

Grinding at Greylock too Graphic?

By RORI BROWN

School dances are different than they once were—that much is clear. “Grinding” has overwhelmingly become the most common style of dancing among high-schoolers at Mt. Greylock, and, since the homecoming dance in November, a topic of debate. For the majority of students, appropriate etiquette has never been a problem, but when Greylock began receiving calls from concerned parents after the most recent dance, students and faculty alike took it as a wake-up call. According to principal Mr. Payne, there will be no letter sent home dictating new rules for school dances; rather, he hopes that students will take the responsibility of being respectful of their peers and tone down any dancing that is too graphic. “It is the same responsibility as the DJ has with the music,” says Payne, who includes that, keeping in mind that dances are a school function, students need to remind themselves and each other what is acceptable versus what is not acceptable. Payne also believes that the vast majority of students are “really nice, responsible kids,” and that with just a few

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*Directed study gives students 28 minutes each day to spend on schoolwork.
Photo: Naomi LaChance*

DIRECTED STUDY

By REBEKEH PACKER

Students may be returning from February break to a new schedule that includes a period called “directed study.” The directed study system sets apart 28 minutes between third and fourth period for students to do homework and get help from teachers. Directed study happens at the same time every day, but students go to a different classroom each day, on a seven day rotation.

To create the new schedule, Principal Tim Payne removed 4 minutes from each class and “shaved a little off of break,” he says. The school day is two minutes longer, which is why the installation of directed study

was delayed. Payne wanted to start the new system at the beginning of the second semester, but with the buses picking up Greylock students two minutes later, Lanesborough and Williamstown Elementary Schools were afraid they would arrive late for the younger students. As of this writing, Payne said that he planned to have the wrinkles ironed out and start the new system on February 28.

“We do seven periods a day,” says Payne, “and there’s really no break.” Directed study is attempting to “carve out some time during the day for students to meet with teachers [and] get some help

on homework.”

Junior Mary Laidlaw says, “It’s something students have been requesting for a long time and can take a lot of stress away from their lives.” Sophomore Lindsey Wick also likes the idea: “I like to get my work out of the way when I get home so I can do other things.” Dylan Goff, a Greylock senior, says he will use directed study time for “homework—because I don’t do it.”

Support isn’t absolute, however. Leah Miller, a junior, thinks “there are problems” with direct-

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1 in 650: An Interview with Jackson Kleiser

By TOM DILS

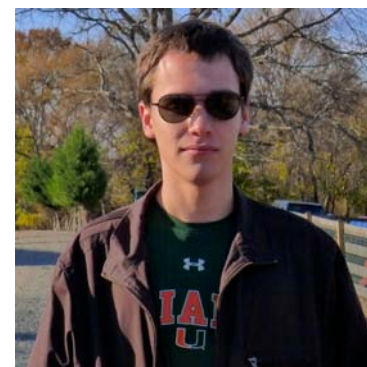


Photo: Diana Walczak

Jackson Kleiser is a junior at Mt. Greylock who participates in a sport that not many of you know much about: fencing. We sat down with him to ask him about his passion for this sport, and we hope to learn a little bit about fencing as well.

Q: What got you interested in fencing initially?

A: I was nine years old when a friend suggested I try fencing. I’d always been interested in sword fighting, and never realized it was a sport.

Q: What parts of the sport appeal to you the most?

A: Fencing...is largely a mind game. Although the strength and speed that comes with time are important, much more so are the tactics that one employs. The mark of good fencer is found in his or her ability to outsmart and deceive an opponent.

Q: How often do you practice, and where do you do so?

A: Until very recently, I practiced fencing for a few hours a night on Tuesdays and Thursdays, in Dalton at the Berkshire Buccaneers Fencing Academy, run by Bernie Desautels, who is a Level IV (Master) Coach. Unfortunately, a few weeks ago he had to close his salle, but he is still available for private lessons.

Echo: What do you do now

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\$34,000 DEFECIT IN SPORTS BUDGET

By HALLIE WALKER

The School Committee voted in January to appropriate \$34,000 to the Athletic extracurricular budget to cover a deficit created by years of spending money that was not the department’s to spend. The error was first identified five years ago when the school’s budget was audited. According to Athletic Director Lindsey Von Holtz, the audit report was not understood by the past administrators and the mistake persisted, resulting in the \$34,000 deficit.

Mount Greylock’s new business manager, Jennifer Coscia, discovered the mismanagement of the funds when reviewing last year’s audit. Coscia explained that each school function has its own “fund balance,” like a checking account, from which money is spent.

Five years ago, a fund balance bank statement was misread by an administrator. The combination of misreading the fund balance account statements and taking money out of the general fund, Coscia says, “overstated what was available to spend” and resulted in the Athletic Department “owing” money to the general fund because of repeated withdrawals. Coscia put the deficit and Athletic Department’s budget in perspective, saying it represents

only two percent of the school’s budget and that there will be little to no effect on the total appropriated budget.

This error only affected Mount Greylock’s after-school sports. Physical education and in-school sports are completely separate line items in the Mount Greylock’s total budget. Physics teacher Sean Burdick manages the in-school athletic budget. He says that the “school combined gym and science curriculums are under one leader who is in charge of coordinating courses, and ordering equipment needed by the teachers and coaches.” The course leader then submits a budget request to the business department based on the equipment requirements. The health curriculum relies solely on grants for the materials it requires as it is not allotted for in the school’s total budget, and so is also unaffected by Athletic Department’s budget.

But what impact will the misappropriated funds have on our school sports? Ath-Von Holtz says that thanks to the \$34,000 gap-closer, the only impact on the Athletic Department will be a lack of funds for new equipment for about two years. However, there are currently only two line items left in the budget for after-school sports: mon-

ey for officials and money for team transportation. Von Holz, who is in the middle of preparing next year’s athletic budget, warns, there isn’t enough to cover those expenses. To put things in perspective, a recent basketball game brought in \$300, but, according to Von Holz, “each JV official cost \$53, each Varsity official cost \$75, and each person manning the table was paid \$35”; after totalling the payroll, costs of officials alone outstripped the generated income from the game. Football games paint an even starker contrast between income and expenses. For each game, the gate brings in \$400 to \$500; the costs of the ambulance, officials, and managers add to around \$1000. This shortfall leaves a substantial amount for the athletic department to pay out of pocket.

Despite the steep costs, the Athletic Director, Superintendent, and School Committee member Carrie Green all predict no change in the sports or gate fees for next year. The \$100 athletic participation fee each student pays is paid to the

Sports Budget, Continued on Page 2

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

BRING ON THE OSCARS!

Maggie Crane graces readers with her thoughts on recent performances in films.

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CROSSWORD

Try it if you dare.

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The Man Behind the Blog

The editors scored a visit to the GSD blogger’s snow observation lair, and learned the truth (or some of it) behind the blog’s mysterious staff.

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Thoroughly Modern Millie

The musical about a 1920s flapper in New York City hits the Greylock stage on March 3, 4, and 5.

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Egypt’s Revolution

Williams adjunct professor and Mt. Greylock parent was in Cairo during protests.

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Co-op Sports

Due to lack of participation, sports teams are formed between area high schools.

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\$34,000 DEFECIT IN SPORTS BUDGET

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Athletic Department where the list of payments is broken down into each division of sports. The list and money is then given to the Business Offices where the fees are pooled, then divided for the coaches' salary allotments, which are decided in part by the number of athletes playing a sport. Because coaches' salaries are not a part of the Athletic Department's revolving account in which the error was made, they are left unchanged.

Participation in after school sports is a driving force at Mount Greylock, and perhaps directly effects more students than any other extra-curricular. With a predicted tight fiscal year ahead of the school, the Athletic Department's troubles are not over. But with the assurance of the administration, it appears our teams will continue to be monetarily supported as we train hard, win big, and defend our school on the course, court, slopes, and field. ■■■



*Quentin Anderson, left, and Alyssa Mangiardi swing dance during the end of semester unit in gym class.
Photo: Katie Rathbun*

SPRINGFIELD CAN'T MATCH GREYLOCK'S WITS

By EVELYN MAHON

On February 5th, Mt. Greylock's own trivia team, consisting of Ned Kleiner, Josh Harrington, Cate Costley, and DJ Ross, was seen competing against another team from West Springfield High School on the popular trivia show "As Schools Match Wits." The show, in its 50th season, is a publicly broadcast trivia show based closely on jeopardy, with categories ranging from pop culture to science.

The half-hour competitions started out very well for Mt. Greylock, and at the end of the "challenge round" we were in the lead, 150-10. However, at the end of the high-speed "lightning round," each team had managed to gain another 15 points, with Greylock still leading 165- 25. By the time the show was over, Mt. Greylock had 235 points, dwarfing Springfield's 60 points. This knocked Minnechaug out of its former first place position with 220 points. The competition isn't over yet, as many other schools have yet to compete. Mr. Dils, the coach of the team, said he is "very pleased with the results. We hope we made the top eight, which would put us in the quarter finals." The team will know very soon whether they have made the top eight, so keep your fingers crossed! ■■■



Snow covers the fields outside of the high school. Mt. Greylock has had 3 snow days, 2 delays, and 1 early release day due to snow.

Photo: Dominique Chenail-Briggs

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reminders, the school will be able to get the dancing issue under control.

Halting this type of dancing altogether seems improbable. "There's always been [a style of dancing] that's a little too much," says Mrs. Murray, a frequent chaperone at dances. "That's just the way it is...but there's a line," she says. "If students aren't respectful of that, teachers or chaperones need to be able to say, 'I think you're going a little too far.'" She adds, "The senior class especially should be setting examples." They are the ones the rest of the students look up to, she says, so if they set examples of appropriate dancing, many students will follow.

For the most part, students agree that it is a good idea for everyone to take the initiative to be respectful at dances, but junior Erin Ostheimer believes there is a grey area that is difficult to address. Because of varying opinions, she says, it is "hard to draw the line between what is appropriate and what is not." She believes that sometimes people just need a small reminder. According to Ostheimer, chaperones should "tell kids to be

respectful," and students just need to keep in mind that they are at a school function.

Senior Jon Oliver believes it is the responsibility of the students to keep their dancing under control. "I'd hope that people were respectful [of each other]," says Oliver, and if someone is dancing in a way that makes others uncomfortable, "those around should say something." Oliver adds that everyone needs to remember "no one is forcing you" to dance a certain way, and if someone does not respect that, "people should stick up for each other."

At the end of the day, the consensus seems to be that everyone needs to be comfortable at dances, because they are school functions, and students and faculty agree that student initiative should be the driving force behind any changes that are made. If anything, people will be more aware that the way they dance affects those around them. Based on what students have to say, most people are willing to make a communal effort at the next dance in order to make it more enjoyable for everyone. ■■■

DIRECTED STUDY

Continued from Page 1

ed study. She says she "could work more efficiently at home," but she recognizes that isn't true of most students. Junior Hallie Walker thinks directed study will be "helpful for the kids who never do their homework, to have...no other choice." Walker is a student representative on the School Council, which spent time this year weighing the "positives and negatives" of directed study.

Many teachers also think directed study will be good for students. "I'm always worried about students, especially if they're not willing or able to come in before school," says history teacher Jeffrey Welch. "If we can provide time during the day for students to do academic work...with a faculty member, I'm all for it." History teacher Tom Murray says, "It might make for a good break in the day. It's a pretty rigorous schedule most kids go through."

A survey of students and faculty during the fall reflected a general willingness to try out directed study, so Payne proposed the idea to the staff. Payne says, "There's already language in the current teachers' contract that supports having this time, this half hour during the day, under an old system: extended learning." In the early 2000s, the extended learning system allowed students to leave their assigned classroom (with a pass) to participate in clubs or get help from other teachers. In 2004, the pass system was removed after teachers complained that students were leaving their classes without permission. A stricter pass system was implemented partway through that year: students could leave with a pass again, but only to go to other classes for academic help (many had previously used the time for school organizations like Student Council). Later, extended learning was removed completely.

This year, at least at first, directed study is being implemented with no pass system; teachers are to keep students in one class for all 28 minutes. "I'd like to see us do maybe a month, to see that we could actually use the time," says Payne. Then, if students and teachers say it would be helpful, he's willing to try a pass system. There's "a lot of responsibility on the teachers to be respectful of the pass," he says.

Some teachers, remembering extended learning, are cautious about the introduction of a pass system. "There were fears out there that the pass system would flood the gymnasium with kids that wanted to go up and play," says Murray, "and I know the gym teachers don't want that."

Physics teacher Sean Burdick doesn't think the school should try the pass system at all: last time, he says, "all it turned into was students aimlessly wandering the halls for the whole period, which was a waste of time....I want students to be working diligently on the subject of their current teacher." DJ Ross, a junior, agrees: "It should be really structured. I think it should be enforced that people shouldn't talk about things other than homework, so that other people could concentrate and...actually get things done."

On the other hand, junior Alex Montiel fears that directed study will be too structured. "It'll be like having detention every day," he says, because teachers will enforce silence in the classroom. Montiel doesn't think that the time will be useful for him, although he says that directed study would be improved with a pass system.

English teacher Trudy Ames wholeheartedly supports a pass system. "My feeling is that directed study should be totally for the students. Students should be able to go wherever they want during that time." Ames believes that with "a little bit of downtime and freedom, you will have fewer problems than if you try to restrain everyone." Junior Karl Mick is less sure. "[Directed study is] a good idea if everybody actually uses it for what it's for. However, I am rather doubtful of our capabilities of doing this. We'll see."

As directed study is implemented, everyone at Mt. Greylock will be waiting to see what it can offer. ■■■

The 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 material or join the Echo staff.

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I'D LIKE TO THANK THE ACADEMY!

By MAGGIE CRANE

It is once again that time of year! That time when we take a moment to recognize the achievements of art in film of the past year, or just whatever the Coen brothers' last project was. The time when we can forget our numerous political and economic problems and let the romanticized tradition of Hollywood distract us for a moment. Yes, it's Oscar season. Please try to contain yourselves. For me, the Oscars are more than just a parade of overpaid puppets in Versace. It is a symbol of tradition and class that will never go out of style. And while I could chew your ear off about all the nominees for best editor or director or even best live action short, I won't. I know you don't care. So let's stick to the faces of film, the actors and actresses who bring these stories to life.

This year, there was a great range of challenging rolls for the talented Oscar nominees to sink their teeth into, from a psychotic ballet dancer to a stuttering monarch to even a crack-head ex-boxer. There are 20 accomplished nominees, but only four tiny golden men to go around (and by that I mean Oscar statues, don't get excited). So where to begin? Let's start with the most obvious.

Christian Bale is nominated for Best Supporting Actor for his role as Dicky, a drug-addicted ex-boxer in *The Fighter*. His performance is nothing short of brilliance. Bale has completely transformed his chiseled, pretty-boy jaw bones and his infuriating Batman voice into the emaciated down and out Dicky. Bale has created a character you desperately want to dislike, but absolutely cannot. The physical and emotional work put into this character is worth ten Oscars! Bale's only real competition in his category is Geoffrey Rush, who played Lionel Logue, an unconventional speech therapist to King George VI in *The King's Speech*. Although Rush's performance is really quite good and more than worthy of the nomination, Bale's is simply spellbinding. There is no chance that anyone besides Bale will be taking home the Oscar this year.

The Best Supporting Actress category is also pretty much a done deal. Melissa Leo, who plays a crazy overbearing Irish mother in *The Fighter*, has won numerous honors this awards season, and should probably make room for one more. Leo no doubt deserves the Oscar, and having a crazy overbearing Irish mother of my own, I can personally attest to the accuracy of her performance. However, Leo is not the star of her category. Hailee Steinfeld is wrongfully nominated in the supporting actress category for her lead role as Mattie Ross, a 14 year old with a vengeance in the Coen brothers' remake of *True Grit*. Steinfeld held her own next to Gods such as Jeff Bridges and Matt Damon, and even at times outshone them. If she had been correctly nominated in the Best Actress category, I believe she could have given Natalie Portman a run for her money. I take solace in the fact that this probably will not be her last nomination.

In the Best Actress category, Nata-

lie Portman is the favorite to win for her portrayal of Nina Sayers, a ballet dancer falling victim to her own psyche in *Black Swan*.



*Maggie's Oscar picks include Natalie Portman in *Black Swan* for Best Actress and Colin Firth in *The King's Speech* for Best Actor.*

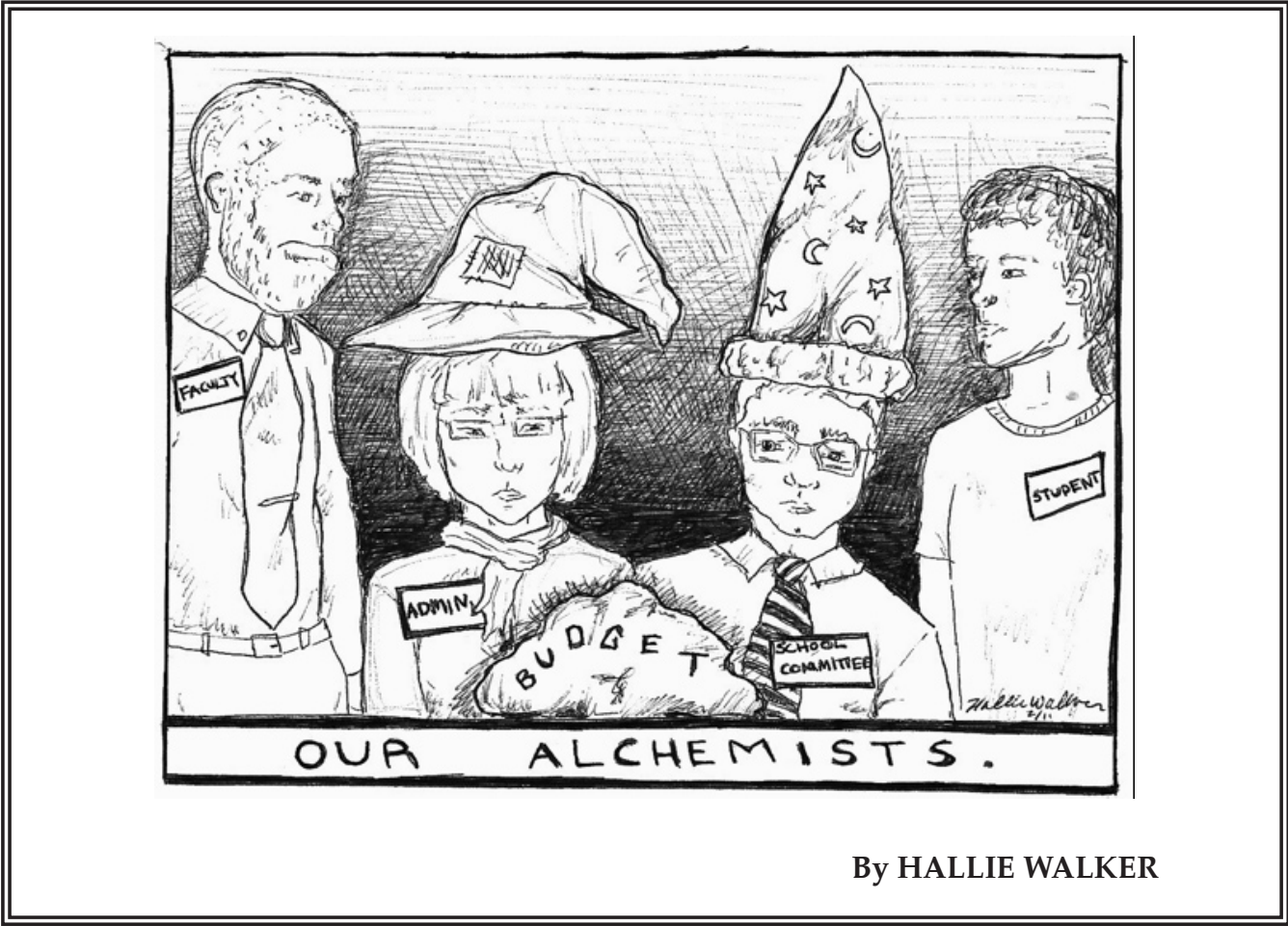
Swan. Portman pulls off psychotic with grace, and makes me nothing but thankful that I gave up dance when I was 7. Hopefully, Portman gets the Oscar and no longer subjects us to films like *No Strings Attached*. (honestly, who thought that was a good idea?). Annette Bening is second-

most likely to take home the Oscar, for her role in *The Kids are All Right*. Bening played a frazzled lesbian mother of teenagers effortlessly, in what I believe was the most honest film of the year. But knowing the academy, they shall give it to the crowd-pleaser. And when they do, I hope that someone has the sense to write Natalie Portman's acceptance speech for her. Let's just say it's a good thing her job



Franco is both a first time nominee and the host of the Oscars this year along with Anne Hathaway. (I don't really know what the academy was thinking there, but I will watch anything that James Franco does, so I can't complain). Franco is up for his performance in *127 Hours*, a role that was essentially him talking to himself for 90 minutes. Jesse Eisenberg is nominated for his breakout role in *The Social Network*, the film that I believe will dominate in the Award count. And of course, the ever so perfectly British Colin Firth is nominated for his portrayal of King George VI in *The King's Speech*. Firth will win, mark my words. And his acceptance speech will be full of beautiful understated Britishisms that will make watching all 11 hours of the Academy Awards completely worth it.

By the time you all read this (all four of you), the Academy awards will be over, predictions like this will be utterly useless, and I will have to search for new meaning in my life until next awards season. Either all my predictions will come true and you shall all be utterly impressed by my foresight (and probably question my priorities), or I'll look completely ridiculous and get every single one wrong. This is unlikely. But whatever happens, we can all agree that this year in film was filled with amazing performances by talented actors. ■■■



By HALLIE WALKER

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WITNESSING HISTORY IN CAIRO STREETS

By NAOMI LACHANCE

On the last day of a Williams winter study trip that taught painting and drawing in the Upper Egypt Nile valley, Julia Morgan-Leamon, the group's instructor, told her students to try and lose themselves in the noisy streets of Cairo. The date was January 25.

"We came face to face with the riot police," said Morgan-Leamon during a presentation to Ms. Houle's ninth grade honors English class on February 15. "[The police] were waiting for something."

The group of Williams students knew about anti-regime uprisings in nearby Tunisia that began on December 17, and had heard rumors about similar events in Egypt, but did not expect anything serious.

Later that day, though, the students were visiting a museum when protests broke out. "We started to hear the sound of protesters though the museum," said Morgan-Leamon. "It was so insistent. It was like it was coming out of the cracks in the streets and the cracks in the walls." Demonstrations took place day and night, not only in

the epicenter at Tahrir Square but also throughout Cairo and all of Egypt.

Egyptians were protesting the 30-year regime held by Hosni Mubarak, under whose "democratic" control the people had experienced police brutality,

strict laws, and a generally low standard of living.

The protests were organized through communication on Facebook, where Egyptians shared plans and tips such as how to be protected from tear gas. Yet

even when the government shut down Facebook and other social networking sites, the demonstrations continued.

"The people want the system to collapse," chanted men, women, and children as they marched through the streets of Cairo. "It was like they were saying, 'inside, we are a free people,'" said Morgan-Leamon.

Morgan-Leamon was able to get the Williams students on a plane and safely home that day, but she remained. "I used the skills that I had been teaching my students, actually," she said. She sketched, water colored, and filmed the demonstrations unraveling around her. She wanted to avoid having her camera confiscated, so she hid it in a clear plastic bag with a falafel sandwich, secretly filming all that was around her: the people marching through the streets, the F-16 bomber planes overhead, the Egyptian flags being waved by the protesters.

As the days carried on, conditions grew worse. The streets were hazy with tear gas. The stores were closed for fear of

being looted. There were fires in the streets. And the people kept on demonstrating.

On February 10, a military commander told protesters in Tahrir Square, "All your demands will be met today," and yet Mubarak still refused to step down. Morgan-Leamon filmed the other residents of the hostel where she stayed watching Mubarak on the news that day. The people watched first in anticipation, and then, as it became clear that he still clung to his power, with hatred. People yelled in the streets outside.

Finally, Morgan-Leamon, who has three children at Mt. Greylock, decided to return home. Despite the crowds at the airport, she had little trouble boarding her plane back to the United States. While grateful for her safety, she wishes she could have been in Cairo when Mubarak finally stepped down on February 11.

"The general sense was, 'we are here because we want to reclaim who we are,'" said Morgan-Leamon. "It was so inspiring." ■■



When Julia Morgan-Leamon found herself amidst protest in Egypt, she painted what she saw.

Photo: Naomi LaChance

"RAISE YOUR SKIRTS AND BOB YOUR HAIR!"

THOROUGHLY MODERN MILLIE TO BE PERFORMED
MARCH 3, 4, AND 5.

By MIRANDA PARK

Last year, the Mount Greylock stage took a trip to magical highlands of Scotland in the winter musical, Brigadoon. This year, the auditorium will be home to 1920s New York City for Thoroughly Modern Millie, a fun show with catchy tunes and awesome tap dancing.

Adapted from the 1967 movie starring Julie Andrews, the musical Thoroughly Modern Millie debuted on Broadway in 2002, winning six Tony Awards, including Best Musical. The book is by Richard Morris and Dick Scalan, with music by Jeanine Tesori. The musical begins with Millie Dillmount arriving in New York City with one goal: to become modern, which entails marrying for money—not for love. She checks into the Hotel Priscilla, a Residence for Young Ladies, run by the scheming Mrs. Meers and her henchmen. Befriending the naïve but sweet Miss Dorothy and the charming Jimmy Smith, Millie must take on the challenges of becoming modern, wooing her boss, Mr. Trevor Graydon, facing Mrs. Meers, and maybe realizing that love is more important than money.

Faced with the challenges of a small cast and short rehearsal time, the ensemble is hard at work memorizing lines—some of which are in Chinese—and singing songs while remembering complex dance sequences. Yet spirits are high, and everyone is excited to put on what will be a fantastic show. Though chorus teacher Marlene Walt has retired, she is still tirelessly helping the cast as the vocal director. She says that her favorite thing about the musical is "the process. It is fun to see the development of the actors

in their characters and in their singing and dancing." Choreographer Ann-Marie Rodriguez agrees. She likes "seeing [the students] feel confident and put their skills into this play." Grinning, director Jeffrey Welch concurs and states that he "gets to spend time with [Walt and Rodriguez]". The pit orchestra, under the direction of Lyndon Moors, sounds great as well. The actors are progressing not only in their acting, but as a group as well. Junior Karl Mick, who plays Trevor Graydon, likes the "no pressure" atmosphere of the cast, sophomore Lindsey Wick puts in that "we're like a family" and junior Leah Miller readily admits that "it's the highlight of my day". Not only is the cast a close-knit one, it is also has a great learning environment. Sophomores Arianna Bashara and Blake Sherman enjoy the challenges of the production. "We learn how to further our skills as dancers and singers", says Bashara, who plays Miss Dorothy, and Sherman, playing a foreigner, likes "speaking a different language."

Thoroughly Modern Millie will be performed on March 3, 4, and 5 at 7:00 pm and tickets will be available at the door, \$6 for students and seniors and \$8 for adults. The show is sure to be one you'll not want to miss, and everyone is wildly excited. Freshman Evelyn Mahon loves the "classic era of this Broadway musical and is eager to see how it will look to the audience." No doubt it will be a lot of fun for people of all ages. Enjoy. ■■



Junior Maggie Crane, right, and sophomore Kim DiLego rehearse a scene from Shakespeare's "The Two Gentlemen of Verona" for Food of Love, which was performed on Feb. 6.

Photo: Aaron Ziemer

Food of Love Fundraiser

By PEARL SUTTER

On February 6th, students from Mt. Greylock and Williams College took part in presenting Food of Love, a play with Shakespeare, love, and chocolate. It included scenes from Shakespeare as well as more contemporary pieces. This event was created 7 years ago when there was a possibility of eliminating the Fall Festival of Shakespeare program from Mt. Greylock. The parents of the students who had participated in the program decided to create a fundraiser to help support this activity so that it would remain at the school. And that is how Food of Love came about. It has now been a regular event at the Williams Inn for 7 years and every year it has been directed by Deborah Burns. This year Deborah Brothers helped direct with Deb Burns and also provided the whole cast with costumes from Shakespeare and Company. This year's Food of Love theme was love letters. In every scene, either a love letter was read or talked about. In between scenes, love letters were read that had been written by famous people. This event is very enjoyable and hope to see you next year! ■■

After Prom Talent Show

By EMILY KAEGI

After Prom Committee and JavaJive want people with talent! If you have a hidden, or not so hidden talent you can get your moment of fame. On March 18th there will be a talent show from 7-9pm in the Mount Greylock Auditorium. Spectators will be entertained with a variety of songs, dance, comedy and much more. This annual event's proceeds go to the After Prom event for this year's senior class. If you want to find out more or to sign up to perform, contact Sky or Moira Jones at javajiveinfo@verison.net, call (413) 458-9407 or find the event on Facebook. All students, teachers, parents, and members of the community are most welcome to attend. ■■

1 in 650: An Interview with Jackson Kleiser

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that BBFA is closed?

Jackson: I've started to more regularly attend practices with the Williams college fencing club. Although fencing the college students is not the equivalent of professional coaching, there is a large skill range, which is great because I can learn from the more experienced as well as help teach the less so.

Q: Do you get to compete in college tournaments? Are those based on individual or team success?

A: The Williams fencing club goes to tournaments, only some of which I can participate in, because I'm not a college student. Although team-based competitions are very common, I think fencing is really about the one-on-one. Just you and your opponent.

Q: What is one fact about fencing that most people don't know?

A: Fencing is not as dangerous as you might think. Though you sometimes run into the occasional hard-hitting opponent, you are loaded up with safety equipment, and at worst might sustain a few scratches. In all my seven years of fencing, I got only one small scar on my arm from a girl in a tournament a few years back. When I look back at all the fun I've had fencing, I'd say it's worth it. ■■

Interview has been edited and condensed. To nominate a Mt. Greylock student for 1 in 650, please contact the editors at mountgreylockecho@gmail.com.



From left: Mackenzie Hitchcock, Laura Nolan, and Amy Santella lead a pack of skiers. The Nordic ski team ended its season undefeated.
Photo: Tamara Hitchcock

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIERS SEE SUCCESS

By LUKE COSTLEY

The Mount Greylock Nordic ski teams put fitting ends to their respective boys' and girls' seasons by winning state titles. Both teams were dominant in Berkshire County throughout the year, often placing as many as eight in the top ten.

On a much bigger and more competitive stage at the state meet, the Mounties were no less impressive—six skiers from each team placed in the top twenty of Massachusetts' best. For the girls' team, the win marked their fourth straight; the boys' fell last year to a very strong team from the east, but this win capped their fifth title in six tries.

The strength of the Greylock teams is their depth, both at the top and across the wide spectrum of ages and abilities. The Mounties have been lead by Cate Costley, Josh Harrington, and Mackenzie Hitchcock in most races, with Matt Cheung, Greg Karabinos, Aaron Taylor, Luke Costley, Laura Nolan, and Amy Santella filling primary support roles. The junior varsity squads have typically been lead by Caleb Raymond, Derek Wood, Greta Savitsky, and Sophie Gerry. The same held true at states, with Harrington and Hitchcock just missing out on the podium with fourth places finishes. Cate Costley was fifth, while both Laura Nolan and Luke Costley were seventh in their respective races. Aaron Taylor capped the list of top ten medals with his tenth place effort.

What makes this team great, however, is its unity and enthusiasm. Nordic skiing is an individual sport, and the athletes recognize that, but the Greylock team makes an extra effort for the experience to be about more than races and results. ■■

Co-op Sports

HOCKEY AND WRESTLING TEAMS INCLUDE MULTIPLE SCHOOLS.

By TOM DILS

At Mt. Greylock, we pride ourselves in the success of athletic teams, and we use these teams to bring the school together. But here, not every team can call itself the Mounties and speak complete truth. Teams including our wrestling and hockey teams work in a co-op system with other schools in the county. Both have mixed teams, but both have found success.

The co-op system evolved out of the lack of participation in certain sports. At Greylock, we have healthy rosters for almost every sport, but the number run short in wrestling and hockey. The schools in Berkshire County pride themselves in the most popular sports—football, soccer, basketball, and baseball. The chances are high that kids will be exposed to these sports first because of their popularity and the abundance of programs on a youth level. Hockey is offered to kids in Berkshire County, but it still remains a primarily prep school sport. The Greylock-St. Joe's hockey team features around eight players from each school, barely enough to collectively field three lines.

Wrestling lacks a strong youth program, and many of Greylock's wrestlers were not exposed to the sport until middle or high school. Greylock has had strong numbers, but they have had to take athletes from Hoosac Valley and McCann because of the lack of participation at those respective schools. Ray Miro, coach of the wrestling team, the co-op system: "It is a good way to keep needed programs alive; however, it would also be a lot better if all schools had their own programs." Logistically, co-ops can pose problems such as transportation and practice and game facilities. Also, making kids from rival schools work together as teammates is a

bigger issue that the co-op teams have to handle.

Competition among high school athletes is fueled by a mutual dislike of the opponent. Part of the fun of sports is wearing the school colors and facing off against rivals. The colors represent more than just the home and away sides—it is a privilege and responsibility to wear them for your school. This pride presents one potential problem with the co-op system. When competitive athletes from rival schools are forced to work together as a team, it could become more about the individual than the team. This, however, does not seem to be the case for the wrestling team. Although students of Mt. Greylock, Hoosac Valley, and McCann have always competed aggressively with each other, Coach Miro's emphasis on the team rather than the individual has brought about a strong chemistry between the players. Miro says that on the wrestling team, "we recognize the different schools, but together, we are one team." The hockey team has found more difficulty building strong team chemistry. According to According to Mt. Greylock hockey player Jesse Foehl, there is a lot of animosity between the players, but he is willing to



The hockey team features about eight players from Mt. Greylock and eight players from St. Joe's.

Photo: Eric Leitch

make this sacrifice in order to play his sport. "The co-op system isn't perfect and we have issues with travel, rink space, and team chemistry; but overall it works since we get to play our sport."

High schools want to be able to offer as much as they can to their students. Is the co-op system the perfect? Of course not. But it is a working solution that keeps less popular sports alive for athletes at Mt. Greylock. Although co-ops are not always easy, they can enhance the values of teamwork and effort because it is for the team alone and not so much the school. And do the wrestlers and hockey players have problems with the system? No, because it allows them to compete in the sport they love. This competition for the love of the game is truly what sports are all about. ■■

WINTER SPORTS CAPSULES

By ALEX WHITE

Nordic Skiing (Undefeated Berkshire County and State Champs): Both the boys and the girls finished up their respective regular seasons with unblemished records, and both swept the state championships at Notchview, winning by commanding margins. For more on the Nordic ski teams' success, see the state championship recap article.

Wrestling (Berkshire County Champs): The wrestling team won the Berkshire Country league title with only one loss. Despite falling short in the MIAA Western Mass competition, the Mounties won the Western Mass Wrestling Association tournament the next week, and Josh Hadley claimed an individual Western Mass. crown.

Boys' Alpine (Berkshire Country Champs): The Berkshire Country champs have their eyes set on states as they have flown past the competition all year. Connor Krell, Zach Hanson, and Kent Hason will compete against the best in the state on March 1 for a chance to bring home the gold.

Girls' Alpine (Fourth in Berkshire County): The girls' alpine team proved to be a team to be reckoned with this year on the slopes. Senior Kristina Chesney was consistently in the top five with the rest of the team filing in not far behind.

Hockey (6-9): The St. Joe's-Mt. Greylock co-op hockey team has found some difficulty repeating last year's success when they won the Hennessey League. Despite a strong start, the team has faltered as of late, dropping important games to county rivals Taconic and Wahconah.

Girls' Basketball (6-11): A up and down year for the girls' basketball team has had plenty of highlights. The emergence of eighth-grader Lucy Barrett and the solid play of captains Kim Houston, Sarah Brink, and Siri Mason have all been key to the girls' season.

Boys' Basketball (4-10): The hoops team has struggled this season in a talented league, but have competed and played with almost every opponent. Much of their roster is made up of sophomores and juniors, so they will be able to use the experience from this season to find more success next year. ■■

GREYLOCK SNOW DAY SECRETS

By THE ECHO STAFF

Editor's Note: This month, the Echo editors had the privilege of meeting with the mysterious man behind every snow enthusiast's favorite blog, Greylock Snow Day.

Greylock Echo: First off, we've heard you have quite an illustrious staff: an English teacher, a boy's soccer coach, the assistant Williams squash coach, an adept puzzlemaster, and a quizbowl coach. How do all these members of your staff find time out of their busy schedules to work on the blog and write for it?

Greylock Snow Day: Well, we have another entire staff at GSD, you know, researchers, and historians, and developers, so we try to push some of that work on the others who help out with the GSD blog.

ECHO: How did it get started?

GSD: Well, in [a Mt. Greylock English] classroom there used to be a posting of percentage chance of a snow day, so some people approached me, and asked if I might make that a little bit more public... so to bring it into the digital age, the backers of GSD decided it would be a great idea to make this more public.

ECHO: And last I checked you had over twenty thousand views. I mean, I think fifteen thousand of those are just me, hitting refresh over and over again. But the other seven thousand, are you happy that you got that many?

GSD: I'm a little shocked at the numbers of people that are hitting it...It's obviously resonating with the students, and other people. I hear people in South County; teachers down at Monument Mountain are checking out the blog, there's a loyal follower in Canada, as Canada has come in with over 80 page views.

ECHO: I hear the superintendent is also a loyal follower?

GSD: The superintendent is right on top of it. Surprisingly, she made it known very clearly at a meeting the other day that she is a follower of the blog. And there's

definitely some allegations—
ECHO: Self-fulfilling prophesy?
GSD: Yeah, is she doing the blog, is it her decision, or is she telling the blog to post her decision ahead of time? But everything is on the up-and-up; this is a prediction machine, there's no inside joke.

ECHO: We heard, though, that you have the numbers that she calls in.

GSD: I did have access to those.

ECHO: So if you had missed it, would you have considered calling in yourself?

GSD: Oh, no, I, uh, I didn't get that good of a look at them. But yeah, she did show the magic piece of paper that she keeps locked up that has all the codes to all the places.

ECHO: How did you first get into predicting snow?

GSD: Well, my interest literally goes back to second grade... We started doing these little competitions; we did it all though elementary school, middle school, high school.

ECHO: Any special incantations to the snow gods?

GSD: No, it wasn't a lot of ritual or superstition, it was more, kind of, if we could see who could be closer to the actual snowfall.

ECHO: So, uh, you're right a lot. I mean, besides luck is there anything you do? I know you go to a lot of different weather sites.

GSD: Yeah, the fun aside, GSD does try to provide actual information that you can count on. So far it's worked out pretty well...It really is based on just following weather...It definitely is the psychology, trying to get inside people's heads and think about what he or she is thinking, what road crews are thinking, what the general tone of the building is: wow, we really need a snow day so we're probably going to have one or we just had one, so, eh, let's suck it up and come to school.

ECHO: That day with the whole confusion about the delay [January 24]?

GSD: Oh, gosh, well that was just wild.

Well, ultimately that was just some miscommunication. The timing and the communication was rough. It was a very difficult decision, because the buses started, but then they stopped working as they were doing the routes... So what's good of something that will come out of it is if we do go below -10 we'll just have an automatic 2-hour delay... Maybe that got people thinking about some of our ideas,

that's something good that came out of that debacle last Monday.

ECHO: You've shown yourself to be pretty good at predicting the micro snow day patterns. But we're going to put you on record now for macro.

GSD: Ooh.

ECHO: How many snow days are we going to have in the future?

GSD: We are going to see the change in the pattern at some point, but we, all right. It's going to be two or three—I think we'll have a late—[GSD falls into a brief trance, murmuring under his breath] I'm going to say three. That's a pretty bold call. But some of the long-range forecasting does show that it's a La Niña winter, which means there's a lot of snow and a lot of storms. The track of the storms is very good for us. So I'll say three, with one of those being maybe a late March or April storm.

ECHO: I've heard rumors that there's



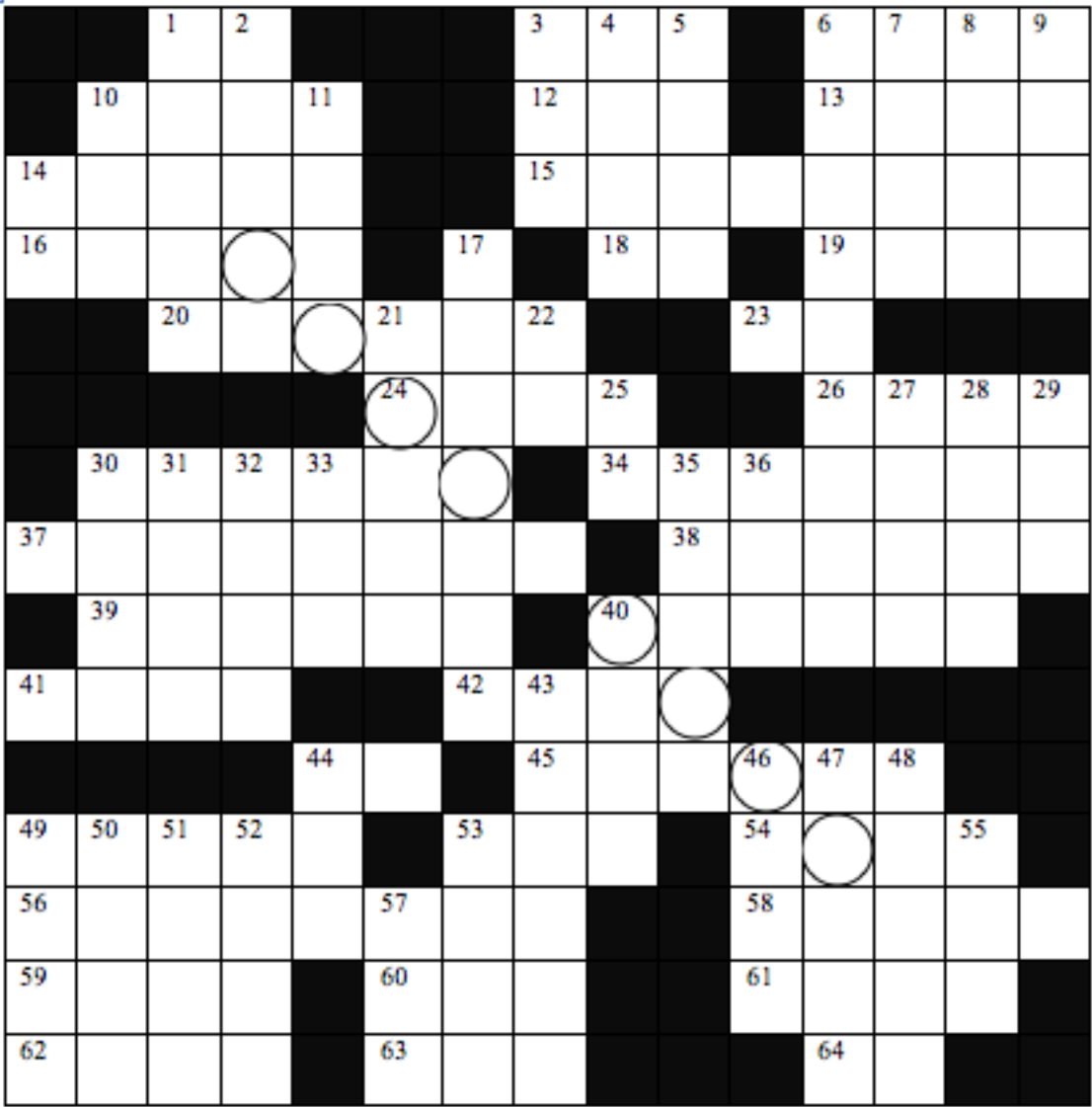
The GSD blogger claims not to use magic, but he's right so often that we suspect he's lying.

another person involved in the blog?
GSD: [Laughs] yeah, uh, well, I, uh, we, uh, have a number of people who send emails to the blog, who pass on information, but those people like to stay shrouded in mystery. There is another member of the English department who is very interested. Let's just put it that way. She's into it, and has been on board for the beginning months. We also have an elementary school teacher, who, oh god, she may or may not be my son's 5th grade teacher at the [Williamstown] elementary school. She's pretty into it too. Yeah, they're out there. We're always adding to the staff. We're always looking for more support. ■■

Interview has been edited and condensed. Check out the blog at greylocksnowday.blogspot.com.

THE SOUND OF MUSIC

By NED KLEINER



Hint: Double in the key of C.

Across:

- Printer's measurement
- Juvenile newt
- Dreaded object
- Late-spring dance
- Compensated athlete
- Woe is me!
- First part, informally
- Quahog
- Snowmobile brand (C)
- Image management
- Citizen ____, 1941 film
- Money that is owed (D)
- Conjunction
- Vacuum brand (E)
- Overthrow
- "Have a seat on ____" (F)
- First female justice of the US Supreme Court
- Hope you do well!
- Oguchi of the US national soccer team
- Representative of the Pope
- Wise king of the Jews (G)
- Whirlpool
- Chair in Lima (A)
- Pre-noon: Abbr.
- Marvin's extraterrestrial provenance (B)
- Performed
- Cockney exclamation
- Sun-dried clay (C)
- Quercus Alba
- Ma'am
- Late Greene of Mt. Greylock
- Advertisement for the good of the people: Abbr.
- Opinion place, in a newspaper
- The anser to this, performed porly
- Vociferate
- Slugger's stat.

Down:

- In follower, in Physics
- Sauron's home (C)
- Purple cow
- Bev at Starbuck's
- Millimeter of mercury
- Words chosen to fit initials
- There in Madrid
- Indian flatbread
- Count Olaf's "unfortunate" girlfriend, with Squalor
- Permutation
- Filmmaker Michael who produced Fahrenheit 9/11 (D)
- 3rd person singular form of "to be"
- Begins with a 14-across (F)
- "Did he catch it?" (E)
- Talking with your hands? (Abbr.)
- __ Wilson, biologist
- Branch of the United Nations dedicated to conservation
- Planted
- Veracious channel, with TV
- Said
- Agitated, as soil
- Nervous
- Grp. that kidnapped Patty Hearst
- Shirt topper (A)
- Lennon's widow
- Sun-generated, as power (G)
- Call after a fall
- Gator or lemon follower
- I love you in Rome (B)
- Alternative spelling of unpopular German first name (C)
- Bull, King, or Rocket
- Piercing tools
- Karate staple
- Wood alternative
- And the others, in a bibliography
- Hispanic house
- Comrade of Ed and Eddy
- Special or Black follower