

Cell Phones in School: The Debate Continues

By REBEKEH PACKER

When a cell phone vibrates during class, the atmosphere changes. Sometimes, the teacher stops a lecture and asks the owner to hand over the phone; sometimes, the teacher doesn't hear (or ignores) it, and students look at each other nervously. Certainly, people are unsure of what to do. Why does a communication tool effect such confusion?

In part, the confusion may come from uncertainty about the rules. The MGRHS Student Handbook declares that electronics "not integral to the teaching and learning process [such as iPods, game boys, and cell phones] must be kept secured in lockers during the school day." Noncompliance with the policy "will result in temporary confiscation...and possible disciplinary consequences." Personal stereos (MP3s and iPods), but not cell phones, are allowed during break and lunch.

It may be simple on paper, but Mt. Greylock's real-life policies on electronics are complicated. Junior Leah Miller says her teachers are "very inconsistent" with the Handbook's policy. "They just say to put it away," she says. Blake Sherman, a sophomore, agrees: "I've never seen a teacher take a phone." Natalia Renzi, a junior, says that "depending on the teacher," phones are sometimes confiscated and sometimes not.

Teachers, in fact, do differ in their classroom policies regarding electronics. Math teacher Sarah Brooks allows iPods when students are working individually because it helps "distractible" students "tune everybody else out." Otherwise, no electronics are allowed: "You can't listen to what I'm doing on the board and read your text message at the same time." Usually, if Ms. Brooks sees a student using a phone, she just says to put it away, but after a few times, she confiscates it. "Generally, I'll give it back at the end of class," she says, "but if it happens multiple days" she turns the phone over to the office.

History teacher Tom Murray thinks students and teachers "have to try to reach an accommodation" around cell phones. He acknowledges that sometimes students "need their stuff for class" or need to contact parents, and he is willing to let that happen. "Most of my students appear to be responsible," he says. Mr. Murray has never confiscated a phone, he says, but he's never caught a student texting twice.

Drew Gibson, English teacher, approves completely of the school confiscation policy. He says he confiscates phones as soon as he sees them, adding, "Usually, I give them to Ms. Penna." Mr. Gibson says, "Kids like being distracted," and he thinks any device, like a phone, that takes focus from the classroom "makes it that much harder [for teachers] to compensate."

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GREYLOCK PART OF STATEWIDE BULLYING AWARENESS MOVEMENT

By NAOMI LACHANCE

On Wednesday, October 20, students from Mt. Greylock stood in the parking lot attired head-to-toe in purple. Nearby, more students signed their names on a white sheet called the Purple Pledge. The day was part of Spirit Week, but its significance stretched far beyond that of high school traditions. The day was inspired by a national effort to raise anti-LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-

decreased self-esteem and increased depression rates even into adulthood."

Recently, situations involving teen bullying have lead to a number of suicides, including that of Phoebe Prince of South Hadley and Carl Joseph Walker-Hoover of Springfield. Last May, in response, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts passed a new bill into legislation, St. 2010, c.92. "This bill aims to secure



Greylock students sign the Purple Pledge as part of a national bullying awareness day. Bullying awareness is a schoolwide and statewide theme this year.

Photo: Naomi LaChance

sexual) bullying awareness in light of recent youth suicides. At Mt. Greylock, the purpose was broadened to bullying of all kinds, but the message was still clear: the Mt. Greylock community will not enable bullying.

With a student body population of less than 650, Mt. Greylock is a relatively small school, and many students have known one another their entire lives. Inevitably, news travels fast. Yet with technology including cell phones and online messaging, bullying can fly more easily under the radar than during the days of bullies stealing lunch money in the schoolyard. "The cliché doesn't really exist anywhere," said senior Kevin Stant. "Cyberbullying is the issue we need to worry about." "Bullying is everywhere," said middle school English teacher Mrs. Barrett. "Mt. Greylock is not magically exempt from bullying."

According to a brochure from the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, bullying ought to be stopped for multiple reasons, including that "bullying interferes with learning in school and may lead to increased absenteeism and dropout rates," "youth bullies may become child and spouse abusers as adults," and "bullying victims grow socially insecure and anxious, with

our students from bullying, both during the school day and after school hours," House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo said in a statement. "In light of recent tragedies, the House has taken the appropriate steps to protect our students from the terror of bullying and cyberbullying." The law requires that teachers report every bullying case, although it fails to offer a fine in penalty, which some say makes the law ineffective. The law also calls for annual teacher training regarding bullying prevention, and demands that each school district create an independent agenda for addressing the issue. "I like that the law allows each school to write their own individual prevention plan," said Mrs. Penna, Dean of Students.

Mt. Greylock's own plan is in the works, although both Penna and Superintendent Dr. Ellis asserted that the high school has always had rules against bullying, and that the new law simply strengthens them and raises awareness. Mt. Greylock's plan, called the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, defines bullying and related terms, sets procedures for community members reporting bullying, and creates an agenda for dealing with bullying. Intervention steps include interviewing the "target,"

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1 in 650: An Interview with Rebekeh Packer

By LUKE COSTLEY



Photo: Rebekeh Packer

This month the Echo chose to interview Rebekeh Packer on her outstanding work with the Youth Environmental Squad and her continued pursuit of making Mount Greylock a greener place. As leader of YES, Rebekeh shared insights into her role in the squad and why she decided to get involved. Rebekeh also touched on the history of the organization, the current issues facing it and the greater school community, and the bright future YES has in store.

Q: Give us a quick preface about the Youth Environmental Squad (YES).

A: YES was started by Patrick Madden within the past four years, I think around 2006. It is an organization of students whose goal is to make Mount Greylock a greener school and currently YES is working towards this goal with many different projects.

Q: Okay, so how about some of the finer details? Who is involved and who can get involved?

A: Anyone and everyone interested can join. YES is open to students in grades seven through twelve, there is no activity fee, and people can be involved to any degree they want. We try to meet once a week, and right now, we have a very enthusiastic group of middle school students helping out.

Q: Clearly you are playing a large role in the squad's success this year after Patrick graduated. What is your role?

A: Well, people call me the YES "president," but really everyone helping out has taken responsibility. Both students and adults in the building have been very help-

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*The Echo is
RECYCLABLE!
Please do NOT
throw it in the
trash when done
reading.*

THE BOOK WORM

Pearl Sutter debuts as the Echo's book reviewer.

See Page 3.

Cartoon!

Mary Laidlaw supplies the Echo with another witty doodle this month.

See Page 3.

Theater Preview: Love's Labour's Lost

Hannah Paul gives a sneak peak into Mount Greylock's upcoming Shakespeare production.

Read about it on page 2.

New and Improved Teacher Contract

Ned Kleiner reports on the changes that the newly approved contract will bring for MG teachers.

See page 3.

Faces in the Crowd

Turn to Page 5 for an exclusive interview with tri-sport athlete Kim Houston.

Sports Feature:

Tom Dils writes on the unparalleled success of Greylock's sports teams this season.
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then the “reporter,” then the “alleged aggressor(s),” then determining the “merit and plausibility of the report,” and finally establishing appropriate consequences and measures, including alerting the police, if necessary. The plan’s consequence guidelines are vague, because “bullying behavior can take many forms and can vary dramatically in its seriousness and its impact on the target and other students.” The plan also discusses professional development and initiatives with students and parents. For example, the school intends to send home an annual document “about the student-related sections of the plan and the school’s Internet safety policy.” The plan, though not specific because its purpose must span the high school as well as Williamstown and Lanesborough elementary schools, takes significant steps in the direction that the legislation has pushed it. The plan will be available on the website and is open for feedback.

To successfully eradicate bullying, common language is needed. After all, if everyone has a different definition of bullying, how will anyone decide whether or not an instance truly is bullying? Mrs. Penna said that since

the law’s legislation, she has seen an increased awareness, both in teachers and students, but people are unsure what exactly qualifies as bullying. The law defines bullying as “the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof directed at a victim.” Finding the line between bad behavior and full-fledged bullying is a precarious art. “It’s the point where you think about it all the time,” said Stant. “It’s the point when you don’t want to go back.”

In both the high school and middle school, bullying is undeniably a part of life for some students. Recent instances have included a physical fight as well as online taunting, and at least one case in the past year included police involvement. “There is crazy tension sometimes,” said seventh grader Jasper Rosenheim of the school’s social scene.

To address the issue of bullying, Mrs. Penna plans to eventually show all students a PowerPoint that discourages malicious acts. Recently, an effort has surfaced to begin a GSA (gay-straight alliance), and the day of wearing purple was widely regarded as a success. An increased number of bullying reports, both with teach-

ers and students, shows that bullying awareness has increased with the new legislation.

Many have more specific ideas as to how bullying can be addressed. Junior Kelsey Goodwin said students should “try to stick up for [the person being bullied]”, while Barrett asserted that “for kids to come forward, they need to feel comfortable,” so good student-teacher relations are vital. Ellis thinks an important part is getting students to consider, “what could you do that’s different than just standing and watching?” “You’re not going to stand there and let yourself be walked on,” said Stant.

The journey toward an environment where everyone is constantly treated with respect is perhaps an unrealistic dream, but measures can certainly be taken in that direction. High school social studies teacher Mr. Ostheimer said, “The more honest people can be about their experiences, the more we can accomplish. We’ve all seen both sides. We need to take away the stigma to create an ongoing conversation.” With the new legislation, a conversation has indeed begun.

ANTI - BULLYING RESOURCES

Here are some contacts if you or someone you know could use help involving bullying, either as the victim or the perpetrator.

In person:

- Peer Team—This group of Mt. Greylock juniors and seniors meets second period every day to deal with issues about peer mediation and counseling. Peer Team members are trained to meet confidentially to help solve problems.
- Reporting form—according to the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, anonymous bullying reporting sheets are available in the principal’s office.
- A teacher or other adult you trust—under the new law, adults working at Mt. Greylock are required to report bullying if they know about it. In other words, if a teacher tries to ignore your pleas for help, he or she is breaking the law. Also, teachers will receive training in regard to bullying, so they will hopefully be able to respond appropriately.

Online:

- Stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov—This US government-maintained website playfully offers tips on how to deal with bullying, complete with playful animal cartoons.
- <http://www.cyberbullying.us>--Offers a database of information regarding cyberbullying and abuse of the Internet.
- Us.reachout.com—A website targeted at helping teens get through many issues pertaining to “tough times,” including bullying.

By Phone:

- The Trevor Project—A 24-hour, toll-free, confidential suicide hotline for LGBTQ youth. (866)-488-7386
- United States Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration—A government organization with an initiative to end bullying. (877)-SAMHSA-7 (877-726-4727)

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ful so it doesn’t all fall to me.

Q: And what sparked your interest in YES?

A: I’ve been interested in the environment ever since I knew what is was. My mom has always been trying to make our house greener; we have a power-strip and clothesline at home. And I think that the environment is one of, if not the most important issue of our generation. So I joined YES as soon as I could.

Q: What impact does YES have on Greylock as of now? What are the squad’s major projects?

A: Our biggest projects around the school are two composting earth machines, “turn-off Tuesdays,” and recycling bins. We also purchased vending-mizers, which conserve energy and save money for the school in the vending machines, and we are looking into creating new plans for our can and bottle recycling system.

Q: How have you been able to promote these projects and make them a success?

A: YES has relied on fund-raising and community support to succeed. We traditionally sell sunglasses at the end of the year and we will keep on doing so. We have also received support from the Student Council and Williams College. One new idea we have is to sell YES duffle bags, but that is still in the works.

Q: Final thoughts on your work and on the Youth Environmental Squad as a whole?

A: It’s exciting for me to be in charge of YES because it’s something I care about and I’ve never been in charge of anything before. And I’m optimistic about YES’s growth in years to come because all the students and teachers working with me have been really helpful.

NEWLY APPROVED CONTRACT DIFFERS FROM OLD IN TWO MAJOR WAYS

By NED KLEINER

On October 14, the Mount Greylock School Committee voted to approve a new teacher contract. This contract was retroactive for one year, and will run until the end of the 2011-2012 school year. This contract is different from its predecessor in two major ways: it changes the stipend structure, and it grants the teachers Cost of Living Adjustments.

Teachers receive stipends for running extracurricular activities such as the soccer team, the musical, or the yearbook. Until the new contract was agreed upon, the amount each teacher was paid depended on a stipend structure that hadn’t been changed in many years, which many believed was behind the times. The new formula for calculating payments, which was decided upon by the School Committee based on suggestions by a Stipend Committee, contains changes for some of the activities. For example, the IRIS advisor will receive 4% of his or her annual salary, up from 2%; the track coach will receive 13%, up from 12%; and the musical director’s stipend decreases from 14.5% to 13%.

The most important change, though, is that all teachers are receiving what the contract calls Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA). COLA’s are supposed to allow teachers’ salaries to keep up with inflation, and so are usually tied to the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Mr. Blackman, president of the Mt. Greylock Teachers’ Association, says of the contract, “it contains [salary] increases which I think are reasonable for the times that we’re in.” The new contract gives the teachers’ a retroactive COLA of .5% for the 2009-2010 school year, which amounts to about \$325 per

teacher. For comparison, the inflation rate in 2009 was -.34%, meaning that prices for consumer goods actually declined. The contract also guarantees teachers a 1.5% COLA for the current school year, and the same amount for next year. Adding this all up, teachers will be paid 3.54% more in September 2011 than they were in 2009, not counting the annual step increases for increasing seniority. The annualized inflation rate for the month of September was 1.15% (keep in mind, however, that because of income tax, COLA’s are actually worth significantly less to the teachers than it first appears).

How will this affect the school? The changes in the stipend structure will largely only affect individual teachers, as the total amount of money being rewarded for extracurriculars remains relatively constant. The COLA, however, represents a sizable increase in Mount Greylock’s nondiscretionary spending. Over 3 years, it represents about \$290,000. Where is the money for that coming from? \$55,000 per year is coming directly from reduced administrative costs due to Mount Greylock joining Union 71, with possibly another \$25,000 in indirect savings. \$24,000 will be taken out of the School Choice account, which is effectively a revolving account that allows Mount Greylock to maintain liquidity. Another \$110,000 will come from an Education Jobs Grant that Mount Greylock received as a result of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, (ARRA) commonly referred to as “the stimulus,” which is intended to help school districts either add or preserve jobs, leaving around \$15,000 still to be accounted for.

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

CHOOSE TO MAKE A CHANGE

By LAURA ROSENTHAL

Editors' Note: Students in Mr. Dils's AP 12 English class all write a Senior Speech on a topic meaningful to them. Laura Rosenthal's speech, printed below, ties into the the schoolwide theme of bullying awareness. The views expressed are solely her own.

White Power. That is a phrase I have been hearing increasingly as of late. It is thrown around in the hallways, on Facebook, at social gatherings. What started as a joke between a few friends is quickly spreading into something potentially dangerous. What would compel anyone to proclaim "White power! The South will rise again!" What would compel a group of kids, on a day where we wore purple to support the cause of six boys who killed themselves after being bullied excessively, to come to school dressed in all white? Six boys, the youngest of whom was eleven, took their own lives because they could not bear to live another day in the presence of such close-minded people. And a small group of kids, from our school, thought it would be funny to wear white as a symbol of white supremacy.

I am not a pacifist. In fact, I would consider myself a very passionate person. I am easily stirred into action, maybe sometimes a little too easily. But I am proud to be that way. I am a Jew. And those of you who have known me for a long time know that I have always been proud of that. Yes, I am a full-blown, Jew camp attending, Yiddish phrase speaking, matzo ball eating Jew, and I would not trade that for anything. My paternal great grandparents emigrated from Russia to escape the pogroms. My maternal grandfather made TNT for the British in World War Two. I am only a third generation American at best. But I will not let anyone make me feel inferior because of it.

To my knowledge, none of these White Power kids has taken it that far yet. I still think most of them to be generally good children who are just letting their ignorance shine. I am not saying they do not realize they're being racist, but I truly believe they do not understand the level at which they are offending. They fear change. They hate anything different or foreign. But saying "white power" goes a lot further than that. It also says they hate people of color, they hate the Jews, they hate the handicapped, they hate the gays. The principles that they half-wittingly support are the same that the Ku Klux Klan was founded on. They wave the Confederate flag with big smiles on their faces and yell "the South will rise again!" What they are trying to say is "Yay we're hicks! Look how cool we are". What they are actually saying is "We support slavery and the lynching of blacks! We will stifle anyone who believes that blacks should have equal rights!"

Not only are they putting themselves in line with one of the most feared and hated groups in America, but they are also echoing the ideas of the world's biggest murderer: Adolph Hitler. Hitler dreamed of the existence of an Aryan race, a race of blond haired, blue-eyed humans. He killed eleven million people for its cause. Eleven million individuals who were loved, who had loved ones. And all the carnage was a result of an idea. So yes, when they say "white power," they say a lot.

What really gets to my core though, what makes me so wrought with emotion that I am unable to speak, is not the offensiveness that these boys expel. It is not the ignorance they demonstrate, or the root of what they advocate. It is the helplessness. It is the frustration. The fact that I do not have the power to change the way they think, or to make them see the error of their ways. It

makes me want to scream out loud. The possibility that some of them may live their entire lives carrying these beliefs makes me want to run through walls. There was one day where this wave of inability crashed over me so hard that it knocked me off my feet and dragged me into its raging waters. I completely gave myself over to emotion; let the tears fall as I drowned in my own helplessness.

Plenty of people tried to pull me out of it. They said things like "you need to be strong, this is the satisfaction they want". But I do not believe that. They sat with me and rubbed my back. But this feeling penetrated far deeper than any hug could go. My blood was on fire and I was literally suffocated by all the words building up in my throat. I was searching, but I could not find a lifeline until I was sitting tear-stained and shaking in front of Ms. Penna.

In the half an hour that I spent in Ms. Penna's office, two things happened. The first was that I had one of those life-changing epiphanies. I always knew I had strong opinions, but it suddenly became clear to me that I am more than that. I am a fighter. And if I let myself, I am going to become one of those crazy activists who sits in a tree for months and poops in a bucket. Maybe not quite that extreme, but you see my point. The second was that Ms. Penna said something I know I will remember for the rest of my life. She told me that I do not have the power to change a mind. I can only try to open it a little, in the hopes that other factors will seize the opportunity to work their way into the new crack. In this way the crack will broaden, and the mind will continue to open further.

There is still uncertainty; this method is not foolproof. But there is no definite solution. There is no guarantee, and no more time to waste. How much longer do we have before this group takes it to the next level? When will they start getting specific and choosing victims? When will violence be incorporated into the "fun"? I do not want to believe that any child is that heartless, especially not any of the ones who walk the same hallways as me. And I do not want to wait to find out.

So now I ask for your help, because I cannot hope to do this alone. I ask you to join me in a fight, not against these students, but against their ignorance. I ask you to embrace your individuality, your differences, and wear them proudly. When you hear someone say "white power," I ask you to find the courage to say "that's not okay." I ask you to have each other's back. Stand up for your friends and yourself, even if you are the type of person who prefers not to get involved. One voice cannot drown out a quartet. But a quartet cannot drown out a chorus.

We have the power to make a difference here. The group of kids who choose to promote something they do not understand is a small one, and we hear them crystal clear. We who oppose greatly outnumber them. So imagine how loud we could be if we chose to unite. The scariest part of the Holocaust is that if it happened once, it can happen again. It is our responsibility to not let it happen again here, even if it is on a much smaller scale. Choose to speak. Choose to be heard. Choose to make a change.

THE BOOK WORM

By PEARL SUTTER



Title:

East

Written By:

Edith Pattou

Price:

\$8.95 (hardcover)

It's school time again and time to pick up a good book. I know some people have not read as many books as they should have over the summer, but now is the time to catch up by adding a few more good books to your shelves. There are many fantastic books out in the world. Some books have intense action, while others are the addicting romantic love stories. There are books with horribly sad tragedies, and others that could never ever be depressing. All those books are great, but *East* is really the book you should curl up on the couch and read.

East is not the newest book in the bookstore. It has been around for just about five years now, but it is a book everyone should definitely read. Of course there are other novels with troll queens, talking white bears, and a girl who has done the most terribly wrong thing out of curiosity, yet I have never read any other books will all of those interesting features.

Before I tell you about this book I will explain a style of writing which many people may find down right confusing. This style of writing invades the three or four of the characters' minds and listens to their thoughts. So there is no one narrator. The point of view in the story will switch continually and you must keep that in mind while you are reading.

There is another technique Pattou uses in this book that is a little different than usual. I must warn you that there are two story lines woven into this book. At first when you are reading, the supposed random chapters from the point of view of the troll queen will not make any sense. They will all of a sudden pop into the story leaving you thinking, WHAT! At first these chapters will just confuse you but do not be discouraged, you will find out what they mean, eventually.

So now you are probably thinking, what is this story re-

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Cartoon

BY MARY LAIDLAW



A LABOR OF LOVE

By HANNAH PAUL

Only William Shakespeare could pull off having cheesy pick-up lines, a sword brandishing Spaniard, a pompous schoolmaster, and bad Russian accents in one play. Such is the case in this year's production of *Love's Labour's Lost*. Set with a backdrop of 18th century France, the play unfolds outside the castle of Ferdinand of Navarre. He and his three loyal lords have sworn an oath that for three years they will study diligently and avoid women at all costs. Coincidentally, no sooner have they signed their contract that the Princess of France and her three lovely ladies come to speak with Navarre and his men and, as should happen in any good romantic comedy, all fall hopelessly in love with one another. Alongside this story is that of Costard, a man who has been arrested for being seen speaking with Jacquinetta, a country wench. Conflict arises when Don Adriano de Armado confesses that he is in love with Jacquinetta. The two plots weave seamlessly with one another, along with some help from a group of scholars, creating a truly unique show. The production is in collaboration with the 22nd annual Fall Festival of Shakespeare, a program where professional actors from Shakespeare and Company in Lenox travel to ten schools around western Massachusetts, eastern New York, and even one school near Boston. Participating students have opportunities to interact with each other through various acting intensives, "common classes," and at the Festival itself: an epic four day marathon of every school's performances at the Shakespeare and Company theater. "I'm really impressed," says Maggie Crane. "Not many other schools get to do something like this."

This year's performances will be held on Friday, November 12th and Saturday, the 13th in the Mount Greylock theatre and on Saturday, the 20th at Founder's Theatre at

and Saturday nights at 7:00pm. The fall Shakespeare program is highly regarded as being unlike any other production at the school. Throughout the 400

Director Jon Croy is especially enthusiastic about this year's play. "It's so unique," he says. "I've only been able to work on it once before, but this year I've just absolutely fallen in love with it." "It's a very modern romance," says Crane. Freshman Evelyn Mahon expresses similar ideas, saying, "It's a very eclectic play." As most of you probably know already, last year's senior class was extremely talented. At first, the cast seemed void of its integral part, but Croy says he "likes how it's sort of a new beginning. Last year's seniors kind of ran the place, but I like how we're creating how it's going to be for the next couple years." Also, the seasoned participants have expressed excitement over the massive explosion of middle schoolers this year. Kim DiLego says she's excited for the "future talent" they represent. She hopes they will keep Shakespeare alive for many years to come. DiLego also commented that "we make a really great team this year." Although this year's cast has only one senior, the remaining grades have been able to pull their weight as role models and important cast members.

Although it seems like a lot of work, through common classes, daily rehearsals and tech week, the cast becomes extremely close. Sophomore Arianna Bashara puts it plainly, and all the cast agrees, "It's like a family." The tightly-knit community makes this year shine like no other, so make sure to save the dates for *Love's Labour's Lost*, which will surely make you laugh and cry, and certainly keep you entertained and surprised through every second.



Mount Greylock thespians are laboring tirelessly to put on a stellar performance of Shakespeare's Love's Labour's Lost.

Photo: Hannah Paul

Shakespeare and Company. This will be after eight weeks of hard work, one week of which will be spent in what is known as "tech week." Tech week is a week of rehearsals that, instead of going until the normal 5:15 bus, continue to 9:00pm. The show will be performed Friday morning for the middle school and then on Friday

years since these classic plays were written, styles have changed in more than just the language. The plays usually contain no character emotion hints or stage directions. "It really makes you look into the text and decipher who your character is yourself," says junior Peter Iwasiwka, who is playing the role of Don Adriano.

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Miller agrees, asking, "Why do you need a phone while you're trying to learn?" Many students, however, disagree with the strictness of the policy. Sophomore Blake Sherman thinks students "should at least be allowed to carry their phones, because a lot of people break into other people's lockers, and you don't want it to get stolen." Renzi agrees that students should be allowed to keep phones in their pockets: "You need to have your phone. My mom texts me."

Trudy Ames, another English teacher, says the Handbook has "a good policy overall." She thinks, however, that we should "start thinking of ways to use cell phones in class." Because many cell phones have cameras, she suggests an activity where students photograph each other and then practice writing skills by describing the

pictures. "There's so much we can do now," she says.

This idea—of utilizing personal electronics in class—has inspired an experiment among the eighth grade team. Team leader Pat Blackman, tired of confiscating phones, says, "we decided as a group that we wanted to ask for permission to change the way we do things."

Eighth graders now keep their phones not in their pockets but on their desks. If a student picks up a phone to text, the teacher tells the student to put down the phone, but doesn't confiscate it. "[Texting in class] is disruptive," says Mr. Blackman, "so we need to handle it in a way where we're not being tyrants."

Additionally, the eighth grade team is trying to use technology in the curriculum. Its shared files are stored on Dropbox, where all team members can access them

over the Internet from any computer. Some teachers also use Ebeam, a digital, projected "white board" that lets a teacher save whole boards full of notes.

Most importantly, the team is experimenting with ways to "leverage the technology that's in kids' pockets." This initiative is just getting started. With support from the rest of the team, especially from special education teacher Martin Walter, Mr. Blackman has done two class experiments with cell phones. In one, Wiffiti let students text their answers to a question anonymously to an Internet page that was being projected on the board. Another experiment used Poll Everywhere to ask kids to think about their performance on a quiz. Mr. Blackman says these reflections can be "more meaningful if you're interacting with technology... at least, kids pay more attention." He also hopes to "teach kids how to use those technologies wisely and

appropriately." Many people struggle to draw the line between which uses are appropriate and which aren't. An irony: in interviewing for this article, this reporter often read aloud the prohibitive cell phone policy—yet she recorded interviews with her phone. A majority of students carry their phones during class at least some of the time, and it seems many are not even aware they shouldn't. Only half of the six students interviewed knew the policy exactly, and two said they bring their phones to class. "As long as it's in your pocket, [teachers] don't care," says sophomore Miranda Park. The world is developing rapidly, and students are more and more enveloped in technology. Meanwhile, teachers and students at Mt. Greylock will continue to look for a balance between eliminating distraction and utilizing technology.



STUDENT COUNCIL UPDATE

The 2010-2011 Mt. Greylock Student Council would like to update you on what its been working on so far. This body decreased in size from twenty-four members to twenty for this school year, and so far the smaller number has helped it to work efficiently.

We have helped to modify the science policy relating to participation grades. We sponsored the 4H Can Drive (which is still going on) and organized the collection with help from Angelina Mangiardi. We participated in Bob Moses's education discussion. We ran the mock election that took place on October 28th. We are currently working closely with GSA to help their club grow in membership.

Looking forward, our future projects include assisting Mrs. Mendel in a trivia night to fundraise for the Mike O'Brien Scholarship. We also are participating in the SEE Fund Cell-a-thon evening. And don't forget, Christmas is not too far away, so start thinking about the lovely candy-cane messages you will be sending.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE WILLIAMS CENTER

The Williams Center at Mount Greylock has been busy this fall, providing students with a wide array of opportunities and experiences. One recent highlight was local authors Karen and Jim Shepard's visit to Greylock on October 18th. Karen and Jim spoke with the 8th and 10th grades, reading excerpts from their own work and giving insight into the life of a writer. The visit was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Another highlight was the dance workshop put on by ZviDance/Zoom. Greylock students of all abilities embraced this chance to learn from the talented, dynamic dancers. The Williams Center is also the organizer of the on-going college essay consultations, an incredibly valuable resource for seniors. This is just a sampling of the many activities the Williams Center is involved in; please check mgrhs.org for a full calendar of events. Thank you to the Williams Center for all the opportunities it provides!



Jim and Karen Shepard present to Greylock students in a workshop coordinated by the Williams Center at Mount Greylock. Photo: Liz Costley

JCL HAPPENINGS

On October 23rd, before the gym was full of high-schoolers in lovely semi-formal attire, 250 young classicists from across the state wandered the halls. The annual Massachusetts Junior Classical League Kick-off Event had once again come around. The day opened with Mrs. Keeley laying out the ground-rules and Alyssa Tomkowicz, MassJCL Editor, welcoming the Eastern visitors to the school. After entertainment featuring former Greylock teacher, Dr. Petruzella, and a Latin rendition of the YMCA by the MassJCL Executive Board, the JCLers ran off to play certamen, launch marshmallow catapults, or tour the Clark Art Institute. After two sessions of these activities as well as lunch and hula hoop and worm competitions, everyone gathered outside for the main event: the launching of the large catapults. While Mount Greylock did not launch a large catapult this year, it was still exhilarating to watch the 8-pound shot-puts and pumpkins soar through the air. After a closing ceremony complete with catapult results and an officers' skit, the Eastern classicists boarded their buses, all agreeing this year's event was one of the best yet.

Book Worm, Continued from Page 3

ally about? Here it is. This is a story of a girl named Rose who finds that she is very different from all of her six siblings. Rose enjoys exploring and always disappears at the strangest times. She is what people would now call a wild child. There is also a white bear. This bear takes Rose away from her family so that he can have company. You see, the white bear is not really a white bear, it is actually a human turned into a bear by a troll queen. This troll queen had fallen in love with a human boy, who was against the troll people's rules, so to punish the queen, her father transformed the boy with whom she was in love into a white bear. Rose does not know that the white bear is actually human. She does not find out until the fateful night when she tried to see him. When she tries to see the white bear in his human form, the troll queen takes him to her palace. Then Rose, because she feels guilty about what has just happened, travels all the way to the ice palace of the trolls to rescue him. Finally, Rose and the white bear's fate intertwine to create a wonderful story, full of love, action and adventure.

For all of those people who want a book that will leave them feeling really connected to the characters and that will leave them smiling at the end, I certainly recommend this book. So get started.

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 the Echo Office at the back of the library, typically during early lunch on Mondays.

Next Issue: December, 2010
Copy Deadline: Wednesday, December 1st, 2010

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FACES IN THE CROWD: KIM HOUSTON

By TOM DILS



Photo: Kim Houston

Kim Houston is a senior three-sport athlete at Greylock. Besides anchoring the soccer team's defense, she is a leader of the basketball and lacrosse teams. We spoke with her about her passion for athletics.

ECHO: What are some of the reasons your defense has been able to lead the Mounties soccer program to many wins this season?

KIM: Besides Kristina Wadsworth, who has been an exceptional addition to this year's team, Eliza [Densmore], Siri [Mason] and I have been in front of Margot [Besnard] since my freshmen year. I think we know each others strengths and weaknesses, and the experience helps us stay strong. Communication is a huge factor, and we work well together.

ECHO: You are a dedicated 3-sport athlete. Do you have a favorite?

KIM: I've always been asked, "Do I have a favorite?" and the answer is "no." I try to focus on the season I'm in and enjoy it to the fullest. I just love being in season no matter which one it is.

ECHO: Do you plan to continue with any of your sports in college?

KIM: I've talked to some coaches about soccer, but I'm not sure if I've fully committed to one sport. There is no doubt I will play at the club or intramural level if I don't go out for any varsity teams.

ECHO: Which school in the county is it most fun to beat?

KIM: For basketball, Drury has always been a rival. We beat them for the first time 2 years ago, which was the first time we had beaten them in as long as some people could remember.

ECHO: What is your favorite memory of your Greylock athletic career?

KIM: I think I have two favorite memories. In 8th grade I was on JV basketball. We were playing Lee, and getting crushed, but I drained a half-court shot in the final seconds. Last season, we played Drury at home and the game was close to the end. Within a matter of only a few minutes, I blocked Cassie Lincoln twice to save some critical points. They were both great feelings.

ECHO: Do you think you'd ever want to work professionally in sports? What are some other passions you wish to follow?

KIM: I really enjoy coaching younger kids. They are so excited to play and I love their passion and energy. If a solid opportunity arrived I would definitely like to coach. Some other interests include possibly teaching

MG DOMINATES FALL SPORTS

By TOM DILS

As of November 1st, the overall record of Greylock's fall sports teams is 79 wins, 15 losses, and 4 ties. In a school where sports are an integral part of the school environment, we've all come to expect Greylock to be on the winning end more than the losing one. But 79 wins and only 15 losses? That means that we win 84% of the time we play, or about five out of every six games. In pro sports, teams would almost always be at the top of their leagues with a record like this.

Let's look a little closer at the individual teams. Right now, five out of seven teams are in first place in their leagues. Boys' and girls' cross-country are both 14-0 heading into the post-season. Volleyball is 15-1, tied with rival Wahconah atop the standings. Boys' soccer is undefeated as well, 15-0-1, with a chance at the first undefeated season in recent memory. And of course, the football team is tearing through Berkshire County with an 8-0 record. All together, these records add up to 67-1-1, a .985 winning percentage. These numbers are almost unbelievable. And don't forget, Greylock is the seventh largest school in the county.

Comparing ourselves to other schools in the county is almost unfair. Wahconah is in second place in overall record this fall and could potentially win three league titles, but with only one undefeated team to Greylock's four, it's

clear they're no match for our athletic supremacy. No other school in the county will win a league title or have an undefeated team.

Said Matt Cheung, top runner on the cross-country team, "It's cool how

lock has unbelievable participation. If you've ever had a chance to watch a cross-country practice where both boys and girls run splits, the sheer numbers are astounding. It seems as if there isn't enough room for everyone to fit around

extra-special.

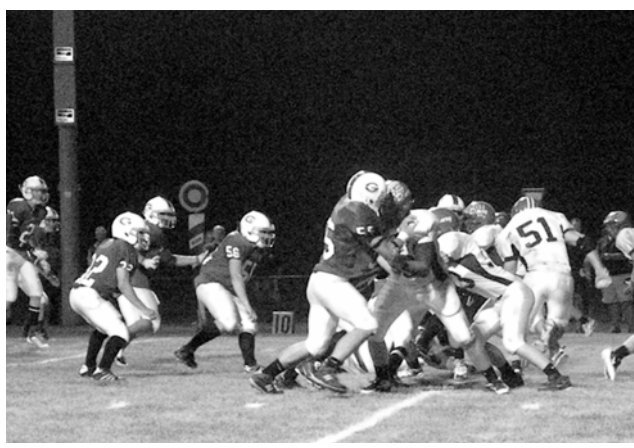
Another form of participation is the support every team receives from the student body. You help the teams in many ways: appreciation on team-spirit days, huge crowds on game days, and

a general awareness for how each and every team is doing. Spirit week was a lot of fun, as it always is, but this year everyone dug a little deeper with the costumes and body paint. As Coach Dils noted, "This year was the best participation in spirit week that I've ever seen at Greylock." That is saying something.

Greylock cares about its sports, and the support is paying off this fall. We could not have five teams in first place in their leagues without a passion for our school. Athletes work hard every day with the desire to win because they do not want to let their peers and the school down.

"The support and spirit is there no matter what, and that is what makes this school special," said Coach Burdick. The fall of 2010 has turned out to be quite the season for Greylock athletics, but behind the records is the school unity that

makes winning meaningful. As teams head off to Western Mass and States, we all know that the school spirit will only increase. Keep coming to the games, and hopefully the wins will keep coming as well.



Mountie sports teams have been very successful this fall. Clockwise from top left, the boys' soccer team, the girls' cross-country team, the boys' cross-country team, and the football team have all enjoyed undefeated seasons.

Photos: Katie Rathbun and Tamara Hitchcock

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VOLLEYBALL

By ALEX WHITE

The Mt. Greylock volleyball team stands atop the county with a 15-1 record. The only blemish on the season came in an early season loss to Wachonah. Since then, Greylock has dominated the league, including beating Wachonah recently in a battle of the two best teams in the county. Senior Alexandra Levinsky and juniors Alyssa Mangiardi and Meaghan Albert captain the Mounties. The team pulls from experience as well as young talent, and has achieved a spectacular season so far. Besides the dominating performance against Wachonah, two other victories stand out. On October 19th, the Mounties pulled off a spectacular 25-12, 25-21, 25-16 win over Lenox. Levinsky had twelve



Photo: Katie Rathbun

kills, six digs, and three aces, and Mangiardi had 13 assists and two aces. In the latest victory, the Mounties had a showdown with the girls from Monument that was decided on the last few points. With the Spartans closing in on victory, the Mounties won the last three points for a 3-2 victory. Levinsky had eighteen kills and three aces, while newcomer Michaela Dean had eight kills, three aces, and twenty-one assists. The win cemented the girls as tops in the county. Greylock now looks to the playoffs to continue their success and improve upon an already excellent season. Their outstanding record and probable high seed will give the Mounties a chance at a title.

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