through school pride, extracurricular activities, or the ever-present quest for good grades. This concentration is reasonable and understandable. At Mt. Greylock, we take pride in strong academics, winning sports teams, and a plethora of after-school activities to partake in. However, our own self-esteem can sometimes get in the way of our perceptions of other schools. A number of students at our school in Williamstown spew stereotypes about the student body of other schools, ones that I need not write down in this article, for we all know them. While most Mt. Greylock scholars are aware of these characterizations, few know concrete facts about the other schools in Berkshire County in regard to enrollment size, the success of their sports teams, extracurriculars offered and actual dropout rates. For instance, who knew that Lenox Memorial High only has 61 students in this year's graduating class? The follow-

ing is a bit of statistical information about the major public high schools near us. Statistics do not necessarily provide any kind of accurate picture of a school as a whole, and some statistics are slightly misleading (for instance graduation percentages are based on the number of high school freshmen who end up graduating, regardless of who moves away or switches schools). But at the same time, it is good for students here at Greylock to have a broad understanding of some of the other schools in the area as well as the ups or downs of attending a school like Mr. Greylock.

The school in Berkshire County with the largest enrollment is Pittsfield High. Within the school's borders are 1,006 students, and the senior class alone has 220 teenagers. Due to this large student body, a variety of courses are offered, some that diverge greatly from Mt. Greylock's own course catalog. For example, PHS has an Italian department, offers AP Government and Politics, and has electives such as Afri-

can-American Studies and Intro to Ceramics. On the average day, 93.1% of the student body is in attendance, and therefore able to participate in these classes. 14.4% of students each year are suspended, which greatly exceeds the state average of 5.8%. Out of all the students initially enrolled as ninth graders, 67% will graduate this year. From this number, approximately two-thirds, it is projected that 27% will attend a 4-year private college, 12% will enroll in a 4-year public college and 37% will attend a 2-year public college. From Pittsfield High, 11% of students will go to work directly after graduating, and 1% will join the military. According to MCAS scores, PHS fares well below the state average: far fewer students in 2008 scored in the Advanced and Proficient categories of the MCAS than on a statewide level, and many more landed in the Needs Improvement and Warning columns. Although standardized tests are not

School Stats, Continued on Page 5

1 in 650: An Interview with JoePro

In a new segment, each month the Echo will interview an individual student who stirs the water with a particular passion or artistic endeavor.



By NATE NURMI

Harris MacDonald, aka "JoePro," just might be the most notorious musician in our school. He started his rapping career small but has grown in prominence throughout the local scene, recording albums, posting videos on YouTube, and appearing in a few live performances.

Not only can he rap, but he is known for the creativity he brings to his beats and lyrics. His messages and beats are quite unique in this era of hip-hop, as he urges listeners to steer away from materialism and his accompaniment is often comprised of just acoustic piano. JoePro goes against the grain of today's mainstream rap music, which is often composed of "poppy" beats and artists tending to preach about the amount of money, clothes, women and jewelry success has brought them. Lyrics like, "Isn't it strange, how people listen and pay - PAY to listen to a bunch of living cliches?" show his emotions toward the values such music embraces. While artists like Richboy talk about throwing D's on their Cadillacs and Soulja Boy makes the world wonder what "cranking that robo-cop" actually is, JoePro always strives to put passion and meaning into his lyrics. His music is both creative and meaningful, which many view as a breath of fresh air from today's popular music, which more and more people feel is pointless and unstimulating. Here are a few words from JoePro himself:

Q: At what age did music become your passion?

A: Probably about 14

JoePro, Continued on Page 4

Language Barriers

Patrick Madden discusses his opinions about our student body's cavalier use of words like "gay" and "retarded" as derogatory terms and how their use affects our school community.

See page 3.

THE BOOK WORM

Isabel Kaufman reviews *My Mistress's Sparrow is Dead*, by Jeffery Eugenides.

See Page 3.

Cartoon

Rufus Paisley presents another take on sleeping in class.

See Page 4.

Obama's First Month

Camille Robertson reports on President Obama's transition to the white house and the initiatives he has taken in his first month in office, including his controversial recovery stimulus package.

See page 2.

Singin' in the Rain comes to the Greylock Stage

Krista Mangiardi reports on the timeless and lively classic about the transition from silent films to "talking pictures" or movies. Olivia Tousignant-Pienkos, Patrick Madden, Ryan Ericson, and Gwen Tunnicliffe star as Kathy, Don, Cosmo, and Lina respectively. The show opened on Thursday, March 5th and will continue tonight and Saturday at 7:00.

See page 4

Crossword

See page 5

NEWS IN BRIEF

Compost is Coming!

Due to the efforts of the Youth Environmental Squad, the Mt. Greylock cafeteria is officially scheduled to start composting. Thanks to an alliance with the Williams Center, Mt. Greylock has arranged to have Williams College's contractor pick up our cafeteria food waste twice a week. The first run will be Tuesday, March 3rd to gather quantitative information for the contractor and test out the process. Students should expect to see a table with blue bins to one side for compost (all food waste, including meat products) and gray bins on the other side for trash. The compost will be taken to either Caretaker Farm or Cricket Creek Farm, where the compost will be fed to the pigs. As the Y.E.S. likes to say, "one man's lunch is another pig's dinner."

8th Grade Bike Workshop

By NAOMI LACHANCE

Especially for the non-driving portion of Greylock, a bicycle is a convenient item to know thoroughly. In January, nine eighth graders participated in a bicycle repair workshop. The class was taught by Paul Rinehart, owner of The Spoke in Williamstown, and took place during the students' gym period. "It was pretty comprehensive," said Rinehart. Students learned bike history, how the vehicle works, and how to maintain and repair a bicycle. Each student even reassembled one. The course, taught from January 5 to 26, "was organized as a way to add some experiential learning into the curriculum," said Paula Consolini, coordinator of experiential education at Williams College. About seven Williams students attended the course as well. Rinehart considers the class a success, and said, "if the school called again and wanted to do something, I'd definitely want to help make that happen."

Costa Rica

By NAOMI LACHANCE

During the week off in February, some endured the frigid temperatures for which New England is so notorious. Others, however, were a bit more fortunate, trading snow for sand, hot cocoa for lemonade, and jackets for swim suits. Twenty-four Mt. Greylock students in grades 10-12, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Murray, visited Costa Rica during the break which lasted from February 14th to 22nd. They visited beaches, climbed an active volcano, and saw native wildlife such as crocodiles and poison frogs. This is the twenty-fifth consecutive year that the Murrays have organized the trip. A twenty-sixth is being planned for next year.

OBAMA'S FIRST MONTH

By CAMILLE ROBERTSON

On January 20th, we watched from the meeting room and cafeteria as former senator Barack Hussein Obama II was sworn in as our nation's 44th president. The emotional invocation by Reverend Rick Warren, the lyrical musical selection by John Williams, and President Obama's moving inaugural address all seemed a very fitting culmination of the past months of tense campaigning. The ceremony was a climax of sorts, but more importantly it initiated the four-year of a new national leader.

Barack Obama ran for office on a platform of hope and change. Throughout his candidacy he made it clear that while he respected and appreciated the work former President George W. Bush has done for America, he believes that some of his policies need to be changed. His opinion did not shift after winning the election. Immediately after his swearing in, Rahm Emanuel, his Chief of Staff, issued an order to suspend the last-minute federal regulations that Bush wanted to push through until they could be thoroughly reviewed. These regulations would have put into motion several oil and gas drilling projects, which adversaries of the initiative opposed on the grounds that they were to take

was highly controversial because Ledbetter did not learn that her male colleagues were being paid more than her to do the same job until the end of her 19-year career at a Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. The new act extends the deadline to file similar charges by 180 days each time a discriminatory paycheck is issued, assuring women and all workers the time they need to discover and act on the injustice. The Census Bureau estimated in 2008 that women receive on average only 78 cents for every dollar that men doing equivalent jobs earn. The equal-pay bill is intended to prevent this iniquity and other discrimination based on factors such as race, religion, national origin, disability, or age.

By far the biggest and most defining legislation the Obama administration has passed is the American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan. This 787-billion-dollar economic stimulus plan is intended to serve as a stimulus to revitalize the recessed economy, as caused in the short term by the subprime mortgage crisis and the resulting credit crunch. The bill was passed in the House of Representatives first, by a 244-188 vote. The vote divided

almost exclusively down party lines, with all 177 Republicans and only 11 Democrats voting nay. In the Senate, however, the Republicans' opposition came much closer to preventing the bill from being passed. The plan needed a two-thirds margin of support, a number which could not be achieved by the majority party alone. Three Republican senators—Susan Collins and Olympia Snowe from Maine and Arlen Specter representing Pennsylvania—voted in favor of the bill, allowing for its eventual success.

On February 24th, Obama addressed a joint session of Congress—as well as the rest of the world listening or watching at home on their radios and TVs—regarding the newly passed economic stimulus plan. His fifty-



place within sight of national monuments and would not provide any long-term energy solutions.

In his first week in office, Obama put into effect a handful of new policies and legislations that his cabinet had been working on during the transition period, all of which shouted "Change!" loud and clear to the public. While still in office, Bush passed legislature that gave presidents and vice presidents complete control over the release of government documents produced during their terms. He did this by putting legal limitations on the Freedom of Information Act, which dates back to 1966 after the Watergate Scandal during Nixon's presidency stirred distrust of political figures in the general public. Bush's restrictions, put into effect after September 11, 2001, gave himself and Dick Cheney the power to keep select documents from the public as long as they liked, instead of their being released after twelve to fifteen years or when deemed no longer politically viable, as used to be the case. Obama's reversal of this policy reflects his belief in "transparent government," the idea that a government should be completely open with the public unless there is a compelling reason—such as national security—for secrecy.

Within the first few days in office, Obama signed an executive order to suspend the actions of the Guantanamo military commissions and to shut down the Guantanamo Bay detention facility within the year. The military commissions were set up by President Bush in order to extract important information from Al Qaeda members and suspected associates. The use of torture-like methods to achieve these goals has incurred heavy international criticism over the past few years. Binyam Mohamad, a Pakistani resident of Great Britain, was the first prisoner to be sent home from the detention center on Monday, February 23. He released a statement to the associated press saying: "I have been through an experience that I never thought to encounter in my darkest nightmares ... It is still difficult for me to believe that I was abducted, hauled from one country to the next, and tortured in medieval ways—all orchestrated by the United States government." While President Obama wishes to prevent any more abuse like this from occurring, dismantling such a high-security facility is not an easy task, and he has put together a committee that will spend the next six months examining the situation and determining if and how the current prisoners will be tried and where they should be sent if they cannot be released.

Prominent among other early legislation that Obama passed was the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. The name of the bill refers to a 2007 Supreme Court case that dismissed Ledbetter's pay-discrimination charge on the basis that the incident had happened over 180 days ago. The decision

ty-minute speech clearly laid out his foremost goals for the stimulus package. He addressed the urgent issue of jobs first. Over the next two years, money from the stimulus plan will be used to save or create 3.5 million jobs, almost all in the private sector. Obama instilled great patriotic fervor in his treatment of the issues confronting all Americans, clearly striving to bridge partisan differences and unite the nation in an effort to tackle our communal problem. Much of the speech was evocative of the messages of hope and optimism he was known for during his campaign. Near the beginning he declared, "we will rebuild, we will recover, and the United States of America will emerge stronger than before," to a thunderous applause from both sides of Congress. Acknowledging the general concern about the state of our economy and admitting that the next few months or years will not be easy, he explained why he believes the issues of health care, education, and innovative energy sources are vital to our national security and economic stability.

He spoke first on energy, urging America to take a competitive role in the international race to develop and install clean and renewable energy sources. One concrete contribution he will make towards this field is the allocation of 15 billion dollars a year towards the development of wind and solar power technology, advanced biofuels, clean coal, and more fuel-efficient cars and trucks. Obama then talked about how we can "no longer afford to put health care reform on hold." Referring to the \$32.8 billion State Children's Health Insurance Program his administration already passed, which will provide health insurance for eleven million American children with full-time working parents, he expressed his belief that this system is a better use of government resources than paying the medical costs for the same children after they become sick and injured because their parents cannot afford insurance.

The last challenge he addressed, and the one that affects us most directly, was education. Right now, America has one of the highest high school dropout rates of any industrialized nation, and only half the population continues their education past high school. Obama stressed the need for both more resources and more reform in public school systems. The stimulus package grants money to prevent cuts and teacher layoffs and make college more affordable and offers new teacher performance incentives. He spoke directly to all students like us: "I know that the price of tuition is higher than ever, which is why if you are willing to volunteer in your neighborhood or give back to your community or serve your country, we will make sure that you can afford a higher education." On that note, I think we all hope that this new "earmark-free" bill really works.

MICHAEL'S
Restaurant
~~AND~~
Pizzeria
10% Off Pizza With
Coupon

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.

The Words We Use

By PATRICK MADDEN

This past summer I worked for four weeks at the Williamstown Youth Center. During my time there, I was perturbed to hear a new brand of “insults” tossed around among the kids with alarming frequency. Particularly among the boys, phrases like “you’re gay”, “you like to kiss boys”, and “faggot” were the new norms in terms of scalding put-downs. I’m talking about kids as young as 5 and 6 years old.

Sadly, the only time I’ve heard similar phrases used as derogatory terms more than at the Youth Center is walking down the hallways of Mt. Greylock. It’s really no wonder why the younger population is learning to use such phrases pejoratively in common, everyday speech. Their older role models are setting shining examples.

Modern American society’s subtle (and in many cases overt) homophobia has led to the integration of “gay” as a negative term into common vocabulary even here in blue Massachusetts. The word and its various degrading forms have become so common that many do not even make the link between the word and the millions of people it inherently targets when used as an insult. When using the word “gay” in the place of words like “obnoxious” or “stupid” (like in the sentence “Oh my God, that class is so gay!”), the speaker is, perhaps without even meaning to, implying that homosexuality and all homosexuals themselves can be described using whatever negative words or ideas were left unsaid. As our math teachers have dutifully informed us, if $A=B$ and $B=C$, then $A=C$, right? When this idea is pointed out, many students react by saying something along the lines of, “Oh no! That’s not what I meant!” I suppose we should be glad that many of Mt. Greylock’s students use words like “fag” and “queer” out of habit rather than homophobic malice, but habit is nowhere near an acceptable excuse. There’s still a very long way to go.

Picture the upcoming seventh grader who might just be starting

to have questions about his/her sexual identity. That student will learn just through listening that “gay” is “bad” and will carry that message around, sometimes even using it to lock him/herself inside the closet. It certainly doesn’t help that the Day of Silence often turns into a game - how much can I annoy someone before they crack and start talking? Even here at Mt. Greylock, students smirk and often openly mock other students participating in the Day of Silence, and its prominence as a strong and silent vigil for all of those who have suffered from sexual orientation-based discrim-

“I suppose we should be glad that many of Mt. Greylock’s students use words like “fag” and “queer” out of habit rather than homophobic malice, but habit is nowhere near an acceptable excuse. There’s still a very long way to go.”

ination gets swept under the rug.

At Greylock, when we use the word “fag,” we forget people like Lawrence King, who was shot in the head and killed by a fellow classmate in 2008 for being openly gay. We forget that many believe the origin of the word “faggot” as an insult goes all the way back to the assumed link between witches and homosexual acts and burning at the stake using faggots, or bundles of wood. We forget that in many other places around the country, students are beat up at recess for being gay and that the word “fag” is often dished out in conjunction with punches and kicks. We forget to see the alarming parallels between the word “faggot” in current times and the n-word in the African civil rights era. And when we do take a step back to see and remember all of

these things, especially following the unfortunate, slap-in-the-face passage of Proposition 8 in California, we wonder why the battle for civil/human rights always has to be so staggered and slow; we wonder why every progressive step is always followed by a flurry of discriminatory backpedaling.

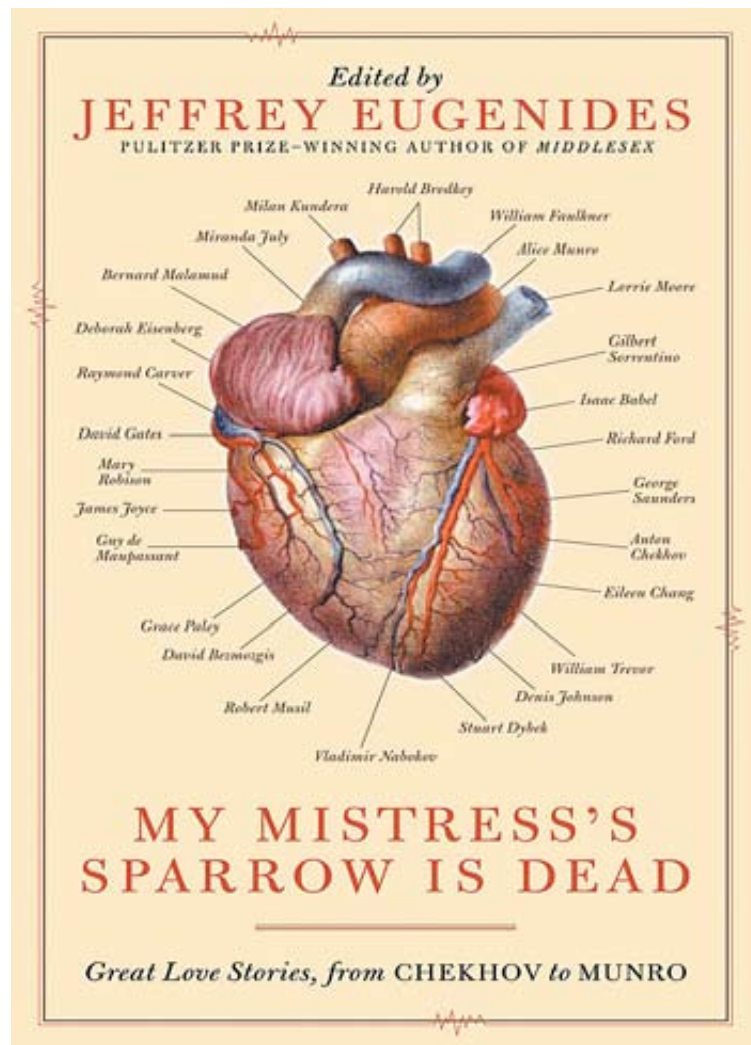
On another, no-less-important note, the word “retarded” is tossed around at Greylock as a defamatory remark almost as often as “gay” is. This is exactly the same situation. Discriminatory language has been around for centuries. It seems to be one of those problems that gets recycled rather than solved. Society finally realized that words like the n-word and “Jap” are completely unacceptable and started to unwittingly use words like “retarded” and “fag” in their stead. Next time you hear or even say a sentence like “Why are you being so retarded?”, think about the people in our school community or your friends or loved ones who actually have mental or developmental disabilities, and try to adapt your vocabulary.

When we use any kind of discriminatory language with an air of nonchalance, we unconsciously push our school community in a direction I don’t think our students actively want to travel. The language we use while shouting to friends across the hallway is important. It has ramifications. And while “it’s not a big deal” because “everybody says it,” it is a big deal, especially because everybody says it.

I look forward to the day when we all look back and cringe in pain at the thought of denying marriage to some based upon sexual orientation, when mental retardation is never used to insult or put down, and when we, the students of Mt. Greylock, stop tossing around offensive language as if it doesn’t mean a thing. The duration of time between the present and such a day in our school when every student can truly feel comfortable and safe depends solely on the common sense, willpower, and compassion of every member of our Greylock community.

The Book Worm

By ISABEL KAUFMAN



Title: My Mistress’s Sparrow is Dead

Edited By: Jeffery Eugenides

Price: \$24.95

As February has just passed, my Hallmark-induced cultural program is shrieking for love stories. It’s not surprising that this is the month in which the world at large is conditioned to ache for romance. I like to blame the existence of seasonal depression (it exists!) on February: like Hobbes’s description of life, this month is nasty, brutish, and short. It’s the very grayest part of winter, and it calls out for the compensation of many heart-shaped objects and much chocolate. Thus, it’s time to get warmhearted. It’s what most of us are looking for right now. It’s what we need.

Here’s the problem, though: most love stories (that is, most stories written where the romance is the point) are bad. Occasionally, they’re appalling. There’s a reason that the romance novel is so maligned—the stigma’s not really unfair. And it’s not like we’ve been greatly refining the stories over the years. Twilight? I’m looking at you.

That’s not what I’m going to tell you to pick up for your dose of winter literature. If that’s what you’re thinking, it’s probably for the best that you throw out all of your preconceived notions of love stories. This is not what you expect.

No, instead let us go with the way that Jeffrey Eugenides defines a good love story here in this book: a story that, while you relish the reading, makes you intensely glad not to be in love. Love (in the best literary tradition) is wrenching and ridiculous. Why not just sit back and let other (fortuitously fictional) lovers cover the crazy scope of emotion that “love stories” get to encompass?

This isn’t to say it’s a gloomy read. Sure, there’s a little schadenfreude mixed in with a little schmaltz here, but neither of those are the point. I did say, after all, that this is a warmhearted read. You’ll find something here that makes you really, genuinely happy, even if you don’t love everything in it. The stories—for it’s a collection of short stories by separate authors—are from every time, in every style. It’s a highbrow selection of writers: you have your tried and tested, your Nabokov and Chekhov and Catullus (the title is from one of his poems), and yes, some of the stories run to density and intensity on the reading spectrum. Yet you also have more modern writers, lesser-known ones (I liked Miranda July’s and Harold Brodkey’s. Heard of them? Yeah, they were new to me, too), and it never feels entirely pretentious. The best thing about such a broad selection is that you get to pick favorites. If you dislike one, there’s no guilt when you choose to skip it. If you love one, it’s short enough to read and reread again with ease. It’s up to you: a literary love buffet, if you will.

And then there’s the real warmhearted bit: all the proceeds from the book go straight to a foundation for young writers. It’s for charity, and even if you get it from the library you can feel inherently good that someone, somewhere, bought it.

I’d say all of this adds up to a love story of the best kind: the one you get to conduct with good words. Now get a cup of hot chocolate, go someplace comfortable, and go read a book instead of this paper. Love.

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.

Next Issue:

Friday, April 3rd, 2009

Copy Deadline:

Tuesday, March 23rd

Editors: Patrick Madden and Sam Sokolsky-Tift

Business Manager: Taylor Foehl

Copy Editor: Petra Mijanovic

Sports Editor: Janelle Van-Luling

Consulting Editors: Chris Densmore and Matt Baker-White

Puzzlemaster: Dylan Dethier

Mt. Greylock Regional High School

1781 Cold Spring Road

Williamstown, Mass, 01267, USA

mountgreylockecho@gmail.com

COMMUNITY

Singin' in the Rain

By KRISTA MANGIARDI

It is that time of the year again. The harmonious notes produced by Mt. Greylock students are reverberating through the school auditorium. This year's production is the classic musical *Singin' in the Rain*, based on the 1952 MGM movie of the same title. The musical originally opened in London in 1983 and won several awards for its book, special effects, choreography, and title actors. Now a small cast of about twenty thespians and 15 musicians in the orchestra are taking on the task of presenting this show for our community.

The story revolves around four main characters. Don Lockwood, played by Patrick Madden, is the heartthrob movie star. His goofy best friend and on-set musician, Cosmo Brown, is portrayed by Ryan Ericson. Lina Lamont (Gwen Tunnicliffe) is Don's squeaky-voiced, glamorous on-screen lover, shown in contrast to Kathy Selden (Olivia Tousignant-Pienkos), a talented, likeable showgirl and Don's off-screen interest. They, along with a medley of other colorful characters including an enthusiastic director, a conscientious owner of the movie company, showgirls, diction teachers, fans, stars, and a policeman come together to illustrate the transition from silent films to talking pictures. Movie actors Don and Lina are famous for their multiple silent films together. They are successful and content with their popularity until talking pictures begin taking over the movie industry. In an effort to retain

relevancy, they try adding sound to a new movie. When it backfires --due to technical errors and Lina's high-toned and nasal voice-- innovation becomes necessary. The discovery of Kathy Selden's talents inspires Cosmo with an idea that may potentially save the movie. Lina creates drama and Cosmo provides comic relief throughout the show while a touching love story unfolds between Don and Kathy.

This tale of movie artists' adaptation to the sound environment is woven with humor, romance, and catchy ballads. Director Mr. Welch says of the show: "It's funny and touching, so the story line is enjoyable...a fun period, set in the 20's." Indeed, the set, costumes, and cast all encourage viewers to engross themselves in the lives of characters who would have lived nearly a century ago.

Several artistic elements come together for *Singin' in the Rain*. Over twenty musical numbers are mastered under musical director Mrs. Walt. The singers are aided by a student pit orchestra conducted by Mr. Moors. There will be dance performances accompanying several of the songs, choreographed mostly by Ann-Marie Rodriguez. Expect to see the cast adorned with tap shoes, tap dancing in conjunction with the songs. Olivia Tousignant-Pienkos states: "The acting, singing, and dancing in this show are all wonderful, and all of us together will produce an outstanding show." Expect the songs from the movie,

such as "Singin' in the Rain" and "Good Morning," as well as songs that were not featured in the film—including "What's Wrong With Me?" and "You are my Lucky Star." Audiences are guaranteed at least one big, all-cast dance number as well as numerous smaller dances by various groups of actors.

Last year, Mt. Greylock's production of *Anything Goes* brought in record profits and ticket sales; it was also the first year with a choreographer. This year all involved, from directors and actors to stagehands and pit members, hope for another record year. Ryan Ericson is enthusiastic: "I think the musical is really coming together this year, better than last year at this time, it should be great." Olivia Tousignant-Pienkos adds, "I hope a lot of people come to see *Singin' in the Rain*--they'll be in for a real treat!"

The show is being performed tonight, March 6th, and tomorrow, beginning each night at 7 o'clock. On Thursday, March 5th, the show was performed in the morning for middle and elementary school students. According to Mr. Welch, it will be "a show all audiences can enjoy." Everyone is eagerly anticipating the audience's reaction to the result of three months' hard work and dedication. Lastly, Mr. Welch would like everyone to be aware that anyone willing to volunteer should pay him a visit in room S51. Make sure to tell students involved in the musical to "break a leg"!

JoePro, From Page 1

Q: How did you get started rapping?
A: I liked playing the piano and I also enjoyed writing, and they eventually came together through rap.

Q: What song of yours is your personal favorite?
A: My most recent song, "Gunpowder Passion," because I slowed it down so that the audience can hear what I'm saying easier, and I recorded with a real piano rather than a keyboard.

Q: How far are you planning to take your music?
A: I would like music to become my career (as ridiculous as that sounds). Not just rap, but anything creative in the form of music such as producing or album design.

Q: What are your plans for after high school?
A: Definitely going to pursue music much more seriously. I'd like to travel around with musicians or producers and learn more about music and performances. Whether or not I go to college, I definitely want to practice performing.

Q: What message are you trying to get across through your music?
A: All kinds of different messages. One is that anybody should be able to make any type of music without being discriminated against. Another is that music shouldn't be based upon the artist's image but rather the music itself.

Q: What rappers do you tend to listen to?
A: Biggie, Tupac, Dr. Dre, Jay-Z, Nas, Snoop.

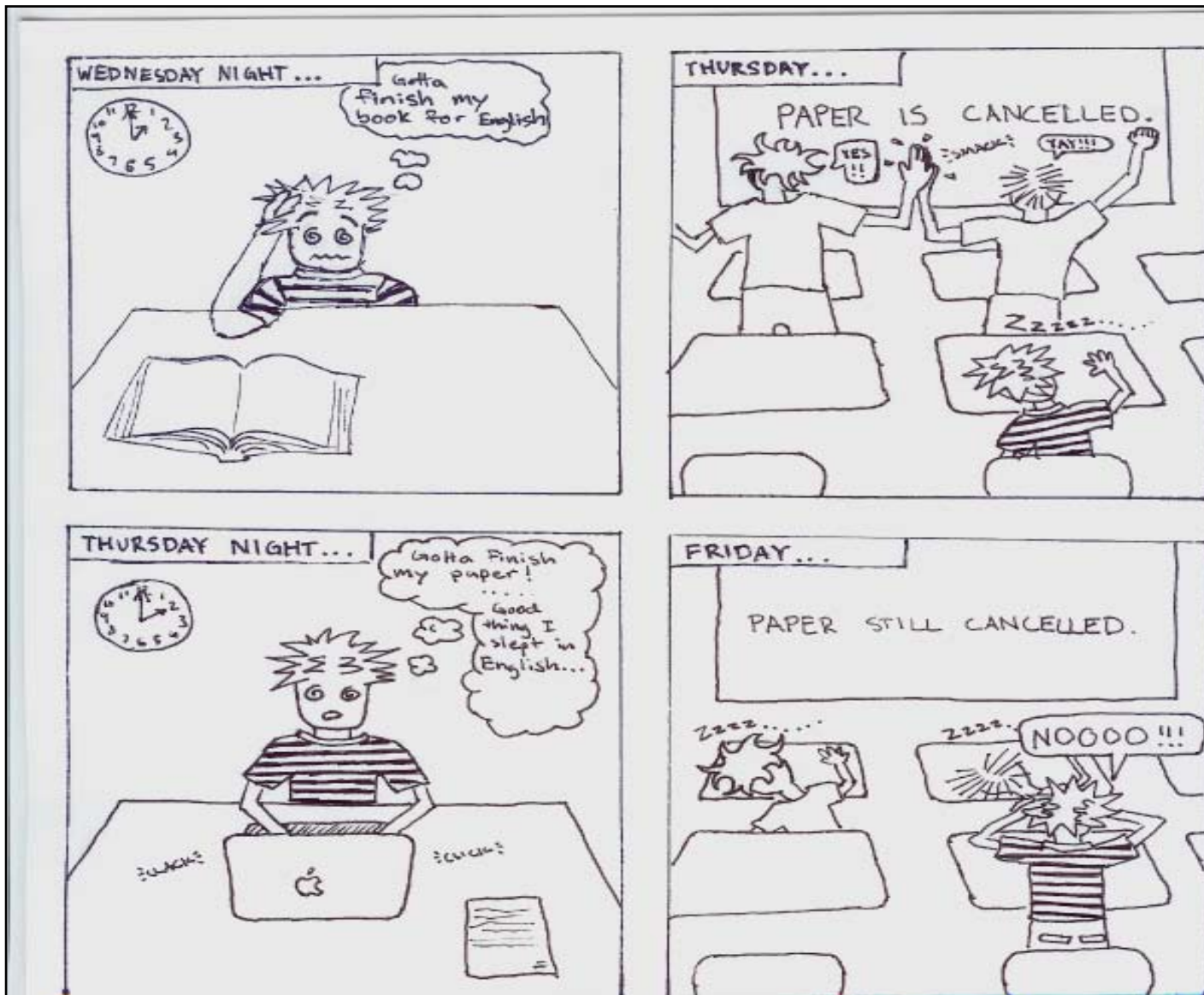
Q: What rappers do you tend to steer away from?
A: Juelz Santana (the name contains the word Jewels), new rappers who rap about the same stuff, T.I. is a tool, ones who have nothing new to bring to the table - Soulja Boy, Hurricane Chris, Richboy (the name), Flo Rida, Rick Ross

Q: What is your response to a "hater" who posted on one of your videos on the internet?
A: Let me start off by saying I regret what I did with my hands in "Rise Up," but nothing on Youtube could really bother me - people's spelling shows that they are not the kind of person to take criticism from. Example: "Blingboy15: Wut r u doing wit yur hands?"

Q: What do you believe is the best lyric of yours?
A: From the song *Unsung*: "You only get the status from the visual, The passions I feel with rapping all just happen to be invisible"

Q: What is your Senior Project?
A: I composed a score for an orchestra with an accompaniment by Aidan Shepard on the drums at Bennington College. I will perform the rap on March 8.

For more information, visit JoePro's website at www.joepromusic.com, where you can check out his upcoming performances and listen to his music.



Graphic: Rufus Paisley

TUNNEL CITY COFFEE

NORTH ADAMS
115 STATE STREET

413-458-5010

WILLIAMSTOWN
100 SPRING STREET

Stats, Continued from Page 1

certain determinants of school quality, they can sometimes be helpful indicators of success.

Taconic High School, also in Pittsfield, follows closely behind PHS with an total enrollment of 967, including 223 in its graduating class. For its students, Taconic offers career pathway programs in liberal arts, fine and performing arts, business management, information technology, science and engineering and human services. Taconic's attendance rate is marginally lower than Pittsfield High's at 92.8%, and the average student misses twelve days of school. THS seems to hand out more suspensions than PHS, as it has a suspension rate of 21.1%. The graduation rate at Taconic is slightly higher than PHS's at 69.7%. Of this graduating percent, 18% are projected to attend a 4-year private college, 12% might go to a 4-year public college, 5% might enroll in a private 2-year college, and almost half, 43%, are projected to enroll at a 2-year public college. 17% of the rest of the total graduating class are forecasted to go straight into employment fields after their matriculation, while 2% are projected to join the army. On the MCAS tests, fewer Taconic students fall into the Advanced category than on the state average, while a greater number than on a statewide level are classified as Proficient. More than average are dubbed as Needing Improvement, and less than the statewide average receive a Warning. Taconic High School has lower attendance rate and a higher suspension rate than its fellow Pittsfield counterpart. However, its MCAS scores are higher and it has a higher graduation rate.

Wahconah Regional High School's total enrollment is 662 students, and its senior class is endowed with 134 teenagers. For its students, the Wahconah administration provides a large variety of clubs and activities, including a mock trial team, a drama club, a quiz team, the school newspaper, the Service, Leadership and Adventure Club (SLAC), student council, and many more. Wahconah also offers several classes that are beyond the standard, such as an entire English class dedicated to Shakespeare, a class entitled "Clothing," a Basic Law class, and Sociology. A catalog of online courses is also provided called Virtual High School (VHS). These classes are taken over the internet and give the student the same amount of credit that a course taken in school would. Students would not have to be present in school to take these classes, but, regardless of this, the attendance rate is 94.7% and the average number of days absent is 9.2. Wahconah's suspension rate is significantly lower than

both Pittsfield High and Taconic at about 7.8%. The graduation rate is also greater at 89.5%. On average, 11% of these students go directly to work and 3% join the military. Of those that do attend college, 32% go to a private 4-year school, 23% enroll in a public 4-year college, 2% go to a 2-year private college and 27% attend a 2-year public college. Wahconah students also fall above the state average on MCAS scores in all levels but Advanced in the English Language Arts section of the test. All in all, the fairly prominent gap in statistics between Wahconah and the two Pittsfield schools could be attributed to a variety of factors, including a smaller student body size, location, available resources, and budget.

The next in line for enrollment size is our own Mt. Greylock. Our Williamstown school has a total student body of 651, including the middle school. The number of students in grades 9-12 is 407, leaving it with less than half the number of students that PHS and THS have and only 92 in this year's senior class. This number leads to fewer diverse electives, and even one less language department than the other three mentioned schools. Mt. Greylock's attendance rate does not outdo the other high schools. On any given day, about 93.1% of the student body is in school, and the average number of days absent is 12.2, just over the number that is allowed according to Mt. Greylock's amended attendance policy, which permits a student to miss twelve school days per semester. Mt. Greylock's out-of-school suspension rate is lower than the Pittsfield schools, but higher than Wahconah's at 10.9%. Our school's graduation rate, however, is very high at 91.4%. Most students who graduate from Mt. Greylock attend college. 47% of all students attend a private 4-year college while 21% attend a public 4-year college and 26% enroll in a public 2-year college. 3% of graduated students go to work immediately after matriculation. Mt. Greylock MCAS averages are about equal to or above state averages in all categories.

Directly below Mt. Greylock in enrollment size is Drury High School in North Adams. Its student body is comprised of 499 students in grades 9-12. Drury's attendance rate is 93%, and the average days that a student is absent is 11.6. Despite the fact that Drury has a higher attendance record than Mt. Greylock, their graduation rate is much lower, with a number at 73.5%. 32% of graduates attend a 4-year private college, 25% a 4-year public college, 18% enroll in a 2-year public college and 11% attend another type of post-secondary education. 9% go to work, and 1% join the military. MCAS scores of Drury students

are about equal to the state's.

The town of Lee, like Williamstown, has a combined middle and high school. That school's total enrollment is 482, and it has a graduating class of 88. Lee Middle/High School has very similar clubs to Mt. Greylock, including a school newspaper (The Dodgetown News), a yearbook committee, the National Honors Society and a drama club. LMHS has an attendance rate of 93.4%, just above Mt. Greylock's, and an average number of missed days at 11.5. While these statistics are marginally superior to Greylock's, its graduation rate is not. 83.3% of initially enrolled Lee students matriculate at the end of their senior year. 21% of these graduates attend a 4-year private college, 32% enroll in a 4-year public college, 35% attend a 2-year public college, and approximately 6% get a job after graduation. On the MCAS test, the state averages for each category are slightly better than the average Lee student's.

Lenox Memorial High School houses students from grades 6-12, has a total student body of 472, and a graduating class of 61. It's attendance rate is higher than the state's, and the other schools in Berkshire County, at 94.7%. Its suspension rate is also far smaller than any other school in Western Massachusetts, at only 3.4%. Lenox Memorial High's graduation rate is not listed. However, of those that do graduate, 59% go to a 4-year private college, 16% are enrolled in a 4-year public college, 2% attend a 2-year private college and 22% enroll in a 2-year public college. Only 2% are projected to attend work, and none on average sign up for the military immediately after graduation. Lenox's MCAS averages are much higher than the state's in all categories. Lenox, despite its small size, offers diverse student activities, including many sports teams and even a model United Nations club.

Hoosac Valley High has a total enrollment of 471, but only services grades 9-12. Therefore, it has a senior-class size of 100 this year. Students at Hoosac Valley High can join a variety of clubs, many of which are duplicated at Mt. Greylock. There are a few deviations, however, including a quiz team and a community service (Leo) club. On the average day, 94.4% of all students are in attendance, and the average number of days absent per student is 9.5. Hoosac Valley's graduation rate is 88%. 32% of graduated students attend a 4-year private college, 22% enroll in a 4-year public college, 1% goes to a 2-year private college and 29% attend a 2-year public college. A large number, 15%, go to work directly after graduation, and 2% join the military. On the MCAS test, Hoosac Valley's numbers are almost equivalent to those of the state.

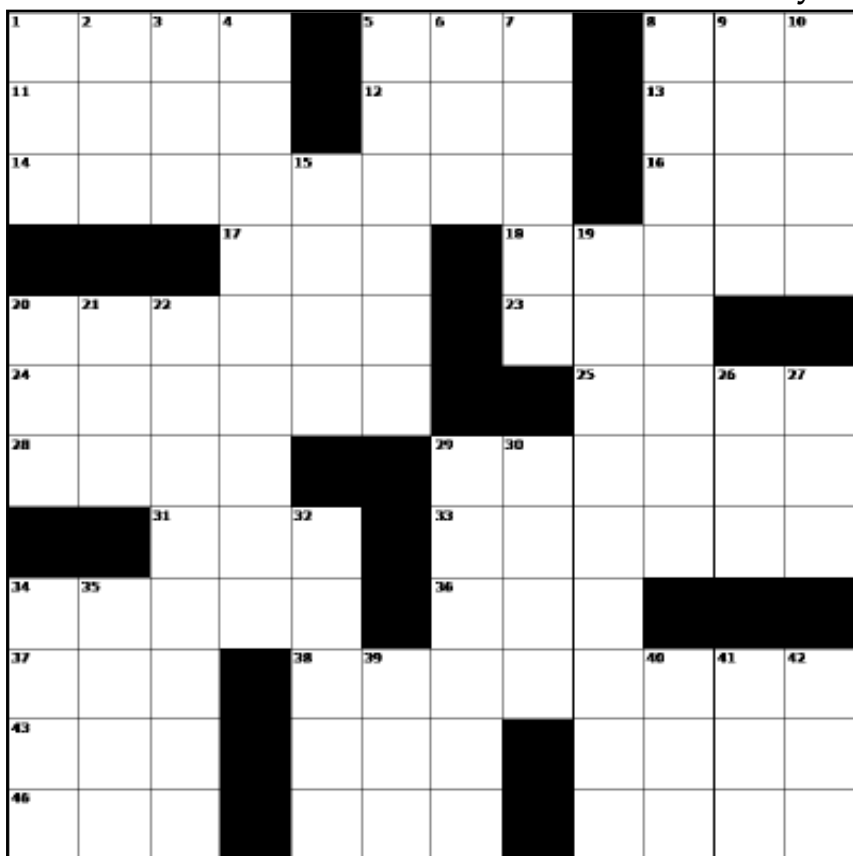
All told, schools in Berkshire County differ from each other in expectable ways. Some schools have lower graduation rates than others, but conversely they have higher attendance rates. Schools with larger student bodies tend to have more activities and offer a greater variety of classes for their students to enroll in, but they generally have greater disciplinary and academic struggles than their smaller counterparts. A majority of students at all schools in Berkshire County attend some sort of private or public college once they finish high school. All told, most of the statistics about each school seem to imply that smaller schools have fewer relative punitive problems, somewhat higher standardized test scores, and more solid graduation rates. But these statistics do not pertain to individual people attending those schools, and, moreover, statistics between smaller schools are not solely favorable to Greylock, making many of our common stereotypes and generalizations about other student bodies simply untrue.

Open a
Morgan **ONE**
teen account
& get \$25!

NotYourMothersDebitCard.com

CROSSWORD

By DYLAN DETHIER



Across

1. Send to hell
5. Fire remnant
8. Lament
11. Good for dunking
12. Place for waste
13. Terminate
14. Moses was found amongst them
16. To be chewed, when pondering
17. Like Baltic or Pennsylvania
18. Nemesis
20. Admits
23. ___ Moines, Iowa
24. Tells off
25. Russian emperor
28. It's smoked
29. Garfield's girl
31. There are several in a tennis match
33. Sleeps like a bird
34. Housemate of Sneezy and Bashful
36. One more than uno
37. It can be high or low
38. Tracks down
43. Anger
44. Possess
45. "What ___ could I do?"
46. Like a stop sign
47. New Jersey baller
48. "Milk" actor Penn

Down

1. Gooden of the Mets and Yankees
2. Altar constellation
3. Shook hands with
4. Insomniac at night:
5. Foreigners
6. Prefix associated with the sun
7. Swindled
8. Courtroom breaks
9. E pluribus ___
10. Small whirlpool
15. Enthusiastic
19. Experienced by companies losing money
20. Recreational hallucinogen
21. Environmental prefix
22. Terminal velocity
26. Bee cousin
27. "They Say Vision" R&B singer
29. Burning with passion
30. Knight's right (or left)-hand man, in chess
32. Notorious ear-biter
34. On Seth Green, it's red
35. Unit of land
39. Female sheep
40. Grand ___ Opry
41. Canada's neighbor
42. Debut album of Pearl Jam

Cross Country Skiing

By CAMILLE ROBERTSON

On Wednesday, February 11, both the girls' and boys' cross-country ski teams successfully defended their state titles. For the girls it was a second first-place trophy and for the boys a fourth consecutive state championship. With over 120 competitors in each race, both teams placed five skiers in the top ten and all eight in the top 25. In unseasonably warm weather, soft snow, and racers wearing t-shirts, tank tops, and even bathing suits, the Greylock skiers showed their fitness, agility, and determination one last time to cap off a perfect undefeated season.



Photo: Matt Baker-White

Though the girls' podium was occupied by three Eastern Mass skiers, they all belonged to different teams with no real depth, and Greylock was able to beat Concord-Carlisle handily 25 to 47. Freshman Mackenzie Hitchcock finished fourth overall, closely followed by Laura Nolan, Jackie Lemme, and Amy Santella in sixth through eighth places respectively. Though Camille Robertson, Meghan O'Grady, Allegra Robertson, and Haley Mahar did not score for the team, they all finished ahead of Concord-Carlisle's fourth skier and met the team's goal of having everyone finish in the top 20. During the entire season the girls demonstrated their depth and talent, as the top four continually shifted and Amy, Camille, and Mackenzie all claimed individual wins. Mackenzie went on to win a second race and was named Berkshire League MVP.

The boys' race and season were equally triumphant. Led by Patrick Joslin and Cary White in third and fourth places, Jordon Tuboly and Dylan Dethier grabbed the sixth and eighth spots to beat Lenox easily 21 to 45. Again, the team's depth shone through as Greg Karabinos finished tenth and Caleb Pudvar, Nate Nurmi, and Evan Grillon were not too far behind, all finishing in the top 23. Except for a tense one-point win over Wahconah earlier in the season, the Greylock boys dominated, Joslin winning each league race with seniors Dethier and White usually close behind him to ensure a solid margin of victory.

Though only eight girls and eight boys had the opportunity to compete in this year's state meet, most of the team went to Notchview Ski Reservation to cheer them on. With 72 skiers (more than one tenth of the entire student body!) in total, the nordic team is by far Greylock's biggest and, in recent years, most consistently successful. A huge thanks goes out to the wonderful coaches who make it all possible.



Photo: Matt Baker-White

Alpine Skiing

By HAYDEN KUHN AND KRISTINA CHESNEY

Although the girls and boys teams compete separately in the races, during practices they work together as one. Racers vary in age from middle school to upperclassmen, but the age gap does not seem to matter. Skiers' abilities range as well, but on race nights, everyone supports each other and is out on the hill cheering from the first racer until the last. The team welcomes new skiers whether they have prior racing experience or simply a desire to learn!

BOYS

The Boys Alpine Ski Team went through its ups and downs this year, with 5th, 4th, 1st, 4th, 1st, and 6th place finishes. The 1st place finish was the team's first victory in the last 8 years. This year looked promising, after the 2008 squad graduated no one in the top four spots. To score, the best four of six total finishes are added together with the team with the lowest score being the winner. With the other skiing power houses graduating many of their top skiers, the Mounties set their sights on a Berkshire County Title. The loss of #2 and #3 racers, Zach and Kent Hanson to injury stung the team badly. Zach would miss the entire season with knee surgery while Kent would miss only the first 3 weeks, still a considerable amount of time. Newcomers Hayden Barber, Ryan Kuhn, Ben Kobrin, Nick DiSanti, and Colin Delano stepped in to fill the void, each racing in a varsity spot at one point during the season. The Mounties' first victory came in the 3rd week. Hard earned 3rd, 7th, 10th, and 19th places for Connor Krell, Hayden Kuhn, Nick Krant, and Eli Burnham respectively were enough to earn the Mounties the win, edging out PHS by .38 seconds as a team. The second 1st place finish came when Connor Krell won his 1st High School race with a time of 39.95, beating the 2nd place finisher by .64 seconds. The team finished the year in 4th place in the county, after a disappointing 6th place finish in the last race. The boys team will be sending Connor Krell and Hayden Kuhn to States on February 24 at Berkshire East. Next year the Mounties will look to take another run at the Berkshire County title after again bringing the whole team back. They hope for a healthy 2010 campaign and have the talent to bring home the championship to Greylock.

GIRLS

With four new members, the girls' alpine ski team started the rebuilding process. The future is full of potential for this young team. After graduating a number of strong skiers in 2005 and 2006, the team has been struggling to compete with the other Berkshire county teams. This year, however, the team celebrated a second place finish in its final slalom race of the season. Two of its members finished in the top fourteen in the county, qualifying them for the state championship race at Berkshire East. This was an exciting event because it was the first time in three years that the girls' team was able to send more than one racer, and they were accompanied by two members of the boys' team. The team will strive for continued success in 2010 and beyond.

Girls' Basketball

By JANELLE VAN LULING

The girls basketball team finished an electrifying season last Monday. In a loss to Wahconah in the first round of the Division II Western Mass. tournament, the Mounties ended their season with a final record of 10-9. The girls entered the tournament on a three game winning streak by defeating county rivals Lenox, St. Joe, and Hoosac Valley. A win against PHS got the girls in the record books, for it was the first time in Mt. Greylock girls basketball history that the team had beaten Pittsfield. Not only did that win make history, but it also gave the girls a boost of confidence at just the right time. Battling the .500 mark to make it into the tournament, the Mounties showed their class and stamina toward the end of the season and came out well above that margin. Senior captain Katherine Wadsworth reflected on the season, saying that she "couldn't have asked for a better year." This particular group of young athletes has turned the program around and gained respect from around the county. No longer will teams look on the schedule and check off Greylock as a "W." The lady Mounties have ended their season with a winning record and a lifetime of pride.



Photo: Matt Baker-White