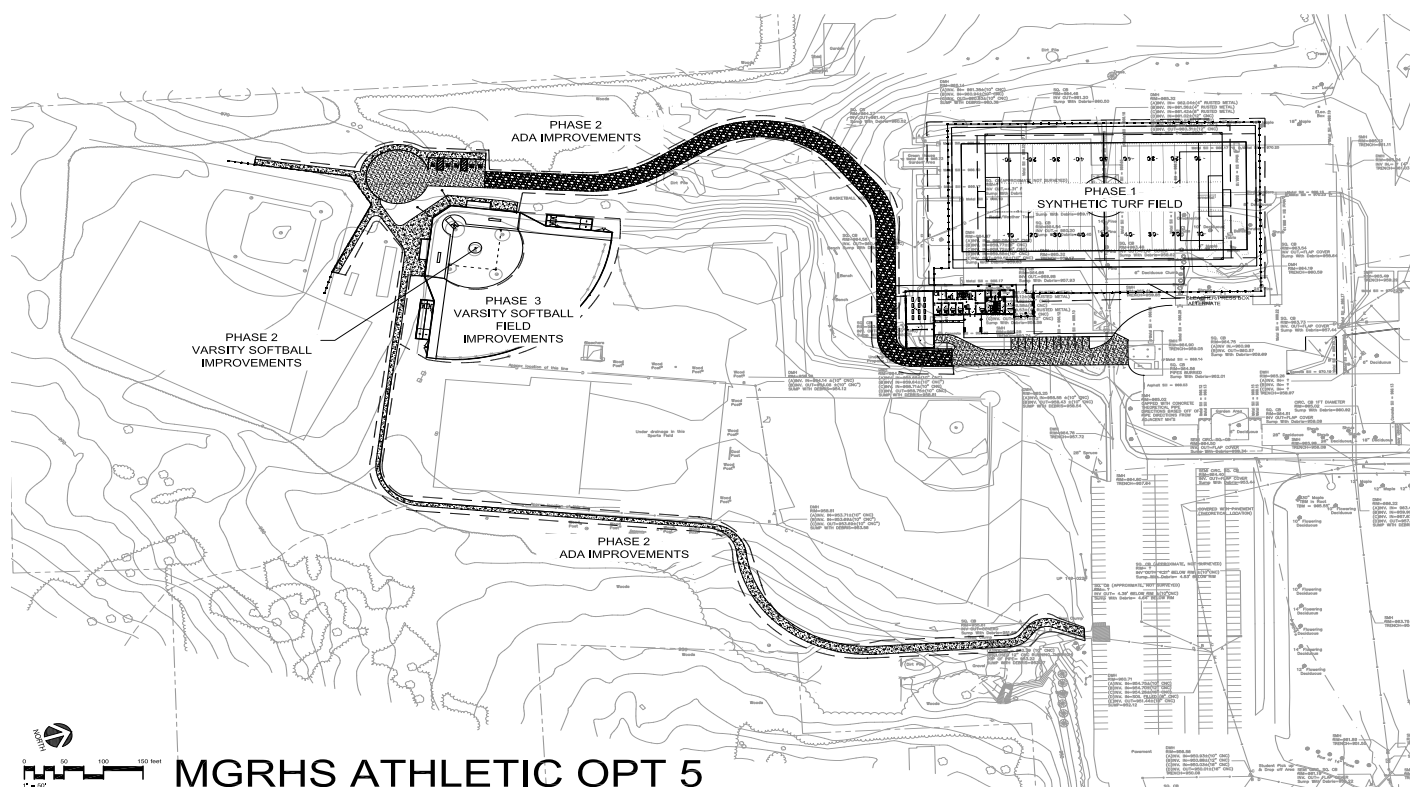


Williams Capital Gift to be Used for Multipurpose Building, Athletic Facilities

By CHARLIE MCWEENY



MGRHS ATHLETIC OPT 5

The schematic plan for the athletic improvements and the multipurpose building (image courtesy of John Skavlem).

Mount Greylock plans to use the five million dollar capital gift from Williams College to construct a multipurpose building and improve athletic facilities. This move came amid the regionalization of WES and LES into the Mt. Greylock district, necessitating a separate building to house district offices for Superintendent Kimberley Grady and her staff. The athletic fields, especially after a wet fall, have fallen into poor condition. Despite the investment of 85,000 dollars for repairs to the John T. Allen field over the summer, many games were moved to other venues, and what condition the field will be in come the spring sports season remains unclear.

The multipurpose structure will be located to the left of and slightly set back from the cafeteria, behind where the JV baseball field is (shown as the bold L-shaped building on the map above). Besides district

offices, the multipurpose building will include additional bathrooms and possibly a concession stand. The building will also house new a wax room for the ski team, after their previous wax room, the greenhouse, was demolished. There will also be additional parking outside of the building.

The construction of this building will take approximately 1.5 million dollars. The phase II subcommittee, tasked with recommending how the remaining 3.5 million dollars should be used on improving athletic complexes, and chaired by John Skavlem, is looking at two possible plans for improvements. One includes building a turf field where the John T. Allen field currently is, and the construction of a new grass field behind the school building. The other plan reverses these, building a turf field behind the school and keeping the John T. Allen field as is. The pos-

sibility of a track has also been floated. Yet before any of these plans can be carried out, improvements must be made to the varsity softball field to bring it up to Title IX requirements. Because the school has not added a girls team without a boys team in recent years, and major improvements have been made to the varsity baseball field but not the varsity softball field, the school has fallen out of Title IX requirements. Improvements to the softball field will be a priority, including dugouts, fencing, and a scoreboard.

At a recent subcommittee meeting, the possibilities of a turf field and a track were also discussed. Chair John Skavlem called a turf field “a very apparent need here,” and said the committee was looking at “what would provide the maximum benefit to the

Continued on Page 7.

Scholastic Book Fair Comes to Greylock

By EVA MYERS

The scholastic book fair is at Greylock this week, thanks to the efforts of the middle school English department and the middle school SOC (Students Organizing Change) club. Many students have experienced these fairs as elementary school students in the past, and are excited to be able to revisit this experience.

The fair is held from March 5th to 7th, and students in grades seven through nine have organized time slots to attend. Middle schoolers will visit during their english classes on Tuesday and Thursday, while freshmen will visit on Wednesday. In addition, community members can come on Wednesday from 5:30 to 8:30 to buy books and help raise money for the Greylock english department.

According to Mr. Romaker, seventh grade math teacher and leader of SOC, the fair will also be opened up to sixth graders and their parents during the eve-

ning. Upperclassmen can visit during their break, directed study, or after school.

Many students, not just middle schoolers, are familiar with Mrs. Barrett’s library on the third floor. It has been used by students of all grades, and while it is already full of many different books, the book fair will allow it to expand even more. This means that the fair will not only benefit current middle school students, but upcoming elementary school students as well.

Upperclassmen may not be on the organized visit schedule, but they remain excited for the fair largely because of their vivid memories of it from their primary school days, when it would come annually.

“I looked forward to the book fair for days because they offered such a variety of literature and felt like they were handing off so many opportunities to read different genres,” junior Amelia Murphy explained.

Murphy was not the only one who

would get excited for book fairs. Fellow junior Miriam Bakija said that “I loved the book fair so much that I couldn’t sleep the night before it.”

Seventh grade english teacher Liza Barrett explains that she gets joy out of finding books for students. “Helping a student find the perfect book for him or her is one of the greatest joys of my job,” she said. “We hope the book fair will continue to foster the love of books and reading that we are always trying to cultivate in our classrooms. There is nothing quite like the feel of holding a new book in your hands and turning those smooth pages.”

The book fair is staffed by parent volunteers only, and it was two seventh grade parents, Andrea Malone and Libbie Pike, that made it happen. “They have done the bulk of the work,” said Barrett. “We are just there as cheerleaders and logistical support!” ■

1 in 650: An Interview with Ruth Weaver

By LUCY MCWEENY



Weaver performs at this year’s second Greylock Plays.

Photo courtesy of Ruth Weaver

Many students saw sophomore Ruth Weaver stun a crowd with her performance of “Hallelujah” at Greylock Plays. The Echo had the opportunity to talk to Weaver about her experiences with singing and acting.

Echo: When did you discover your love for acting and singing?

Weaver: I’ve loved to sing forever but when I was in 6th grade I did the 6th grade musical and started to get more interested in musical theater and acting. Then in 7th grade the Shakespeare program at MGRHS really helped me to develop my acting. I realized I could do that separately or with singing. There are lots of students at MGRHS who have really discovered themselves through the Shakespeare program, and we’re really grateful for that.

E: Can you tell us a bit about this year’s musical?

Weaver: The musical this year is *Hello, Dolly!* It was written in the 60’s but it’s set in the 1890’s. It’s about a woman in New York City who’s a matchmaker, and some couples that she puts together, and eventually (spoiler alert!) she finds herself a match in the end.

E: What is your role?

W: I am Dolly so it’s a lot of work but I am really enjoying it.

E: Did you want this part or were you hoping for a different one?

W: I did want to be Dolly. I had hoped for a big part but I would’ve been happy with other parts. I think all the parts are really funny and interesting this year so I would’ve been okay with any of them. We all help each other and we all have our own time to develop our talents.

Continued on Page 5

THANK U, NEXT

Sophie Jones takes a look at Grande’s recent album.

See Page 3.

CONCUSSIONS

Victoria Melkonyan and Alex Wilson check out concussion culture at Mt. Greylock.

See Page 4.

TWIN ADVICE: TWICE AS NICE

Charlie and Clara talk ice cream.

See Page 5.

IDEAL PRESIDENT

Ava Simon discusses the qualities she looks for in a leader.

See Page 6.

Students Push Neal to Support Green New Deal

By OWEN TUCKER-SMITH

Over the past weeks, students in grades seven through twelve have collaborated with the Sunrise Movement and local schools to fight for a new congressional resolution: the Green New Deal. After attending a group watch-party for the Sunrise Movement's informational livestream, students proceeded to visit congressman Richard Neal's office in Pittsfield to demand his support. After weeks of silence from the congressman, the students visited his Springfield office on Tuesday as part of the Green New Deal Nationwide Day of Action.

The Green New Deal, Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's and Senator Ed Markey's plan to stop climate change and create millions of jobs in the process, was released as a resolution in the first week of February. The resolution differed from many pieces of proposed climate legislation in that it combined the fight for climate justice with that for social and economic justice. In addition to net-zero carbon emissions, the resolution called for things such as "resources, training, and high-quality education, including higher education, [for] all people of the United States, with a focus on frontline and vulnerable communities" and the promotion of "justice and equity by stopping current, preventing future, and repairing historic oppression" of the "frontline and vulnerable communities" referenced throughout the resolution.

Soon after the launch of the Green New Deal as a resolution, every congressperson from Massachusetts became a co-sponsor with the exception of Richard Neal, a representative from Western Massachusetts. Students responded to Neal's silence by making signs and arriving at his office. A representative for Neal met with three Greylock students inside, while the rest of the students waited outside, waving signs and singing songs.

The students at Neal's office explained that they were led to push for the Green New Deal because of the urgency of climate change. "If we don't do this today, then it's too late," said senior James Fisher. Senior Sophie Jones echoed this sentiment, arguing that "if we don't do something now, then my future children and their children's children won't have a safe planet to live in. And they need that."

Seniors Cathy McPartland and Karen



Students stand in front of Neal's Pittsfield office. Photo courtesy of Owen Tucker-Smith

McComish and junior Maddy Art represented the students inside the office, voicing their concerns to a member of Neal's staff. "We shared a couple of personal stories and explained why the Green New Deal would be important and effective in our district specifically," said McComish.

The Berkshires, as McPartland explained, have been hit by deindustrialization over the last decades. She believes that this gives Western Mass a special reason to support the Green New Deal.

"I talked about the effect of General Electric and Sprague leaving our community," McPartland told the *Echo*. "The Green New Deal is so important because it has language for transitioning jobs, so it would not just be good environmentally, but especially here for economic reasons."

Criticism of the Green New Deal has emerged partially because of the deal's broad, vague nature. McPartland and McComish argued that this aspect of it is actually purposeful and important. They both stressed that "a national sweeping policy that addresses many facets of environmental issues" was necessary to tackle such a large and urgent issue. "We don't have enough time for each individual thing to get individually passed," McPartland said.

Students at the office visit were quick to provide personal anecdotes to express their desire for environmental action. For McComish, this included a story about her family, who saw the dangers of ignoring the environment directly.

"A couple of years ago my cousins in Hoosick Falls, their water was poisoned by PFOA. Within a year Judy, Everett, and their dog all had cancer and they're still struggling with it today," said McComish. "That had a big impact on my own family and it really awakened me to the urgency and how immediate environmental dangers are."

Art's experience came in the form of having a grandfather who has always known nature well. An ecologist, his love of nature has been transferred to Art herself.

The results of the meeting were not a satisfying immediate co-sponsorship, but the students inside said that they got out of it what they wanted to. "The point of this meeting was to get our stories told and to tell Neal that his constituents do care so that he has reason to support the Green New Deal," McComish said. "We were able to tell our stories and he is planning on

Continued on Page 7.

The New Building: Midyear Report

By LAURA DUPUIS

After years of working to find the perfect design for a new school building to suit budgetary constraints as well as to satisfy the needs of Mount Greylock students, faculty, and staff, the much anticipated new school building opened in early September. The new school has been an overall success and a considerable improvement over the old building. However, as with any big change, the new school does have some aspects that need adjustments.

One vast enhancement to the new school is the overall cleanliness of the new space. Also, the new furniture and technology have greatly benefited learning inside the classroom. With a new building, there are many new learning opportunities. For one, the science classrooms have increased in size and in resources, allowing students to complete labs and experiments that they might not have been able to do in the old building. Also, all the boards, chairs, and tables are new. The chairs are more comfortable for students and the tables are much easier to move as they are now on wheels, allowing teachers and students to design the classroom in different ways in order to best enhance the learning environment.

However, there are some small problems for students concerning the overall construction of the new school building. With narrower stairways and hallways, students have had to make adjustments to be on time for their classes, especially for classes on different floors or in the middle of the day when traffic is at its peak. Students must now plan ahead time-wise to compensate for the overcrowding on the stairways and in the halls.

Students have also found that the smaller cafeteria (compared to the almost too large old cafeteria) poses the problem of not being able to find a place to sit, or not being able to sit with their friends. Students have also commented on the striking difference between the old school building, which had the school colors, red, white, and black with the sparse, simplistic design of the new room. Sophomore Charlotte Sanford mentioned, "a sense of community needs to be brought back." Also a sophomore, Leah Petricca pointed out, "we can't eat in the halls which is a big disadvantage and the school has lots of boring and plain colors. We need more red, like in the signs."

The eating in the hallways issue has been a much debated topic. There is always a possibility that a student could have a food allergy and by not eating in the halls, the risk of an inflammation of an allergy is decreased. However, students feel that they should be able to at least drink coffee outside of the designated eating areas, as demonstrated in Petricca's comment.

Another controversial topic concerns the flexible learning spaces, a new feature to the school's design. During directed study, students are not allowed to use these spaces. Kylie Myers commented upon this, saying, "What's the point of spending money on furniture [for the flexible learning spaces] if we can't use it?" Many students do actually advantage of the space to complete their schoolwork, using it for its intended function. However, some do not utilize the spaces in the appropriate manner, which may be a contributing factor to why students are not allowed in the flexible learning spaces during directed study.

Concerning the continuation of adding new features to the building, the Mount Greylock community remains excited for the now official opening of the auditorium. Since the auditorium has not been open for performances for a few years, Williams College has been extremely generous during the renovation and several theatre productions have been hosted at the '62 Center for Theatre and Dance in Williamstown as well as several concerts at Chapin Hall. The space will hold its first major event as the cast of *Hello, Dolly!* performs at the end of the month. ■

Students Struggle With Narrow Stairways

By KRISHAN RAI

Half a year after the opening of the new school, staircases remain an issue for many among the Mount Greylock community. When students transitioned to the new school in September, one major difference was a three story academic wing unlike the simpler one story model of the old school. In order to allow travel between the floors, two staircases were built near each end of the floors.

Now, they are a main hub of activity as students transition between classes on different floors. Recently, to improve traffic flow, the seventh and eighth grades have been designated to each use separate staircases to ease traffic. They happen to be larger grades and use the stairs considerably more to get all the way up on the third floor where most of the middle school core classes are located.

Most of the traffic congestion occurs during the middle of the day, when middle schoolers are moving to and from gym while high schoolers are moving to and from their two lunches. Often, multiple different grades use the stairs at the same time and while limiting the seventh grade to one staircase has made some difference, the system still isn't perfect.

English teacher Kellie Houle's classroom is situated right next to the foremost staircase closest to the cafeteria and the gym and has a first hand view to the chaos surrounding the stairwells. According to her, "there seem to be problems with people moving through the hallway as well as up and down the stairs- it is concerning

concentration during class, but students have other perspectives. "If you're in a class, and the middle schoolers are going to lunch, it literally sounds like thunder," said senior Katrina Hotaling. "It's actually hard to concentrate when people are shouting on the stairs."

Noise may seem unrelated to the actual structure of the stairs, but Hotaling thinks the time that forces students to be in a hurry might be a culprit in the frantic, loud traffic patterns. "It is literally impossible to get from the first floor to the third in the four minute passing time...I'm always late."

Seventh grader Ben Dingman said the decision to restrict Seventh graders to the far stairwell has only exacerbated this problem: "The seventh graders can

only use the far stairs so we're always late to our classes." The problem is a tricky one but Hotaling proposed one solution: "if people can go in a single file then it will stop some of the problems. When students walk side by side that there are some issues." ■

"It's impossible to get from the first floor to the third in the four minute passing time... I'm always late."

Katrina Hotaling

that someone could get injured." She noted that "it seems a little bit better now that the seventh grade teachers have asked their students to use the other stairwells during those busy times but there definitely still is congestion."

In Houle's experience, noises from stairwells haven't affected her work and con-

A Netflix Revolution?

By WILL MCDONOUGH

Netflix has slowly been weaving its way into the entertainment industry for years. First, they just sent movies in the mail. Then they started streaming shows. They've finally taken the next step: creating original movies and shows. However, That does not mean that Netflix has taken over TV or film.

Netflix has, without a doubt, been widely successful recently, with several original shows that have received high praise like *Stranger Things*, *Orange is The New Black*, and *Black Mirror*. It also has begun to have successful original movies recently, most notably *Birdbox*. *Birdbox* was said to pull in seventy-five million plays in its first weekend on Netflix. It created so much traction to the service that they upped their price from about \$10 a month to \$12. Whether the movie is good or not is up to interpretation, but its impact is so large that it will likely change the movie scene forever. Even though *Birdbox*'s impact was massive, Netflix is still incredibly far away from becoming large enough to rival cable TV or the movie industry.

The public does not know Netflix's viewing figures, as they do not release them. This has caused speculation as to whether or not the service is as big as the executives of the company say they are. Hundreds of accounts are rumored to be inactive, and the way they track a view is controversial (a view is considered watching 2/3 of the medium, meaning watching something once and then watching half of it is considered 2 views). Cable television still rules the TV industry, with most people paying around \$200 a month to use their services. Movies released in theaters still bring in millions of dollars, and some blockbusters make it into the billions like *Black Panther*, *Infinity War*, and *Aquaman* most recently. Netflix is not as big as they try to be, and to some they lose credibility by not showing their actual numbers, and possibly lying about them. Still, Netflix has started something new in the entertainment industry.

Streaming services as a whole are on the rise. Hulu and Amazon Prime Video are reporting record numbers, and new services are being formed. DC already released their service, with several originals that have been reported as doing extremely well. Disney Plus, Disney's new service, is coming out later this year, with several originals also being announced. Warner Brothers is reportedly starting a service as well. Netflix started all of this. It changed how people watch television, and now how some watch movies. It has not began to rival traditional media outputs yet, but it has changed entertainment in an important way. Although it is not as big as it is said to be, no one can deny the impact Netflix has had and continues to have on entertainment as a whole. ■

Grande's Album Satisfactory Yet Shallow

By SOPHIE JONES

Ariana Grande's not so long-awaited album was released on Thursday night at midnight, titled "thank u, next" after her hit single of the same name. I say that it's not highly anticipated because her last album, *Sweetener*, was released only six months ago. Grande has had a successful year, with popular singles "God is A Woman," "thank u, next," and "7 rings" reaching the top of the charts.

But it's also one that she has described as the "best year for her career, and the worst for her life."

Her ex-boyfriend, Mac Miller--a fellow musical artist--passed away, and she endured a whirlwind relationship with comedian Pete Davidson that started with an engagement and ended with a messy break-up. I'm only explaining all of this because it's important to any sort of analysis that an album following these events entails. Despite the record's instant popularity and supposed introspective nature, it's not very good. The album lacks depth in both production and lyricism. Each song is fun to listen to, but unlike her last two albums, which were marked by her distinct vocal style and sound, it seems like something almost any modern pop artist could have crafted. The lyrics are unoriginal and, frankly, uninspired. The production seems shallow, with each song seeming very sim-

ilar: slightly upbeat, with a trap influence, and on the sadder songs, a bit of synth-pop. That's not to say I didn't enjoy it. I'm a huge fan of Ariana--I really respect her style, and her vocals are always amazing. I still consider "Into You" from her sophomore album "Dangerous Woman" to be one of the best pop songs of the 2010's.

To summarize, "imagine," "fake smile," and "bad idea" aren't really worth the listen. They sound very similar and their lyrics are basic: "I can't fake another smile /

need space," leave much to be desired. At the top is "ghostin," which sounds absolutely beautiful. It's one of the only more relaxed yet melancholy songs on the album. "make up" is catchy but includes some lyrics that have basically no meaning and are just filler: "Let me stay in my bag / 'cause I like when you mad / It's a mood / it's a vibe/ it's a look / it's a match." "needy" is also great, but again, only for its catchiness.

"7 rings" and "break up with your girlfriend, i'm bored" are probably my favorites. They aren't very good songs. But they direct her style into a new genre, and however "pop" they may be, they have a taste of something new.

They tell an interesting story of modern love and friendship.

Overall, Ariana shows that she certainly knows how to play the game. Her fans will love the album, and anyone who likes pop music will like it, and it will attract those who were surprised by whatever her single "thank u, next" evoked. But in terms of longevity, and of recognition as a pop icon like Beyonce and Gaga, Ariana is going to have to work a little harder. We'll see what's in store for us in future albums. ■

The album lacks depth in both production and lyricism... The lyrics are unorigonal and frankly, uninspired.

I can't fake like I'm alright / And I won't say I'm feeling fine / After what I been through, I can't lie." Call me crazy, but these are some truly inspired words.

On the next tier up is "in my head," "bloodline," and "NASA." Her vocals on "in my head" sound angelic, but the song itself isn't anything special. Beyonce's Coachella brass-band inspired style can be heard in "bloodline," which is somewhat interesting, and "NASA" is catchy, but lyrics like "You know I'm a star; space, I'ma

DiBuono: A Hidden Gem

By GABE GERRY

DiBuono is not a normal restaurant, but a pasta shop, so they sell raw homemade pasta that you cook at home. But it is so good so I decided it deserved a review. Well, you already know how I feel about it, so let's get into more detail.

Right in the heart of Bennington, on Route 9, a little past Ramunto's, DiBuono is nested in a small block and is easy to pass by. Next time you drive by just try to keep an eye out for the Italian flag hanging outside (not on a Sunday - they're closed). It's tucked away, but definitely worth a stop. It is a very humble store, with only one small counter to pay at with a display case of all of the days' pasta options. Along the left wall, there are refrigerated goods, like the sauces, meats, and cheeses. Behind the counter you can see where all of the pasta is made: it's very simple, and clearly produced in small batches. It's homey and cozy.

Even though Ravioli is in its name, DiBuono has far more variety than

that. There are usually three to four different shapes of pasta you can choose from, but you have to arrive early or they may be sold out. They have five different ravioli fillings, ranging from traditional, mushroom, all the way to lobster, all of which are incredible. They have spaghetti, pappardelle, capellini, and fettuccine. Last, they make excellent rigatoni. But no one just has plain pasta - that's so boring. DiBuono has you covered with anything you may want to go with your pasta. Their sauces are amazing, and all are made right there in the store. They taste 100 times fresher than anything you will ever find in a grocery store. There is a rustic tomato, which is just normal sauce, but there are also spicy, alfredo, and basil and cream sauces. You can also find sweet and spicy summer sausage, pecorino Romano, mozzarella, and biscotti, which are not made there but are local and equally as nice.

At the end of the day what matters is if everything tastes as good as it looks.

And it's a yes, big YES - everything is so amazing and full of flavor. Before going I had made my own fresh pasta, and this tastes very similar. (Side note: if you want to try your hand in pasta making, Bon Appetit has a good, fresh pasta dough recipe).

But back to DiBuono: their pasta tastes so delicious and when you pair it, say, with the spicy sauce and a summer sausage... Wow, one of the best dishes I've ever had. The best part is you can make everything without having to leave your house!

Overall the only way to mess it up is if you over or under cook the pasta. I have done both, and that ruined the pasta. Luckily, Chef Scott - the main chef and I believe the owner - tells you how long to cook each shape, and what it pairs with best.

It's pasta so anyone can make it; that's what makes DiBuono so great. Next time you drive through Bennington definitely stop. ■

Salinger's Classic: Once is Enough

By SAVILLE KEYES

Controversial is certainly a word that comes to mind when thinking of *Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger. As to why the novel is a well-known classic, the reasons are quite clear. It covers major issues such as mental health and morality as the protagonist and narrator, Holden Caulfield, faces depression after getting kicked out of Pencey Prep School for failing four out of his five classes. Following a huge fight with his roommate, Stradlater, over a girl named Jane, Holden skips town and leaves for NYC, where he plans to hide out until he finds the courage to talk to his family about the expulsion. From the very beginning, Holden is portrayed as this cynical, jaded, and lazy teenager who has little motivation for anything, especially when it comes to planning his future. He is extremely spontaneous throughout the book, as well as inappropriate with women he meets along the way, which certainly adds to his immaturity. On top of this, he believes that he is constantly surrounded by "phonies" wherever he goes, somehow not realizing that

he is reciprocating this fakeness to basically everyone he meets. However, Holden's complexity shines through as readers are able to see that there is much more to him than a confused, rebellious teen.

I definitely think this book would be more popular with teenagers rather than adults. It is understandable as to why this book was banned in Australia, for example, due to its excessive profanity, underage drinking, and sexual innuendos. At times, I found it actually took away from the storyline because it could be so distracting. I'm sure it matches up with the setting - 1950's Manhattan - but there could certainly be less of, well, all of it. Holden's sarcasm and humor make up for a lack of consistency in the novel, as they intertwine with the harsh realities of life to create one interesting read.

I like *Catcher in the Rye* for all of its important topics, especially as a stressed teen in high school, but I don't think I will feel the need to read it again - once was enough. ■

Hey, you!

Me?

Yes, you!

What do you need. I'm busy.

Have you been reading the Echo?

Um, I'm reading it now, and I read it in the fall.

You do realize most of our content is online, right?

How much of it?

Over 90 percent of it.

I don't know, your website's never looked great on my phone.

We've redesigned the Echo online. It's pretty slick.

Why are you worth my time?

Do you want to stay informed and support journalism?

I don't think I'm allowed to say no to that. What's my next step?

greylockecho.mgrhs.org. You're in for a treat.

FEATURES

Concussed

Part 1 of a series on concussion culture at Mt. Greylock

By VICTORIA MELKONYAN and ALEX WILSON

There is no doubt that sports-related injuries among adolescents are on the rise, and one of the most dangerous sports-related injuries suffered by high schoolers nationwide is a concussion. Concussion rates among adolescents have been rising steadily for years, with the Orthopaedic Journal of Sports Medicine finding that among 15-19 year olds, there were as many as 16.5 cases per 1,000 patients and that there had been an 87% increase in concussions among that same age group from 2007-2014. The main danger is not the concussion, which often has a recovery period of less than six months; multiple traumatic brain injuries can lead to Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE), a neurodegenerative disease that can have incredibly damaging effects for those diagnosed. Given that little research has been done on long-term effects of multiple concussions (such as CTE), however, high schools can often mishandle situations and not take adequate steps to ensure safety of students. At Mount Greylock, as with any other school, there are two sides to the story.

Concussion rates at Mt. Greylock have been down in recent years: in the 2014-15 school year, there were 48, 35 in 2015-16, and 24 in 2016-17. The sports that most students suffered concussions while playing were soccer, football, and lacrosse. Mount Greylock junior Alex Falk noted that the numbers are “pretty normal” for a school where so many participate in athletic activities.

Mount Greylock is unique in that its concussion policy extends not only to athletes, or to those with school-related injuries, but to any students who may need special help. In addition, to be eligible to participate in sports, students and parents must complete a concussion education course and turn in a certificate of completion to Athletic Director Lindsey von Holtz.

In order to better get an idea of what having a concussion is like and the social culture around concussions at Mt. Greylock, the *Echo* sat down with junior Alex Falk. Falk sustained two concussions in the 2017-18 school year, with the two only a week apart and occurring fairly late in the year, in late May. One was during

a lacrosse game and the other during a car accident. Describing how he felt after the lacrosse-related concussion, Falk that “you’re not yourself when you have a concussion. Coming off the field, it felt like... if beige was a feeling.”

When asked about the challenges at school after the concussion, Falk mentioned that he had not realized how “technology-oriented” all of his classes were, noting that with his inability to use technology while concussed, certain assignments

multiple concussions can be pervasive and disastrous if they go unchecked - it seems that at Greylock, these effects vary widely from group to group, but they exist in at least some capacity.

Contact sports pose high risks for many students, from those who swim to those who play football. However, the headlines have focused on football and the potential long term effects from concussions.

Currently, all athletes and their parents must take concussion training before being

signs are crucial.”

David Zaldivar, a coach and gym teacher at Mount Greylock, shared his thoughts on concussions with the *Echo*. Zaldivar brought up the protocols of sports teams for students who have suffered concussions. “I would suggest to an athlete taking at the very least two full weeks off from any physical activity,” said Zaldivar. “Once the athlete is cleared to do so, they go through what is called the concussion protocol. This allows them to slowly return to play taking steps that are closely monitored by a medical professional and coach.” He further commented, “I believe athletes should know the symptoms of concussions prior to joining sports. Not only for themselves but to protect their teammates as well. If an athlete continues to participate in their sport with an undetected concussion, they put themselves in serious danger of head trauma. I have read about the very unfortunate stories of athletes dying because of head injuries, and one of these reasons is because they continue to play with a prior concussion. It is so important to educate players and coaches on head injuries so that we can keep sports safe.”

Zaldivar also told the *Echo* a story from his own high school career. “I was in high school, I noticed one of my teammates showing signs of a concussion during a game, I mentioned it to my coach who then had our trainer check him out. My teammate ended up having a bad concussion, and if I did not recognize his symptoms, he could have gone back into the game and seriously hurt himself.”

According to Zaldivar, the experience showed him just how crucial seeing symptoms and reporting them to others really is in all sports. ■

Coach Zaldivar

“I believe athletes should know the symptoms of concussions prior to joining sports. Not only for themselves but to protect their teammates as well.”

and classes got considerably more difficult. However, he also said that “teachers take it very seriously” and that they are willing to give students any special accommodations they may require (specifically citing Mr. Davis giving him a three week extension as an example).

Falk also spoke about the social culture at Greylock surrounding concussions, saying that they can be perceived very differently among different students: “some kids think of it as a badge of honor, and others hide it to seem ‘tough’... but it really depends person to person.” In regard to interactions with friends, he said that after a lot of questions, the treatment was normal. The last point he made was that “reporting it to someone is most important.” Falk was medically cleared a month and a half after sustaining his concussions and thankfully shows no further signs of trauma (medical or social), but it has been proven time and time again in many cases that the long-term effects of sustaining

allowed to play for the Mounties or their co-op teams. Doctors suggest the long term effects from head injuries should make schools end programs, but there are many who disagree with their suggestions. Mount Greylock football player Seth Schulties commented, “concussions in football are bound to happen. But, they are easily preventable with the right training.” He went on to explain that coaches help the athletes find strategies to prevent concussions. Schulties self-reported that he has never gotten a concussion. In fact, he praised the coaches for teaching techniques that reduce the risk of concussions. Said Schulties, “we learn in practice how to tackle in a certain way that avoids using your head. This helps to lessen the chance and limit concussions.” Schulties also explained that it is important to recognize symptoms as an athlete. Schulties highlighted the importance of coaches, players, and parents, who need to recognize the symptoms of a concussion. “Knowing the

Concussion Culture

Have you had experiences with concussions at Greylock? We'd love to hear from you as we continue to report on concussion culture at our school.

mountgreylockecho@gmail.com

A Look at the AP Course

By CLARA MCWEENY

In a recent school council meeting, the subject of Advanced Placement classes was brought up. Community members, parents, and students all raised concerns over the pressure to take AP classes, and the strict schedule and curriculum the classes must follow. The importance of APs and the challenges they bring was also discussed.

AP classes are offered from tenth grade onwards, apart from the rare exception of an AP math class freshman year. Greylock seems to be easing high school students into these classes, only offering one core curriculum AP class in tenth grade, AP European History. Students do have the option to skip a class in math and science to take an AP class, and a brand new elective was recently introduced, AP Computer Science Principles, offered to students in grades 10th grade and up. In Junior and Senior year, AP classes are offered in full force, with students taking as many as five APs a year.

As with most schools, a certain emphasis is placed on taking as many APs as possible, so colleges can see that students are reaching their full potentials as scholars. Often, AP classes can do just that. These classes teach college level concepts for students wishing to challenge themselves and learn in an environment with peers looking to do the same, preparing them for a similar atmosphere to college classes. Sophomore Leo Rossiter remarked upon this, saying “there should be more [AP’s] because they’re the most interesting classes and aren’t actually that much more work than honors classes.” The curricula take a deeper dive into the subject, encouraging

students to think about topics outside their comfort zone. Students who take AP classes stand out to colleges because it shows they challenged themselves and are prepared to take college level classes, according to the Princeton Review.

Unfortunately, the strict, regimented schedule AP classes must follow can sometimes leave little room for discussion concerning other than what’s in the textbook. With Greylock starting later than most schools across the country, the inevitable snow days, and the unchanging date for all AP tests, teachers are already playing catch up to teach kids everything they need to know for the tests. Current events, debates, and topics outside of the textbook can have little importance in the eyes of AP classes, given the both the students and teachers desire for success on the exam. Anything that is not preparing students for the highly specific test is not emphasized in classes, which has had negative reactions concerning both the faculty and student body of Mt. Greylock.

Given the heightened prominence of AP classes, students often push to take as many AP classes as possible. Often times, students are taking up to five classes at once, meaning five AP tests to study for when Spring comes around. Mr. Fisher, an english teacher at Mt. Greylock, when asked about the added stress of APs, said “I think that students take too many APs sometimes and it raises their anxiety and hurts them in the long run. But colleges ask for them and it makes it hard to try and balance that.” This statement sums up how many Greylock students seem to feeling

concerning AP classes. Many are taking as many as possible, which leads to some sleepless nights and an increase in stress level.

But is it all worth it to get into their dream school? Sophomore Izzy Leonard expressed her feelings towards APs, saying, “It’s more about what looks good for colleges then what [students] actually want to learn. It becomes all about the grade instead of actually learning.” Striving for these grades can certainly add to the stress of high school. With an average of an hour of homework each night for each AP class and school related extracurriculars, students are left without much time to pursue other interests or even sleep for the 9-9.5 hours recommended by Nationwide Children’s hospital. The early start of the school day could be the main contributor to this, but that’s a whole other article.

More and more schools have been limiting APs or decreasing the number they offer. Mr Bell, a science teacher at Greylock commented upon this, saying “absolutely there should be a limit [on APs] because you can’t trust parents and kids to make wise decisions because of all the college pressure. Everyone feels like if you don’t go to an Ivy league your a failure, so the pressure on kids and families from neighbors and friends is immense.” Bell continued, stating “we know kids are making unhealthy decisions and not sleeping enough and melting down. If you put a limit, we can honestly say to colleges that you took the most possible.” While Bell’s opinion seems to be in line with many of the faculty members and students at Mt. Greylock,

some still find that the positives of APs outweigh the negatives.

Students can find themselves taking classes they might not be interested just for the sake of taking APs, but that can be a great way to broaden horizons and taking difficult and oftentimes out-of-the-comfort-zone classes can be good for students and fuel interests they may not have pursued originally. Greylock strives to meet the needs of students who want to learn as much as possible in the most challenging environment possible. Senior Karen McComish said “I don’t think we should have less APs; if anything we should have more but in subjects we don’t have, like AP government or different AP histories that aren’t so western centric.” English teacher Mrs. Houle echoed McComish’s thoughts : “I think that APs are a great opportunity for students who want to challenge themselves. I think that it’s really important for students to make good choices so they’re not overburdening themselves because I think anxiety is unfortunately something that’s very prevalent. But I feel like limiting the number available isn’t necessarily addressing that problem because kids need to learn to give themselves limits and figure out what they’re capable of.”

The conversation concerning APs is sure to continue in high schools across the country and it is evident that many more discussions will ensue at Greylock, considering the divided opinion of both faculty and students. ■

Twin Advice: Twice as Nice

By CHARLIE and CLARA MCWEENY

To The Twins,
Hi! It's an honor to get to write to you two! I know you must get a ton of letters, but maybe you'll get around to answering mine. I've just moved to town midway through the year, but on an alarmingly warm day this February, I started to think towards Summer and the ice cream that comes with it. Any suggestions?

Best,
Sweet-tooth Sally

There is only one answer, and that's Lickety Split. Located in the heart of downtown Williamstown, towards the Southern end of Spring Street, stands a temple to all that is good in this world: ice cream. Wait, I think they might be moving to a new building, near the new hotel, I'll have to check on it. Either way Sally, it's time for an important life lesson. There will be people in your life who will try and misguide you. For example, they might tell you to get your ice cream from Krispy Kone. It is absolutely essential that you do not heed their lures. Consider yourself warned.

Now that you've entered Lickety Split, what do you get? A great question, and I'm afraid that it is at this point that Clara's opinion and my own may start to differ. Just whatever you do, don't get a cone. I mean, if your intention is to be covered in sticky ice cream, while every small flying animal from bees to gnats hovers around you, while you can't even get a proper bite, by all means go ahead and get a cone. But if you don't want to look like a helpless toddler, stick with the cup. This will open up the addition of untold joys. Swedish Fish, hot fudge, M&Ms, nuts, and Oreos are all at your disposal. A cup gives you the freedom to choose between any available topping, protecting your first amendment rights and upholding a pillar of our democracy.

You have your store, Lickety Split, you have your container, a cup, now you just need your ice cream. Lucky for you, there is once again only one option: mud pie. Can you taste it yet? The perfect balance of coffee ice cream and frozen fudge, rolled into one? Such a deep and rich flavor, sliding down the back of your throat, the frozen fudge melting and creating a steady trickle of chocolate into your stomach in a scene that's straight out of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. That brings me to a sidebar: only take advice on sweets from Charlies - its our natural specialty. Clara will undoubtedly attempt to mislead you, maybe even with a fruit ice cream (long, drawn-out gagging noises). Going back to the life lesson before, don't listen to her. Don't get me wrong, I'm a huge fan of fruit myself, but it simply doesn't belong in ice cream. Imagine putting grapes in your ice cream. Have you thrown up yet?

Clara might even try to talk you into, dare I even say it, purple-cow. Just look at it. Purple as a color is not something humans eat in the wild. In fact, a number of highly venomous plants and animals share

a purple coloring. Biologically, every bone in your body should be pushing you away from that ice cream. That's not even mentioning the dye they must put in it to create such a horrific color. I bet its banned in Europe. Imagine, by some horrible twist of fate, that you are being forced at gunpoint to eat a cup of purple-cow ice cream, the only circumstances under which any rational human would eat it. You take the first bite. Fruit, gross! But you're forced to keep on going. Suddenly, your tooth hits something hard, what is it? You pull it out of your mouth to discover it's a miniature bar of chocolate. Weird. You have to keep going, and once again you hit a solid bar, but at least this time you know what the expect. Right? Wrong! The taste buds in your mouth burn, and the neurons in your brain fly off their intended paths. Its not dark chocolate, but white chocolate that someone has snuck in here too. Is there no consistency in the world? What is this cruelty? First someone is forcing you to eat ice cream at gunpoint, and now they've snuck white chocolate into it too! Avoid this situation at all costs. Choose mud pie. Now that you have your delicious mud pie, in a cup, you can practice your first amendment rights by picking any topping you want. You're helping uphold democracy, while the Sally that heeded Clara's advice is now living in an authoritarian state, being forced at gunpoint to eat purple-cow.

Best, Charlie

Hi Sally! Thank you so much for writing in. Now comes the part you can actually read, not just skim over for the sake of skimming. Shall we?

For once, Charlie and I can agree on one thing (but only the one). Lickety Split is the only place to get ice cream in Berkshire County. It really is. While I believe you should only go to lickety split because of its pure deliciousness, Charlie has different motives. I.e., a ten year grudge against some Krispy Kone sponsored tee ball team who beat his team in some tournament. Which I respect, but it seems traveling to Lickety Split simply because it's the last option is not the right reason. But that's a whole other conversation. Also, side note, Charlie playing baseball is perhaps funnier than him playing basketball. But back to your question.

I am faced with the very same dilemma as you each and every time I visit our local ice cream shop. I've been there hundreds and hundreds of times, yet I still face the eternal struggle of our generation: which ice cream flavor should I choose today? And yet, almost without fail, I always come back to the same answer I first settled on that humid day in the summer of '05. Purple cow ice cream. Just typing the words make me yearn for a bite of the rich yet refreshing gem of an ice cream flavor. The contrast of white and milk chocolate chips in the smooth, creamy base is ev-

erything anyone could hope for in an ice cream flavor. And this flavor isn't just any old store brand flavor like, say, mud pie. This flavor is the pride and joy of Williamstown, Massachusetts home of the rare and mystical actual purple cow. There's literally nothing better than taking a bite or lick (purple cow is so versatile that it is just as good on a cone as it is in a cup) surrounded by stately, glowing purple mountains on a warm summer day.

Aside from the obvious deliciousness of the flavor itself, the name adds a certain intrigue. Freshmen William's students flock to the sacred storefront of Lickety Split to get a glimpse of the vibrant purple ice cream that will soon become a staple food for their next four years. But purple cow ice cream is a hollowed name on the streets of Williamstown, not just for its name but for its title of best-ice-cream-flavor-in-the-world. Even with the hype surrounding purple cow, I was initially skeptical. I'm not a fan of fruity dessert, aside from the occasional strawberries and chocolate. I thought fruit was just not necessary to make a great dessert. I had obviously never tried purple cow. And if I, a person who normally stays as far away from fruit desserts as possible, can love purple cow ice cream as much as I do (and I love it a lot) then who knows the ways in which purple cow could change your life.

And now, on to a topic I've been avoided just because, frankly, it grosses me out. Mud pie. Eww. Not to be crass, but the irony of what cow poop is called is certainly not lost on me. And hopefully not lost on you either, Sally. Mud pie is everything I hate in an ice cream. First of all, and not to offend anyone, I really think chocolate does not make a good ice cream flavor. Don't get me wrong, I love chocolate in any other dessert. Seriously, I do. But I eat ice cream when I'm craving something refreshing. Chocolate ice cream, in the middle of summer, is not refreshing. It sticks to the back of your throat and is too rich. Purple cow, on the other hand.... And I'm pretty sure (although not positive because I try to avoid mud pie at all costs) mud pie has caffeine in it! The horrors. Forget the purple die being banned in Europe, (which its not, only the orange dye is. You can ask my Mom) think about the caffeine intake in a single scoop of mud pie. I can't even begin to imagine the number of inches lost (or not gained) because of mud pie.

Go try mud pie. Really, I urge you to. You don't even need to be held by gunpoint (which was a kind of weird, extreme analogy on Charlie's part). Stop by literally any convenience or grocery store anywhere to try it. It will taste the same anywhere: gross. But if you're really, truly interested in finding the best ice cream flavor, please try purple cow. It might just make these next thirteen years the best of your life (or at least for your taste buds) just as it did mine.

Sincerely, Clara ■

An Interview with Ms. Siegel

By CELINA SAVAGE

A new face at Greylock is Ms. Siegel, who is teaching latin on the third floor to eighth graders and sophomores in Latin I and III. The Echo sat down with Siegel to ask her about her background as a teacher and latin enthusiast.

Echo: So what have you done before coming here? Is this the first time you've taught?

Seigl: So right before I came here I did a semester teaching French at Berkshire School in Sheffield. That was really fun and the first time I had been back full time in teaching since I had children. Right after that I thought it was great and starting looking for something to move onto. That was the first time I taught a foreign language full time. I taught French last year part-time at Wardolf High School where I have taught on and off in Stockbridge. So this is my first year teaching Latin since I taught Latin one year at BCD in 2009. I taught one year at Berkshire Country Day School where I also went to school, but I have definitely been a part-time teacher because I am an actress by training and a writer. I wrote a one-woman show that I did three years ago and have performed in The Unicorn Theater in Stockbridge. Now I've started working on a pilot of that for television.

E: What grades do you teach here at Mount Greylock?

S: I teach three sections of eighth-grade Latin and one section of tenth-grade Latin.

E: Did you have any connections before coming here?

S: No, I live in Great Barrington so I don't really know anyone up here. I do know two families because both our sons have Down Syndrome.

E: Do you like it here at Mount Greylock?

S: I do, yeah! My students are really great and I feel like it is a very vibrant classroom environment.

E: Where did you learn Latin?

S: I had latin from the age of seventh grade at BCD (Berkshire Country Day) through ninth with a teacher who is still there! That teacher really knew how to teach Latin. Then I went to boarding school and did Latin and Greek. Then I went to college and was a classics major for a couple years then switched to another field. My husband is a classicist and is a Latin teacher as well. So we both do something we really love. He also teaches French. So there is always something to talk about at the dinner table.

E: So will you be getting into JCL while you're here?

S: Well, I am only here for a semester, but I am interested in learning more about it.

E: Okay, last question. What grades did you teach before coming here?

Seigl: I've taught like everything. I literally have taught everything except first and second grade. Yeah, so I've taught kindergarten French at BCD, and I taught fourth through sixth English. I have also taught eighth-grade English and Latin at BCD. Then when I was in New York I taught third-grade for a year. Then I have taught high school last year. Then I taught college for a year. I taught drama for a year at Simon's Rock and MCLA. ■

Know someone with cool hobbies or interests?

Nominate them for 1 in 650!

mountgreylockecho@gmail.com-

Continued from Page 1.

E: Do you prefer singing in a show or on your own?

W: Oh that's hard! I love having context for a song that I'm singing. Singing the songs in Hello Dolly! is really fun because they're furthering the character or you can really inject a lot of life into it. But I also love singing outside of musicals by myself because then I can put my own voice on it. Literally. And put my own thoughts into it.

E: What is your favorite aspect of performing?

W: I love making something that's beautiful. I want to make things that bring people joy. It brings me so much joy doing it. You can step out of yourself and see the world from someone else's point of view, and by doing so, you can learn so many things.

E: If you could put on any play, which would you do?

W: I might want to put on Pride and Prejudice, the play. I think that would be a really interesting challenge and something we haven't really delved into.

E: Are you excited for the new auditorium?

rium?

W: I am beyond thrilled for the new auditorium. I have been for a while. I've actually never been able to rehearse on a stage until the actual show during my career at Mount Greylock so I'm very excited to be able to work in space made to be worked in.

E: Will it be finished in time for the musical or will you have to use a different space?*

W: There has been lot's of debate over that. We heard it's definitely not going to be ready, and then we heard it might be ready. Then we heard again that it's definitely not going to be ready, but I'll be happy with the show wherever it is. Being in the '62 Center is obviously amazing because it's such a perfect space for any type of performance art, but being on our own stage would be wonderful.

E: Out of all the plays you have performed in at Greylock, which is your favorite?

W: I was Beatrice in Much Ado About Nothing, and she is such a fiery character; I think I grew so much when I did that play. I would say that, but they've all been very

fun.

E: Shakespeare or Spring musical?

W: That's very hard. I won't say which I like more, but I'll say Shakespeare really helps you to develop your character and helps you to come into yourself as a human outside of the role. The musical builds your community at Greylock and builds your ability to work with other people, because singing with a others is such a difficult thing to do. They both definitely furthered me as a person and have been a huge part of my high school career.

E: Do you think that you want a career in acting or singing?

W: Optimistically I'd say I'd love to be singing for the rest of my life and I will be whether I make a career out of it or not! And I'd love to be acting. Financially that might not be the best decision but I know that I'll be pursuing some sort of creative career.

*Editor's note: interview was conducted before auditorium received certificate of occupancy over February break. ■

OPINION

No More Presidential Prerequisites, Please *Finding flaws in the “we’re not ready for” mindset*

By MADDY ART

On March 28, 2020, I will turn eighteen, exactly twenty-five days after Massachusetts voters head to the polls to vote in the primaries for the 2020 presidential election. If you know me, you can probably guess that those twenty-five days devastate me. I cannot wait to exercise my right to vote, and the fact that I’ll narrowly miss that opportunity in what has been deemed the most important primary of our time pains my soul.

Fortunately, I’ll be able to vote in the general election, when President Trump faces a Democratic challenger. So, too, will the rest of the current juniors, the current seniors, and some of the current sophomores. Given the surge in turnout of youth voters in the recent midterm elections, -- the Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning And Engagement estimated that youth turnout was the highest in any midterm election in the past twenty-five years -- I have no doubt in the influence that our votes will have in 2020.

Before we get to the general election, though, Democrats must nominate the candidate who will run against Trump. The stakes are incredibly high: the past two years have been characterized by presidential scandals, connections between the president and a foreign power that influenced our election, attacks on the free press, racially-motivated vilification, and blatant lies, all because of the man running the executive branch. Voting Trump out of office would not only be a rebuke to divisions and bigotry, but it would also be a return to normalcy. I’m so distressed about

what the next two years could bring that I cannot even fathom what another six could be like. So, yes, the pressure is on to nominate a Democratic candidate who will beat Trump.

What that candidate looks like, though, has been the subject of much debate. From the hallways of Mount Greylock to the New York Times Opinion section, I’ve heard and read fervent arguments about what sorts of candidates can and cannot deliver the magic number of 270 electoral votes. I think it is important to have conversations about the ideological priorities of the party, but I’m concerned by the debates over whether Democrats “should run” a white man or, well, anyone else.

For one, talking about the primary process as some selection procedure controlled and carried out by an elite group of people undermines the democratic process through which voters decide who each party’s nominee will be. It’s true that the Democratic National Committee faces credible allegations of corruption in regard to the 2016 primaries and that we should talk about the DNC’s general practice of throwing their support behind the establishment candidate. At the same time, we can’t take the voters out of the equation. Using language like “Democrats should run...” creates the notion that the American people are powerless watchers of the political process rather than the ones driving it. Your party does not decide your vote, your vote decides your party’s candidate.

The substance of the argument is generally that, because the stakes are high, vot-

ing for a white man to be the Democratic nominee is the safest way to beat Trump. They hold that “the country wasn’t ready for Obama,” so we shouldn’t try again with anyone who doesn’t look like forty-three of our country’s forty-four presidents. While the intentions are presumed opposite, not voting for women or people of color has the same result whether you are doing it out of bigotry or out of a desire for Democratic wins: women and people of color won’t be elected. With every major step America has taken toward becoming a more just nation, there has been pushback. That does not mean we stop fighting. There is never going to be a moment where the country - and presumably the white Midwestern voters to whom this argument refers - announces, “Okay, now we’re really ready for a black president,” or a female president, or any other kind of president. If we want to have presidents who look like America, we have to just go for it and vote for them.

I understand the compulsion to wait another four years before fully adopting this mindset. The first female nominee of a major party was defeated by the same person that the next Democratic nominee will face, after all. Isn’t it tempting to wait another four years until the stakes are a little lower before we try again? It’s impossible to forget the tense atmosphere surrounding the 2016 election and easy to assume that any female candidate would face the same atmosphere of double standards, uneven media coverage, and sexist attacks from Trump. The media, though, seems to be

acknowledging these issues and working to prevent the same atmosphere from controlling the 2020 election.

The other problem is that this mentality assumes that any female candidate is the same as Hillary Clinton. In fact, there is just as much diversity in the ideology of women running for office than that of men. Painting all women with the same brush -- and assuming that because Clinton didn’t win, no woman can -- is not only narrow-minded, but untrue.

To win in 2020, Democrats will need the votes of “Obama-Trump” voters and those who voted for Obama in 2012 and didn’t vote in 2016. While many presume that their willingness to vote for Trump was a “racial backlash,” in focus groups with these voters conducted for The Wilderness podcast, most said they would have voted for Obama for a third term. More importantly, they said they felt lied to and abandoned by Trump, and then rebuked Trump’s racist fear-mongering by delivering a victory to Democrats in the midst of a news cycle dominated by Trump’s fabricated crisis at the border.

These Americans initially voted for Trump because they believed he would make their lives better; ironically, his harsh and fallacious rhetoric connected with and inspired voters. A Democratic candidate who can beat Trump will be one who can also connect with and inspire voters, but with a message of unity rather than one of division. Neither the race nor the gender of the candidate will matter in delivering that message. ■

My Ideal President

By AVA SIMON

Something that irked me when watching the 2016 presidential debates was how all the candidates would, without fail, interrupt each other. They would consistently speak over each other until it got to the point where there was no intelligent conversation happening, just a loud back and forth of useless banter. Even if by some miracle the debate did not dissolve into inane nonsense, the candidates never actually formed coherent rebuttals or even simple statements of what their policies were. They just sputtered out words about their websites that no one would go to until their two minutes were up.

As I watched, I wondered what an ideal presidential candidate would do during the debates. As I pursued my hypothetical president, a character started to form. This president would be named Henrietta Pergison, standing for HP, or Hypothetical President. Ms. Pergison would have concise two-minute arguments for all her reforms, policies, and rebuttals. She would never overstep her boundaries during the debates and be cool-headed in the face of her opponent. Automatically, she would have a huge advantage in the polls since if there is anything everybody values, it is good manners. Moving beyond the election, one of Pres-

ident Pergison’s reforms would be to cut all work and industries that use fossil fuels, such as car gas and certain types of electricity. Since there would then be a huge influx of unemployed citizens, Pergison would cut the military to fund massive public work organizations for the unemployed, promote climate-friendly industries, fund healthcare, and perhaps start to pay off the USA’s massive and ever-growing debt.

The main argument against this particular policy would involve the fear of other nations. It would be argued that we need a military to protect ourselves either from other countries or evil people. In response, President Pergison would say that the money gained from cutting the military could be used to foster healthy environments to encourage goodness instead of evil, and she would argue that we do not need to fear other countries, the reasoning being that we can work out our differences with logic instead of war. In the end, everyone is a human wishing for personal prosperity, and if negotiations can ensure good fortune, there would be little incentive to attack. If peace can be guaranteed, then the military can be cut for good, providing 598.5 billion dollars, AKA 54% of all government spending as reported in 2015.

However, the money gained from the military would not go on forever. To boost the money flow, taxes would have to be cut for the low and middle class and increased for the wealthy. The goal with this tax plan would be to incentivize new businesses, distribute money evenly, and make life easier for the impoverished. Interest rates would be kept at a moderate level to discourage fool-hardy investments and keep a stable but healthy economy.

Assuming that Pergison’s reforms worked as intended, the country would be flourishing. With little to worry about within the borders, it would be time for President Pergison to turn to matters overseas and everywhere in between. Her first policy on this matter would be to stop waging war on other countries, instead focusing on providing healthcare for the injured and less fortunate. The USA would replace its global image of aggression for one of protection. For example, the supplies saved from guarding South Korea’s border could be better used to set up immigration camps and provide emergency assistance to those recently affected by natural disasters. This change in foreign involvement would be a nice compromise between those who believe the USA is being far too provoc-

ative with its military use and those who believe the USA has a right and moral obligation to try and settle matters overseas.

On a similar note, President Pergison would change the immigration policy. The USA currently has a stagnant population, only growing by 1% each year. As we stand, the USA can absorb a much larger population. Thus, the total immigration quota would be drastically inflated and the citizenship process would be made much faster, taking far less than the current maximum six-year wait. The goal of changing the immigration system would be to encourage diversity and be more hospitable, striking blows at prejudice.

What started as a mad fever dream about the shortcomings of the presidential debates ended up forming the mold for what I believe to be my perfect hypothetical president. Even though most of us are not yet of voting age, when the time comes, if we have not solidified our political beliefs, then we will simply vote for the loudest candidate. I firmly believe that if we can get a president like Henrietta Pergison, the USA and the world would become a better place. All we need are enough voices. ■

Who’s your ideal president? Let us know: mountgreylockecho@gmail.com

My ideal president...

Thoughts from your peers

“is completely respectful of everyone’s views.”

Tarryn Gaherty

“would want the best treatment for every member of the military, no matter their gender, race, beliefs, or sexual orientation.”

Saville Keyes

“would acknowledge that climate change is happening and try to find the best solution.”

Ella Smith

“would stick with allies and does not appease the enemy. They would work with the U.N and allies to positively benefit the world.”

Alex Wilson

“if John F. Kennedy and Obama had a love child.”

Inez Higgston

“would work with a younger demographic.”

Anna Welch

Editorial: Media Trust and Consumption

Call out facts that aren't true. But support those that are.

By THE EDITORIAL BOARD

In mid-January, *BuzzFeed* released a story that, if true, would have had enormous implications on the Trump presidency's legitimacy. If true, it would have meant that Trump told lawyer Michael Cohen to lie under oath. If true, the story would have proved that the president had obstructed justice - in other words, that he had broken the law.

The only issue was the "if true" part because later in the day, the Office of the Special Council told the American people that this information was not correct. Trump was quick to attack *BuzzFeed* as well as the press itself. "A very sad day for journalism, but a great day for our Country!" he tweeted that evening. He followed up by reminding followers that "fake news is truly the ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE." Rudy Giuliani, an attorney of Trump, tweeted that "I ask the press to take heed that their hysterical desire to destroy this President has gone too far."

Interestingly, Trump's labeling of the *BuzzFeed* situation as "fake news" is one of the few times that he's used the phrase to mean news that is wrong. Because the story was, at least according to the Special Council, false.

Joshua Habgood-Coote of the *Conversation* noted that fake news as a term is used in a number of different ways - from something that is mistakenly not true, to a blatant lie, to news that someone doesn't like. "We would be better off if we stopped using it," he said. Habgood-Coote argued that fake news can on a surface level be a democratic phrase: it holds accountable

those who do not give the people access to the truth.

But fake news is used by people like Trump and Giuliani describe news they disagree with, news that doesn't paint pretty pictures of them, and news that makes them angry. Trump has used the phrase as a weapon. And he's not even hiding it. In May he tweeted that "The Fake News is working overtime. Just reported that, despite the tremendous success we are having with the economy & all things else, 91% of the Network News about me is negative (Fake). Why do we work so hard in working with the media when it is corrupt? Take away credentials?"

CNN was quick to point out the shady juxtaposition of "negative" and "fake." By putting fake in parenthesis after negative, Trump admitted that he sees news that depicts him negatively as fake news.

This is why Habgood-Coote argued for the elimination of "fake news" as a phrase. While you may be using it to describe journalism that is not factually supported, someone else is using it to attack the free press itself. The Editorial Board urges readers to consider how they use the term.

Teenagers consume news in different ways than past generations have. They have constant access to cell phones, which can mean constant access the news. Scrolling through Instagram, teens are closer to the greater world than they have ever been.

But while teens may have greater access to the news, they do not trust it. In a Knight Foundation report on news consumption, "lack of trust and perceived bias in

the news was an important theme" for all groups surveyed. "Teens and young adults expressed widespread skepticism about the news and assume that much of the information they encounter may be inaccurate or biased," the researchers found. Another Knight survey found that 49 percent of high school students don't trust the media to "accurately and fairly report news."

The Board stresses that accurate, unbiased media coverage is immensely important, and it's vital to a functional democracy. So is the ability of a press to function. And if you aren't happy with how the press is giving you news because it is not giving you the unfiltered, democratic, truthful content you seek, know that completely turning your back on the media - abandoning the free press - will contribute to a widespread disintegration of truth as a key American value.

Think about it this way. There is an important difference between Donald Trump and someone who holds the press accountable. The latter will push the media to do the best job it can do, while the President dreams of the media's death.

Both actors are upset by mass media screw-ups. The end goals of the two are different in the most important ways.

Critic A, we will call it, wishes the press did not exist. Critic A espouses rhetoric that convinces a California man to make threatening phone calls to the staff of the *Boston Globe*. Critic A praises someone body slamming journalists. Critic A paints the press as the enemy of the people.

Critic B strives to promote fact and

eliminate misinformation. Critic B asks publications to correct their mistakes, and to acknowledge them. Critic B seeks a media that people can trust. Critic B understands that trust in the press is crucial, and that sometimes it takes some work to achieve it.

The Board hears the cries of those who feel that media bias makes it hard to read the news. Bias exists and is undesirable. Instead of turning backs, the Board asks students to consider what they do want. A press that reports factual, truthful information? National news outlets that are flawlessly neutral?

The Board proposes that members of the Mt. Greylock community relentlessly examine the news they read. Do these two stories contain the same information? Is this writer's news story neutral? Is there clear consistency across these several news outlets?

When *BuzzFeed*'s story is denied by Mueller's office, consider how *BuzzFeed* should have acted differently, and make a decision about it. Make sure to clarify what actually happened by reading stories from a variety of sources and questioning their credibility.

You might even decide that you no longer want to read *BuzzFeed*. These decisions, if calculated and reasoned, often make sense.

However, do not turn your back on the news when *BuzzFeed* screws up. Because turning your back is giving up on the truth, and the truth is important. ■

Capital Gift

Continued from Page 1.

maximum number of students." The committee discussed two main plans. Plan 5A would involve the construction of a new turf field where the John T. Allen field currently is, and a new grass field behind the school. The current lights would have to be upgraded to LEDs, and ADA accessibility improvements would have to be made. Plan 5B keeps the John T. Allen field as is, avoiding the need for ADA accessibility requirements, and involves the construction of a new turf field behind the school, including bleachers, new lighting, and a press box.

At the subcommittee meeting the general consensus was in favor of plan 5B, partly to avoid additional costs from improving accessibility at John T. Allen, and because a significant amount of money had been invested in the field over the summer. Athletic director Lindsey Vonn Holtz said that she thought plan 5B would be better: "I like that option better, based off my conversations in other athletic areas."

Dan Caplinger emphasized that plan 5A would undo work previously done on John T. Allen: "you'd be undoing all the work previously done at John Allen by replacing it with turf." Chair Skavelem summed up the day's discussions, "we're with 5B now, with the potential of exploring a new turf field at a new location, a minimum number of improvements at John Allen, improvements to bleachers, press box, and lighting."

With most committee members in favor of plan B, conversation moved towards the possibility of a track. The track team currently hosts their home meets at Williams, and often uses their track for practices. However, as of now, von Holtz has said that Williams has no availability for track meets this spring. Von Holtz asked, "at some point, should we be discussing if we need a track here?" Caplinger asked, "do we recommend the track, understanding we don't have the money...is it totally feasible, or not feasible, to do the field first and the track later?" Conversation eventually moved on, without a decision on the track.

At a school committee meeting on the 25th, the subcommittee presented their recommendations to the school board. This included a three, or possibly four, part plan.

The first phase of this plan comprises of the construction of a turf field behind the school, as well as lighting, a press box, and portable bleachers. Improvements to the baseball and softball fields would make up the next step, which would also encompass fencing and dugouts for the softball field to bring the school up to Title IX requirements. The third phase would continue upgrades to the softball field, focusing on enhancing the grass. The possible fourth phase of the plan entails the construction of an eight-lane straightaway and six-lane curved track, on the site currently occupied by the grass track. The separation of the turf and track would allow a full-width soccer field, the ability to host simultaneous sporting events, and flexibility in planning.

It was also revealed at the school committee meeting that the initial five million dollar gift had now grown to over six million dollars, but that money is tied to the endowment and can swing with the market.

Students were deeply divided on what should be done. Hazel Scullin, a sophomore who runs cross-country and track, said that "I would like a turf field - I just don't want a track. Using Williams' facilities is just so nice - we don't have to maintain them whatsoever. We have a good grass track." Other students expressed their desire for a proper track. Sophomore Briana Dowling voiced her opinion, saying that "I think a track is a good idea. It makes it easier - it's harder to get to Williams. Other students expressed concern that this money was going to athletic facilities, and not academic concerns, such as expanding teaching staff, or making the school more sustainable. Yet at the end of the day, most students wanted both a turf and a track. Sophomore Finn Ellingwood stated, "I think it would be cool to have an actual track and turf field like most other schools." A freshman group of students said, "Why can't we do both - the field inside the track?"

As for a timeline, sophomore Julius Munemo, who serves as a student representative on the subcommittee, said "It only takes two months to build a turf field ... we'd be looking to do it over the summer ... it would be ready, hypothetically, by the fall season. We would start to refurbish the current John T. Allen field and the softball field either in the fall or next summer." ■

Green New Deal

Continued from Page 2.

passing those up the ladder. Hopefully that will mean something," McPartland added.

The students' visit, which was covered on *iBerkshires* and through the Sunrise Facebook page, received an abundance of negative reception. Many *iBerkshires* Facebook commenters, calling the students "ignorant," "arrogant," "indocrinated," and "uninformed," expressed strong distaste for the Green New Deal and the students supporting it.

Responding to these comments, McComish told the Echo that "when they go low, we go high," quoting Michelle Obama. "A few [Greylock] people did respond in the comments, but they were only comments that were positive and based on facts, which was the opposite of what the other comments were."

In her commented response, Art noted that the importance of the Deal lay much in its ability to create discussion about important issues.

"We are hopeful that this can be taken as an opportunity to have a conversation about how to best combat climate change," Art wrote. "If you don't support the Green New Deal, what kinds of environmental legislation would you like to see? How should we all work to make that happen?" McComish said that the resolution probably will not get passed, and that attention for climate issues is a valuable reward for the Green New Deal's efforts.

"[The Green New Deal] has shown politicians that this is a priority, that this is what we care about. Showing support for this will make it more likely in the future that politicians will support good environmental legislation," said McComish.

In the weeks following the Pittsfield visit, Neal did not announce his support, so students joined the Nationwide Day of Action by protesting at Neal's Springfield office. Neal announced recently that he is

committed to passing legislation that will lower emissions, but the protesters said that that wasn't enough - that "incremental changes" would not be satisfactory.

"We came here today to ask Representative Neal to support this deal because it is the only progressive deal that will have the change that we need to take right now," said senior Ella Dudley in a speech outside of Neal's Springfield office. "If we don't enact change now, our future and our environment and the beautiful nature of this state and this country will be destroyed forever."

In her speech, McComish told the crowd about her family's experience with poisoned water at the hands of a factory, and said that "the intersection between corporate greed and political complacency resulting in entirely preventable human-made dangers has haunted me

"If we don't enact change now, our future and our environment... will be destroyed forever."

Ella Dudley

and my country."

"I read about flint, where the politicians in power were responsible for poisoning an entire city," said McComish. "And today I read about senators on the other coast who dismiss their youth constituents, reasoning that their record of incremental policies which they have enacted during decades in office is enough and sufficient for now."

McComish pointed out in her speech that Neal was in an important position: "Neal, you have the power to make a statement by co-sponsoring the Green New Deal. Right now you have the power, being the last person in Massachusetts, to make our state the first one to have full support of the resolution."

Also present at the Springfield rally were members of Sunrise Boston, who emphasized that "all we want is a good job and a livable future. We don't think that's too much to ask... We know [Neal's] been an environmental champion in the past, and we are so hopeful that he will co-sponsor this resolution." ■

SPORTS

Senior Athlete Spotlights

By CAMMI MACUCH and SAM TUCKER-SMITH

MADDIE ALBERT Basketball

ECHO: How is the basketball season going?

ALBERT: The season is going well so far. In the beginning our record was not stellar, but we have been making a come back in our last 5 games and will hopefully continue pushing towards that 10th win we need in order to qualify for the Western Mass Tournament.

E: What are your goals this season?

A: Our team has a lot of goals, but one of the important ones is making it to Western Mass. We hope to qualify for the tournament as our season is wrapping up over the next week or so.

E: What have you accomplished so far as a team?

A: The games we have won have all been super exciting. We have played East Longmeadow twice, and we beat them by 2 points in a tight game the first time we played them. The 2nd time, we won by a little more so that was a great win, especially because East Longmeadow is extremely aggressive...We needed to overcome that as a team and it was great to see what we were made of. We also had a great win against a northern division team (Monument Mountain) in the beginning of our season, and we are preparing to play them again this Saturday. We have had a few other road wins against teams like Palmer and Southwick which were fun, competitive games, and we also just came off a win against Lee at home. Our record is 8-9 right now.

E: What was different about this season?

A: This season is very different from last year as we lost Lauren Howard, who was our best player and now is playing at the college level! We have had to rearrange our lineup, and now we try to capitalize off of our Guard speed in order to score points.

Our forwards also have stepped up a ton, rebounding everything they can and making great plays near the basket. Overall, the entire team has needed to put all of our effort in to fill Lauren's shoes.

E: What's one thing basketball has taught you?

A: Basketball has taught me about positivity because you can never let yourself get down. You can never let yourself have negative emotions or else the game becomes a blur. Our team often says "next play" as motivation to move on from our mistakes. Everyone is going to make mistakes, and we need to know how to deal with that and bring our best effort to the next trip down the court.

E: What are some of the challenges of playing basketball?

A: Basketball can be challenging when you are up against a team you know is stacked because basketball is just as much a mental game as it is physical. So it is difficult to go up against teams that are really good without second guessing yourself, but our team has been able to overcome this challenge recently I order to have the confidence we need to win.

E: What about after you graduate? Do you think that you will continue to play basketball?

A: I don't think I will play in college because I am more interested in the other sports I play.

E: Do you have any advice to give for the younger members of the Mount Greylock basketball team?

A: My advice to the younger players on the team is to keep your heads up and keep working hard. Run as fast as you can on the court, be confident in yourself, and take chances. ■

JAKIN MILLER Nordic Skiing

ECHO: So, let's start at the very beginning: how long have you been skiing?

MILLER: Since I was six.

E: Wow! What convinced you to start skiing?

M: My dad, he just signed me up for it. I downhill skied for a couple years, so then I thought, "Oh! I'll start cross country skiing."

E: So what was it like skiing as a six-year-old?

MILLER: [laughs] We pretty much just slid around, had fun. Yeah. My siblings do it now.

E: So, over the years, how do you think you've developed as a skier?

MILLER: My form's gotten a lot better, and my strength - strength is a big part, getting stronger. And I didn't really start training for skiing until I was a sophomore. Until then I was just kind of doing it for fun. But now that I'm a high-level skier I train a lot more.

E: What would you say are some highlights from those past few years of skiing?

M: Hmm... I was sixth in New England, as a sophomore, for U-16s. That was... it was pretty big. The top six guys weren't there, so I was really twelfth, but it was still a big result. I've been top ten in states the past few years, pretty good results.

E: How has this season been going so far for you? You seem to be doing really well.

M: Yeah. I'd like to be faster, but I've won a couple races. [laughs]

E: What are your predictions for this year?

M: I don't know. I'm hoping to get top three at States, is my goal. And then the

New England championships are in March, and I'm hoping to be in the top ten.

E: So what is the journey to States like? How does that happen?

M: Well, in the league we don't have much competition at all, so that's kind of really our only "team race", where we have a chance of getting beat. This year, there's a team from Eastern Mass that's really good, so that's kind of our whole team's focus this whole year, just to get to States.

E: What are some of your favorite parts about skiing?

M: I really like training. I don't know, I'd just be rather doing that than sitting inside, especially in the summer. When I can just go and train.

E: And it seems like you don't have much snow at the moment...

M: Right, yeah. But I like skiing a lot, the culture of skiing is really fun. I like the people.

E: That's wonderful. Were there any people that really furthered your skiing journey along the way? Any people that inspired you?

M: Matt Wiseman and Ian Culnane, a couple years ago, when I was a freshman. They were the seniors, they were the top guys, and just chasing them helped a lot. Also, I've gone to a couple of camps with really fast skiers, and that's great just following people. I like that.

E: So what is it like, in States for instance, that environment, with all those skiers from across the state?

M: I know them pretty well from regular races, so it's fun to race different people from our league, but I kind of know who's the fast people, who I have to gun for, so it's not super out of my depth. ■

Winter Sports in Brief

By SAM WHITTUM

Girls Basketball

The girls basketball team went 9-11 and unfortunately was not able to secure a spot in the Western Mass. tournament. In order to qualify the team had to beat Drury on Feb. 21, but they ended up losing 49-41. "Despite the outcome of some games we have really learned how to play well together," senior Autumn Delorey said. "Our team has really good chemistry and I believe we're completely different than how we were in November, which is really great and important."

Boys basketball

Despite having a team of mainly younger players, the boys basketball team has fought hard to have a record of 9-11. In a fierce battle against Lenox, the team came just short of qualifying for the tournament, losing 65-60. Freshman Derek Paris and junior Toby Foehl led the team in scoring this season, with a total of 231 and 229 points, respectively.

Co-op swimming

Mt. Greylock's co-op team with Wahconah had a successful season with a 5-5 score. Senior captain Katherine Wilson said, "this year I definitely improved and made some new best times in my 500 freestyle and 100 backstroke despite being out for the beginning of the season." Wilson reflected on her time on the team as being "the best decision she ever made."

Wrestling

The wrestling team endured a big change this season with the addition of new head coach John Carvallo. With a group full of younger, inexperienced wrestlers, the team "tried their best this season, and most im-

portantly had fun," according to Carvallo.

Co-op Hockey

Mt. Greylock's co-op team with Drury had a record of 6-7-6 and made it to the Western Mass quarterfinals. Compared to last year, the team has taken (and made) a lot more goals on net and have been more successful overall this season than those in the past. Senior Toby Ellingwood said, "This season has gone a lot better than we expected. We have a shot of making it to the playoffs for the first time in years." While the team did make it to the tournament, they lost to Greenfield 5-2 in the quarterfinal round.

Boys' Nordic

The boys' nordic ski team has finished another undefeated regular season, competing in six league races against other teams in the Berkshires. At the top of the results is senior Jakin Miller, who has seized several wins and continues to battle against Lenox senior Herkus Rudzinskis, and sophomore Col McDermott. The boys face defending state champion team Concord Carlisle at Notchview. Many boys qualified for the Eastern High School Championships and the New England U16 Championships.

Girls' Nordic

The girls head into this year's state championship race as defending champions. Junior Brandi Gill and sophomore Jackie Wells have been at the top of the league this year, and hope to lead the also undefeated team to another state victory. A handful of the girls are also headed to the Eastern High School Championships and the New England U16 Championships in March. ■

The Greylock Echo

The Greylock Echo is the student newspaper of Mt. Greylock Regional High School in Williamstown, Mass. While the Echo posts most content online, print editions are published seasonally. Any Mt. Greylock student is welcome to submit material or join the Echo staff.

Greylock Echo Editorial Staff

Editor-in-Chief: Owen Tucker-Smith '20

News: Charlie and Clara McWeeny '21

Features: Victoria Melkonyan '21

Arts & Living: Sophie Jones '19

Sports: Sam Whittum '19

Interviews: Cammi Macuch '19

Advisor: Peter Niemeyer

Mt. Greylock Regional High School
1781 Cold Spring Road
Williamstown, Mass, 01267, USA

Questions? Comments? News tips? Want to submit a letter to the editor?

Please contact:

mountgreylockecho@gmail.com

Please note: opinion pieces represent the views of individual writers, not the publication. Editorials represent the views of the editorial board, which is distinct from the editorial staff.

Visit our website!

*Record the news through
pictures and words.*

Join the Echo today.

mountgreylockecho@gmail.com