

## School Committee Weighs Vacation Options

By EMMA SANDSTROM

The Mt. Greylock administration and school committee are considering an alternative vacation plan in an effort to limit the impact of snow days on the length of the school year.

Mount Greylock's current vacation schedule includes one week off in December, one week off in February and one week off in April. The proposed alteration would change the vacation time to one week off in December, one week off in March, and two long weekends in February and April, roughly following Williams College's vacation schedule.

Although Principal Mary MacDonald was not ultimately part of the proposed plan, she weighed in on the situation.

"Members of our community, meaning parents, guardians, and faculty, were interested in rethinking how the school calendar was laid out and potentially moving some vacation time," she said. She explained that due to the school's Western Massachusetts location, snow days have been a major issue for Mount Greylock, often times forcing the school to go into late June. The change in vacation time would leave built in school days to make up for the days lost

to snow.

"I am interested in trying to provide students with opportunities for learning that are consistent," MacDonald said.

She said the benchmarks students face, such as MCAS testing and AP exams, need to be taken into consideration as the decision is made.

Other teachers at Mount Greylock, such as history teacher Jeffrey Welch, also weighed in on the idea. "Because I was

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## 1 in 650: An Interview with Max Rhie

By GABE GERRY



*Photo courtesy of Max Rhie*

Senior Max Rhie balances an impressive array of interests, from working with kids to music. The Echo sat down with Rhie to talk about some of what he does.

**Echo:** Alright, Hello, how are you?

Max Rhie: I am doing alright, I am doing well actually.

**E:** How has your year been?

MR: My year so far has been good. It has been by far the best year of my school career. I am doing things maybe for the first time in my school career that feels really meaningful. Like for example, being a teacher's assistant for the middle school gym classes. Playing trumpet in the band. Doing other musical endeavors during music lab. Collaborating with other people here. Yeah it has been good.

**E:** You went to private school for a year or two right? And how did that compare to Greylock?

M: Oh man, that's a hard question to answer. They're so different in so many dramatic ways. Maybe the biggest difference [at Berkshire] is that a vast majority of students there were boarding students, so they lived on campus. And that creates a lot of interesting situations. It forces people to grow up and become independent adults at ages that are younger than I think maybe they should be forced to do that. I left Berkshire during my sophomore year when I started to be a boarding student after my family had moved back to Williamstown. I did not find myself able to take on that responsibility fully. I think it caused people to try and act like they have it together and that they are grown up before they really are. Academically it's very similar. Berkshire school students are dedicated and motivated and the classes are rigorous but

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## Students to Strike Again

Two months ago, they screamed, sang, and spoke on the steps of Paresky. Next week they're back at it.

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## Greylock Seals Deal on Building Project

By KRISHAN RAI

Almost 2,000 days after Williamstown and Lanesborough OK'd a feasibility study for a new school building, Mt. Greylock welcomed a varied crowd last month to formally recognize the completion of the project. From Greylock students to administrators and community organizers, the auditorium was filled to the brim with speeches and music from the Mount Greylock Quintet.

Among the lineup of speakers were Principal Mary MacDonald, Superintendent Kim Grady, State Rep. John Barrett II, school and building board members, and student Charlie McWeeny.

The event culminated with a symbolic ribbon cutting to formally celebrate the building process and declare the opening of a new chapter in the school community.

MacDonald said the ceremony was an important milestone for the school. In particular, she thought "it was very authentic and genuine. It wasn't a big fanfare." In her mind, this attitude reflects the "roll-up your sleeves, individual effort from a myriad of individuals"

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## At the Spanish Table

By OWEN TUCKER-SMITH

"Buenos dias," she says. Students pile into the room, scribbling onto scraps of paper and stuffing them into a large box. Then, one by one, they reach in and pick. They make eye contact with their partner, and stumble through a few sentences about their assigned person. The game of charades has begun.

Their partner looks lost. Someone giggles.

"George W. Bush!" they yell. The partner nods. The whole room breaks out in laughter.

This is the Spanish table, a weekly tradition for Mr. Johnson's AP Spanish Students. On Wednesday afternoons, the twenty-or-so of them gather around a long, black table in the meeting room with a Williams College student. There's a bottle of hot sauce, a brown paper bag, a club sandwich, and half a dozen lunch trays.

Another student picks from the box. They hesitate. They giggle, then offer a carefully constructed sentence. "Bernie Sanders. George Washington. Mary MacDonald," their partner fires.

Time's up. The alarm goes off. "That sound gives me nightmares," a student says.

The tradition is a brainchild of Johnson, Principal MacDonald, and the Williams Center's Kaatje White. Johnson decided to provide his students with an opportunity to

engage in Spanish in a non-academic setting by reaching out to the Center.

"Since I arrived at Mount Greylock I've been trying as much as I can to take advantage of the fantastic resource we have right down the road," Johnson said. "I certainly wasn't aware of how many Williams College students would be interested in coming, and didn't know that the College would be willing to provide transportation for the students. Their generosity in that way has been instrumental in making it all possible."

One Williams student is Alicia Smith Reina, a sophomore from Honduras. Reina said the first weeks felt like class, but that it has since loosened up.

"I knew that it would be an informal lunch, but I thought that the conversations would be on academic topics," she said. "In the last couple of weeks we've been playing a game somewhat similar to charades. It has been so much fun and I really enjoy seeing the students have fun as well."

At one point in the conversation, a student rises. They motion a gun with their banana. Again, there's laughter. The conversation is dynamic and fast-paced.

Sometimes, the Spanish breaks. "Dude, I don't listen to Britney Spears," one student says. "Who's that person from the Bi

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## DIRECTED-ISH STUDY

The Editorial Board questions the "prison cell" model for Directed Study.

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## INSIDE GREYLOCK'S GLASS

Molly Sullivan explores a niche field of the arts at Greylock.

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## GIRLS ON THE FIELD

Maddy Art and Clara McWeeny explore the culture of girls in sports. See Page 3.

## TURF WAR

The battle continues.

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## School Considers Vacation Options

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a student in public school and have been teaching in public schools for over twenty years, I've gotten used to the schedule," Welch said.

Welch said some benefits to the original schedule include the eliminated risk of illness spreading at its peak, and the need for breaks when students are most tired.

"I don't really have a problem with the schedule with the way it is now, and I think people are used to it and have tailored their work schedules to it," he said. "If I had the choice, I would keep it how it is."

To gauge student opinion, the school sent out a survey on October 30, which included questions regarding students' attachment to the current vacation schedule and their openness to a new one. While the survey closed on November 15, Director of Technology Eileen Belastock said the results will not be made public until she presents the data to the school committee on December 12.

The Echo conducted a survey parallel to the one sent out to Mount Greylock students and asked a range of students from a variety of grades to input their opinions on the matter of the possible switch in vacation schedules.

The survey clearly explained Mount Greylock's current schedule, and then detailed the new plan proposed by the administration. Students had the option to select "yes," "no" or "no opinion" in response to whether they would prefer a week in December, a week in March and two long weekends in February and April.

Fifty-Seven percent of students answered "no" while 29 percent answered "yes" and 14 percent answered "no opinion."

Several students further vocalized their opinions, explaining that they felt as though the summer break is long enough, and they would prefer to keep the break situation the same.

On the other side of the spectrum, students expressed their interest in changing the schedule. One survey respondent said that they think "it would be beneficial to have our breaks coincide with Williams College, since a large portion of students have family connections to the college, and it would allow more opportunities for families to spend time with each other."

Another student added that with the proposed alterations, the school year would "feel more split up which helps students to get through the year."

The survey sent out to students followed a similar one sent out to staff members and parents of students in the district in the fall. Bellastock collected the results and presented the data to the school committee in October.

**"People need to understand that this is not a coin flip."**

Dan Caplinger

The community was split. Just under 60 percent of parents approved of the district considering a modified vacation schedule. Staff members generally had a more negative opinion of the proposal, with 71.6 percent expressing approval of the current schedule and just under half strongly disapproving of the idea of the new schedule. At October's school committee meeting, committee member Alison Carter expressed concern over the staff side of the results.

"The fact that more staff strongly disapprove of this than approve of it is a big red flag for me," she said.

Fellow member Dan Caplinger said given the split, the district would have to provide a sound explanation whatever decision they ultimately made.

"To me this says that we will have some educating to do," Caplinger said. "When you have a division like this, it signals that people need to understand that this is not a coin flip." ■

## Students Gear Up for Second Climate Strike

By OWEN TUCKER-SMITH and AVA HOWARD

Just over two months ago, dozens of Mt. Greylock students screamed, sang, and spoke on the steps of Williams' Paresky Center in the year's first International Climate Strike.

Now they're gearing up to do it again. Next Friday, students will gather in front of Williamstown's First Congregational Church to demand action for the second time this year.

The September 20 climate strike was the largest national day of climate action ever recorded, according to the Sunrise Movement. Over the course of the week that followed, over seven million people in 185 countries participated in over six thousand actions related to the strikes, according to Global Climate Strike. At the forefront of the strike was 16-year-old Greta Thunberg, the Swedish youth climate activist who began skipping school on Fridays last year.

Thunberg's striking led to the creation of Fridays for Future, a movement of students striking from school to demand climate action. Over 9.9 million people have participated so far, according to their website.

December 6th will mark the fifth day of this year's United Nations Climate Change Conference in Madrid. "As world leaders gather at the conference, young people across America will take the momentum from September to our elected officials'

doorsteps," the Sunrise Movement said. "In September, many politicians shared nice words of encouragement. But, we didn't walk out of school and work to earn their praise."

Mt. Greylock Youth Environmental Squad leader Brooke Phelps said the strike will be a forceful attempt to remind people of the urgency of the climate crisis.

"We hope to make people uncomfortable," Phelps said. "We hope it keeps the message in the back of everyone's minds. The message that our political leaders, especially local political leaders, are doing very little to help the climate injustice."

September's strike was a combination of the efforts of YES, Williamstown's First Congregational Church, and several Williams College Students. Williams' Kofilee Berman said he and several peers convened on the first day of school. Soon they began to coordinate with the church and high school students.

The result was an event attended by about one hundred community members, with dozens of students sitting on the steps and a large handful of parents and friends watching on the quad. Mt. Greylock students, Buxton students, Williams students, and Williamstown Elementary School students spoke of fear, hope, and anger.

"It was even better than what I expect-

ed," Phelps said after the strike. "I expected the chants and everything, but just the feeling of being with everybody was just extraordinary."

After the strike, Phelps said the next steps for YES would be community engagement in the form of cleanups, and more activism on her part. She, Buxton's Ruby Lerman, and the church's Anne O'Connor ended up deciding to "register one of the thousands of strikes that happen on specific dates, such as December 6th," Phelps said.

The strike will have a similar format to September's, Phelps said, but will likely be of a smaller scale, due to the weather and availability of Williams College students. She said it will probably take place on the steps of the church.

Lerman, the Buxton student working with Phelps, comes from New York City's climate action scene, where she worked in Friday's for Future's outreach department. She has continued striking on Fridays, and said being in the relatively small community of Williamstown has been an enriching experience for her.

"In the city, I was a bit shy to get up and speak," Lerman said. "Now I feel like I've found myself through climate activism, and I feel really comfortable here."

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## Greylock Seals Deal on Building Project

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that contributed to the building project.

And she is very thankful for the result — a "beautiful, functional learning space for teachers and for students." She said students who participated in design ideas would be proud of the school's features: "lots of natural light, windows to the ceiling, and bright spaces for movement."

In addition, Ms. MacDonald recognized the broader ability of the school to promote "a sense of comfort and health" that comes from having a clean building. She said she felt happy "going into the art room and seeing how functional the space is" as well as seeing teachers able to use new technology like the smart boards.

MacDonald also said she has been intrigued by the effects of the building transition to encourage a variety of change, such as revitalizing curricula. "It's nice to be thinking about the new while you're in a new environment," she said.

The student representative at the ribbon cutting, Charlie McWeeny, shared MacDonald's satisfaction with the new school. McWeeny pointed out the school's environmental impact, including "a reduced carbon footprint, electric car chargers, a low-impact meadow which will help us achieve LEED certification, and a building that is 50% more efficient than its predecessor." For McWeeny, the building also reflects the greatness of Greylock's exemplary faculty and staff.

That's not to say the new school is without its challenges. MacDonald mentioned that she'd love to have several more rooms to contain "a robust enrollment."

Looking forward from the ribbon-cutting, the administration plans to continue developing the school environment with



Students line up at the ribbon. Photo courtesy of Gage McWeeny.

artwork and decoration. MacDonald said that "while the building is done, we have to bring some of the Mount Greylock character to it." In addition, Mount Greylock is having an open house on November 23 to unveil the new school for the wider community and thank the taxpayers for supporting the building project. MacDonald said this is an opportunity to showcase the innovative vitality this school has brought.

"Everybody assumes that they know how to do school, because they went to school, but school changes," she said. "I think this is an opportunity for them to come in and see the new texts... the new biology experiments that weren't being done forty years ago. It would be nice for

people to get a sense of what school looks like today."

Aside from McWeeny and administrators, a student from each grade was invited to the event to represent their class in cutting the ribbon. One student was junior Priya D'Souza.

D'Souza said she viewed her presence there as a way to showcase the diversity of Mount Greylock. She said her token status offended her as she felt pressure to be her own representation "at the extreme end of the ethnic identity spectrum." She said that "it is very easy for minority students here to play into their token identities because there is such little representation of their community." ■

## Student Council Invests in Lawn Games

By SAVILLE KEYES

The Mount Greylock Student Council will be providing students with new recreation options for school break time. At the beginning of the year, students expressed interest in using the field in front of the building to play ultimate frisbee at free periods like break and lunch. Senior Student Council President Toby Foehl addressed the question and immediately took action. He asked Principal MacDonald about the matter, and she said that the proposition was, in fact, a possibility. Collectively, the Student Council decided that it would be a great opportunity to introduce lawn games for people to play during lunch periods when the weather permits.

The Student Council utilized money

raised over the past few years to purchase one cornhole set, one KanJam set, and one Spikeball set that students from all grades will be able to use. Students are also able to bring their own materials, like frisbees, footballs, or soccer balls, to play with on the field.

That being said, Student Council Secretary Nima Darafshi said the group has some concerns when it comes to the initiative. Students must watch out for potential cars near the field, as it is near a loading and visitor zone. They also must be sure to check for ticks after playing in the tall grass, which are most active during the spring and fall months. To ensure the longevity of the project, the lawn games must

be well cared for, Darafshi added.

Overall, this initiative allows students to enjoy a little break and alleviate some of the stress that can come with school and challenging schedules. The hope is that the activities will bring students together and inspire others to become more active.

"This set of lawn games will encourage students to get outside more and interact with friends while taking advantage of the weather," Darafshi said. "This is a better alternative to just staying inside and being on your phone until the bell. I hope that students will be able to take advantage of this perk in the future." ■

## Turf War Continues

By CHARLIE MCWEENY

Despite the completion of the school building, work continues on improvements of athletic facilities and district offices at Greylock. Using a five million dollar capital gift from Williams College, which has grown in the Williams endowment, the School Committee has explored plans for buildings and grounds improvements that were not included in the construction of the school building. Two subcommittees, a Phase I committee tasked with addressing needs for district office space and storage and a Phase II committee tasked with updating athletic facilities for ADA and Title IX compliance and improving playability, were formed.

### Phase I

During the building project, Greylock regionalized as a school district, putting Williamstown Elementary School, Lanesborough Elementary School, and Mount Greylock Regional School under the control of one School Committee and one superintendent. Originally, Greylock operated under their own Superintendent, whose offices were housed within the old school building.

However, regionalization meant funding for the new school from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or MSBA, would not cover space for district offices to house the Superintendent and their staff. On top of this, any portion of the Williams capital gift used for the new school building would replace funding from the MSBA. The School Committee elected not to proceed with district office space inside the school building, and explored other options from renting space off-campus to the construction of a separate building.

On Tuesday, November 12, the School Committee accepted a bid for the administration building from David J. Tierney, Jr., Inc. of Pittsfield. The School Committee approved the use of 2.5 million dollars for the building, which included a base price of 2,184,000 dollars and an add alternate for finished bathrooms that priced in at 315,000 dollars. The move came after a vote the previous week that attempted to use money from the District's Excess and Deficiency (E&D) fund and tie funding for the administration building to funding for athletic improvements, moves which the District's legal counsel, Dupere Roche,

called "Invalid".

At the November 12th meeting, Roche described "a couple of different problems with the original motion."

"You can't make a vote for a project that hasn't been bid yet," Roche said, noting that allocating funds before sending a project out to bid might lead to bids higher than their actual price. Roche also cited the use of the E&D fund, which the committee does not directly control, as invalidating the vote. "You can't vote to just have money come out of the fund."

Ultimately, the committee re-approved the bid, not coupling it with any other funding and exclusively using funds from the Williams capital gift. The building will include office space for the district, public restrooms for the fields, and storage. At the November 12 meeting Superintendent Kimberly Grady called the building "far more than just district offices," while addressing concerns about the price of the building compared to modular construction. "We need a space to safely host district office. I am the smallest space. I can't shrink district offices, I can't shrink storage, any more than we did."

Previous designs for a multipurpose building included storage space for grounds equipment and a wax room for the nordic ski team. These will not be included in the administration building, and, according to Superintendent Grady, are being worked on by "a separate research group."

### Phase II

On September 26, the School Committee rejected three bids for the Phase II project. The design, which the Echo described in last year's graduation issue, includes improvements to the softball field to bring the school up to Title IX standards, new pathways that will bring the school into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, or ADA, and synthetic turf playing field.

The Committee received bids from R.A.D sports, Clark Companies, and MountainView Landscapes for 2,984,000 dollars, 2,847,000 dollars, and 2,895,750 dollars, respectively. These bids ranged from 19 to 22 percent higher than the original estimate. After rejecting the bids, the School Committee voted in favor of two

motions. The first, moved by Dan Capliger, authorized "the sub-committee to consider value-engineered reductions with the intent of reducing the expected expenditure of the project to \$2.3 million." This passed by a vote of four to three. The second motion, brought to the floor by Jamie Art, set Title IX compliance and ADA accessibility as the base, including both a natural grass field and a synthetic turf field as add alternates, and passed by a vote of five to two.

The School Committee, if they receive bids that include a natural grass field, will now have the choice between a synthetic turf field and grass. A number of critics have raised concerns over the financial, environmental, and health impacts of a turf field. In an interview with The Echo, Thomas Bartels, a parent of three former Mount Greylock students, described his apprehension with a turf field.

"I came across, in the summer, an article which described the whole question of artificial turf and what was going on over in Europe," Bartels said, citing a 2018 report by the Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment analyzing the environmental effect of rubber infill. "The use of rubber granulate sourced from car tires, on synthetic turf fields can be harmful to the environment in the close vicinity of these fields." The report served as the basis for the European Chemical Agency's vote in favor of supporting restrictions on eight polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons commonly found in turf infill.

Other studies, such as one performed by the Toxic Use Reduction Institute (TURI) out of Lowell, Ma, and another by Mt. Sinai Hospital, highlight the health risks of turf fields.

"Artificial turf poses a number of health and environmental concerns. Those communities that have decided to install artificial turf are encouraged to make careful choices among the materials available to them," read the TURI study.

However, conflicting studies have been released by the University of Pennsylvania and the states of New York, California, and Connecticut. A July 2019 report from the United States Environmental Protection Agency supports "the premise that while chemicals are present as expected in the

tire crumb rubber, human exposure appears to be limited based on what is released into the air or simulated biological fluids." However, the report also warns that it is "not a risk assessment."

Besides health and environmental concerns, Bartels also questioned the financial ramifications of the project. "1.3 million of that for artificial turf vs. a sustainable grass field for 460,000, so there's a pretty big difference. And that difference in capital cost could be used for other athletic, educational or arts and music initiatives, while still getting brand new, environmentally safe and ADA accessible fields without exposing athletes to known toxins."

John Skavlem, the chairman of the Phase II subcommittee, took issue with this assertion. "The numbers they are suggesting are erroneous. My biggest concern in all of this is that people are not well informed - there's the 450,000 dollar proposition for the grass field, I'm not sure where that number came from."

In a survey conducted by The Echo, Greylock student echoed Bartels' concerns. "I believe there are better ways for the school to use its budget than investing in a turf field," said Lucas Foreman. Another student emphasized the need to "consider other clubs and their needs," but added that "starting with sports and expanding more and more is a great start." The proposal for a turf field has faced opposition from the Lanesborough Board of Selectmen, which voted to advise the School Committee against proceeding with a turf field. Members of the Williamstown Finance Committee also expressed concern at the upkeep costs for a turf field, which would most likely have to be replaced every decade, at a recent meeting.

In an interview with The Echo, Skavlem said that he was aware of financial concerns. Skavlem said that "it's just a matter of working through cost reduction. Every element of the project came in on budget, they just didn't come in with the same bidder." He said the price of a grass field might be similarly high when factoring in other costs. "The big cost factor will be irrigation and finding water that's not contaminated. That cost is going to be very high"

Talia Cappadona, who serves as a student  
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## Girls on the Field

By MADDY ART and CLARA MCWEENY

Mount Greylock is frequently exalted as an exceptionally progressive school: a place in which girls feel empowered and boys are respectful. Over the past few months, as we've heard this praise, we began to question whether it matched the experiences of the girls at Mount Greylock. The following is part three of a series of features in which the Echo delves into the female experience at Mount Greylock, investigating girls' impressions of their environments. Part one, about female experiences in the classroom, can be found on the online Echo, and part two, about female social experiences, can be found in the Echo archives from the June print edition. In this installment, the Echo sought to hear from girls about their athletic experience at Mount Greylock.

The Echo asked girls, through surveys and interviews, whether they felt that their experiences on sports teams and in gym classes at Mount Greylock had been different from that of their male peers. Of 51 surveyed, 27 said that their gym class experience has been different, and 24 said that it has not. Sixteen of the 46 surveyed who play sports at Mount Greylock said that they perceived an imbalance in the amount of time, attention, and resources put into their team as compared to the boys' team, and 30 said that they did not.

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## New Writing Center Provides Free Essay Help

By JACKIE WELLS

The Mount Greylock Writing Center is a new resource available for students looking for help on essays, research papers, or reports, introduced by first-year librarian Liza Barrett through the Williams center at Mount Greylock. For the past two months, three students from Williams college have been stationed in the library during various blocks, and have assisted over 30 students to date, both in person and electronically.

In a world where essay assistance often runs a steep price, Barrett hopes students will see the writing support center as a free resource for the same help. The writing support fellows are paid by Williams College as a work study. "The fellows were interviewed and selected because of their strength as writers and their passion for writing," said Barrett. "For us to get this help for free for our students, where students all over the country are paying all kinds of money to get essay help or tutoring, we're very fortunate. I know that a handful of students used them for that first early decision college essay deadline."

The fellows offer help beyond college essay. "It doesn't matter what type of writing it is," said Barrett. "It could be a literary essay, a personal essay, a short story, even a lab report. They are just ready and willing to help."

Senior Marleigh Briggs is one of the students who has utilized the center, working with Williams student Quincy. "He helped me write a few papers, and he helped me edit a grant that I was writing for the

school," Briggs said. "In one paper that I was writing," Briggs added, "I apparently was writing about an underlying theme that I didn't know I was writing about, and he pointed it out to me so I could make it the main focus of my paper."

"The students who have used them have been incredibly positive about how helpful it's been," said Barrett, "and I've heard from two parents, who have been just thrilled."

As for the impact on the Williams students, Barrett described the program as a "win-win." "They're just as invested as I am," Barrett said. "They want to be utilized. They love writing, they're passionate about writing, and they feel confident in their ability to help students look at their own writing and improve it and revise it." Quincy, who can be found in the library block thirteen on Mondays and Tuesdays, emphasized Barrett's statement. "I've always enjoyed working at the high school and the writing center has just been a new opportunity to help out, do what I can," Quincy said. "Everyone here really enjoys what they do, so we're always looking for people. I'm excited when I get people who bring me their papers."

As a former English teacher, Barrett analyzed the help she witnessed these fellows providing. "The fellows are not there to fix your writing, they're there to help you grow as a writer," she said. "They're really getting you thinking about structure and openings and closings."

Ms. Barrett expressed the challenge of getting students to reach out to the fellows. "Teenagers are the hardest population to get to ask for help with their writing," she said "younger students, even through middle school are eager to ask and accept any help they can get, and the fellows have told me that at the college level, the writing support is a huge thing. Students will go to the writing support center at Williams without even thinking about it, they all seek support from each other. It's funny that the high school population is reticent to ask for help."

With only three fellows and a handful of students with blocks in the library, Barrett said it has been challenging to try to expand their use to the full student body: "We've advertised on the TV monitors, on the website, on flyers, because they're not here to just be available to the particular kids that happen to be in the library the period they come to support." All three current fellows have plans to return for the second semester, and Barrett expressed hopes to pick a day in January when the three fellows could pop their heads into English classes to introduce themselves to students. In addition, she is hoping to have one of the Williams writing fellows available for directed study second semester. With these adaptations, she is hoping the program will reach a larger portion of the student body. ■

# FEATURES

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I would not say that is very different than Greylock. It's slightly strange living in a boarding school because everything is self contained to that campus. You do not really leave the campus at all. There is no sense of the day ending and you going home. It is all one continuous thing. You definitely don't have much free time at boarding school whereas at public school, you can have a lot of free time or time to explore new things independent of the school you go to. As more of a personal observation people at Mount Greylock are much nicer and there is a much better social community. There is a culture of general understanding and kindness towards one another. There is much less judgement. I would walk into the dining hall at Berkshire School and feel anxious as to where I was going to sit, who I was going to sit with, what kind of people I would have to talk to. I would walk in and just feel judged.

**E: Your dad came to Greylock last year for a Greylock Talks about meditation. Are you also interested in meditation?**

MR: Yes, short answer yes. I try to meditate every day. I don't always succeed in that effort

**E: What does that entail?**

MR: So I'll sit in a zen community (it is called sitting not meditating). I try to sit for 20 minutes or 30 minutes (if I am feeling adventurous) and the process entails... I am definitely not a qualified person to describe this. For me, I'll try to follow my breath. I'll try to become very aware of what is going on around me. So some of the physical queues to follow are mainly your breath and the sounds around you. When you actually sit down and listen you realize that there is a lot you are unaware of. For example in the foyer. If you were to take just five seconds to just listen you would hear this loud vent. Plus people walking by. Conversation all around you. It sort of connects you to the here and now and whether it is different and special. But the goal of meditation is to calm and settle ourselves when things arise. Emotions deep down, anxieties, fears, all of those things that we are so eager to run away from and that are so tempting to run away from. And so difficult to face. But you find that when you are willing to be open to these difficult experiences they become less difficult. The very basis of meditation is to embrace the full spectrum of experiences that you can have in life.

**E: And is your dad the one who got you to try it out?**

M: Absolutely. He inspired me to do it by not by encouraging me to do so. I get this sense of stability and calmness that I do not see in many other people and I have so much respect and admiration for it. I feel like there is so much on a daily basis that we suffer from and there is too much anxiety. So much fear. So much insecurity and so much stuff that makes life feel so burdensome. And in starting to meditate I was trying to break out of that cycle where I had to constantly experience all of those terrible things and be wound up by them.

**E: Did you see a decrease in these things like anxiety?**

M: Oh absolutely. It completely changes your relationship towards your own suffering. And I think suffering for people that are not familiar to meditation seems like this really intense word but I think if we are being really honest there is lots of suffering going in relative senses. Meditation completely changes the way you can relate to these negative experiences you have. It really is life changing.

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## Inside Greylock's Glass

How a fragile material turned into a sturdy tradition

By MOLLY SULLIVAN

Of Greylock's many unique features, one of the most notable (and fragile) ones can be found in Lisa Mendel's classroom on the first floor: the glass program. Despite Greylock being a small public school of under 600 students, the program of studies has consistently included stained glass, and has recently added glass fusing. The Echo decided to dive into what's behind the glass program and why it's so popular.

The stained glass program was founded in 1987 by a man named Bill Pommy, who was an English teacher at the school. Teachers could sign up to instruct an elective in which they had a passion, and Pommy, who had a side job with glass art, began quarter courses revolving around the making of stained glass. The quarter courses were eventually discontinued, but the students enjoyed the stained glass elective so much that the administration allowed Pommy to continue teaching semester long classes. Mendel, a current art teacher at Greylock, took over for him 14 years ago. She has been teaching glass art here ever since. The Echo sat down with Mendel to discuss the community around glass art here at the school.

Mendel's classroom has four tattered, wooden desktops, crowded with art in the making. Equipment and half finished stained glass projects can be found lying around, and the room seems to welcome creativity.

Mendel said the glass art classes interest students so much because they're unique. "First, it's art," Mendel said. "But I think it's one of the last hands on classes that we have. I think most of the students will say to you that they can't believe the 45 minutes is over."

Mendel turned toward the students in her directed study class. She asked how many of them wish they could stay in her class for the whole day. They all raised their hands.

"It's just fun," Mendel said. "It's fun to work with your hands. I love all the colors of it, and whatever you're doing, there's a product at the end of it. I think that becomes important... when you're done with your stained glass, you get to take it home."

Stained Glass, Mosaics, and Glass Fusing are three of the many art classes offered at Greylock. In stained glass, students learn how to make two or three piece projects, and then start 3D pieces with the skills that they've attained. A couple of years ago, Mendel offered trial classes in mosaics and glass fusing, and they took off, so full semester courses were added to the curriculum.

In the old school building, there was stained glass featured all around. Whether it was in the window or hanging in the art classrooms, Mendel said that it helped coral interest for these types of classes. "I think people get interested in seeing oth-

er people's artwork," she said. Stained Glass, told the Echo that she had never taken an art class in all of her seven years here, but because of a scheduling mistake, ended up in it for her senior year. Welch said she is now thankful this happened; she loves Stained Glass and the unique element that it brings to this school.

Welch said the class starts out simple, with students learning to cut glass and fit the pieces together. Some of the first projects include mushrooms and tulips. Welch shared a couple of the other projects she has finished: "we did a sun catcher, so I made a hibiscus flower; it was pink. Then we did a nightlight, and I made a seashell. Now I'm working on a picture frame, and



Several pieces made by students in Mendel's glass fusing class. Photo courtesy of Molly Howard.

it has a lily built into it." Towards the end of the semester, they will create a 3D project, such as a planter or a box.

"I think it's vibrant because it's different," Welch said. "It's something that no one would think you'd take in public high school."

In Mendel's glass fusing class, students start with glass tile, and move through the process of slumping glass and working with drop rings and ceramic and stainless steel molds. Senior Molly Howard is taking the class this fall.

I came into my glass fusing class having never cut or done anything with the material, and honestly, it was terrifying," Howard

said. "It makes a really loud noise when it shatters, and occasionally you cut yourself."

But as she adjusted, Howard said glass fusing grew on her.

"I learned to really like it," she said. "I even think I like it more than stained glass, because stained glass has to be very exact, whereas in glass fusing you just get to cut things and melt them together in no exact fashion. I'm very happy I decided to take the course."

Welch said when her extended family visited the school, they noticed the glass. "The first thing they commented on actually was the stained glass in the display case," she said. "They were like 'oh my gosh, no other high school has this.' I think it's just because it's very special to our school. It's something that no other school offers." ■

## At the Spanish Table

Continued from Page 1.

-ble?" another asks. "Moses?"

Students said it took a few weeks to get to this point.

"It started out a little slow, because we had to be actively talking about the stories that we had read in class," junior Priya D'Souza said. "It felt very academic, like they were there to tutor us."

"There was a point that people wanted to skip it, and just have lunch, because it felt like we were just doing more class," junior Finn Elingwood said.

But a switch from academics to games a few weeks back made all the difference, they agreed.

"We're just having fun now," Elingwood said. "We play games, and we just do it in Spanish. It's cool. We learned a lot of words you wouldn't learn in a classroom. I think it's awesome that we can have genuine interactions with native Spanish speakers. We learn by copying them. It's the most basic way, but it's also the most genuine way of learning."

Johnson agreed. "It's just so good for our students to hear

from people other than their own teachers, and to get to know and to talk to real, live Spanish speakers," he said.

Johnson also said his past experiences with bringing in college students have been only positive.



Students at the Spanish table. Photo courtesy of O. Tucker-Smith.

"When I taught at Lenox, I had invited the College's Spanish language TA's down to present to my junior-level class on the political struggle between the left and the right," he said. "And they didn't disappoint! It was great, and put a lot of flesh on

the bones of what we were studying.

D'Souza said at the beginning the conversations felt awkward. There's still an uncertainty in the room. A student will laugh uncomfortably as they look for the right word. Another will have to slip into English.

But still, the dynamic has shifted, D'Souza said.

"The interactions feel genuine."

As the box empties, students get up, clearing their lunch trays. The hot sauce loses a few millimeters. There's another "Siiiiiii!" as someone's partner gets the right answer. "Doesn't count. Disqualified," someone yells.

At the middle of the table, Reina smiles.

"I love talking about my native language, my culture, and my experience growing up in Honduras," she said. "I've had more fun than I thought I would."

The bell rings. The class gets up, still laughing.

"Their confidence has gone up a lot," Reina said. "That is very rewarding to see." ■

## Unified Basketball Returns, Succeeds in Second Season

By LUCY MCWEENY

The Unified Basketball team is the first and only of the unified teams at Mount Greylock Regional School. The unified program is a joint effort with the MIAA and The Special Olympics, allowing students who often do not have the opportunity to play a school sport to do so. Liza Barrett coaches the team, along with Karen DuCharme and former player Dakota Sunskis.

The Unified Basketball team is a chance for all of the players to meet people and get to know each other under the setting of sports. As Liza Barrett, Mount Greylock librarian and coach of the team said, "It is really an opportunity for the students, and anyone involved in it, coaches included, to learn and grow." Barrett added, "The primary goals of the Unified Basketball team are participation, enjoyment, and competition. If winning happens, that's great, but it is not the primary goal." Barrett's approach is taken from the Unified Sports motto: Respect. Advocate. Include.

The Greylock Unified Basketball team was started last year by Lindsey von Holtz, the Athletic Director of Mount Greylock. Students on a unified basketball team in Eastern Massachusetts presented the idea at an event that Holtz attended, and she brought it to Greylock, where she coached the team for the first year.

After six games so far in the 2019 season, the Unified Basketball team has a record of 3-3. One win was captured in overtime, while two others were lost by two points. Wahconah is the only other school in Berkshire County with a Unified Basketball team, so the Greylock team plays against them often. Both teams were recently honored with the MIAA state sportsmanship award for this season.

Jackson Powell, a seventh grader on the team, said he likes "being on the team because it is a cool experience." The Unified Basketball team has played a large role in younger students' adjustment to Greylock. Thomas Art is in eighth grade, but this is his first year playing, as an injury prevented him from doing so last year. Art stated that his favorite part of being on the team is

"creating a bond between the other players and myself."

Older students on the team commented on how it has influenced their experience at Greylock. Sarah Egan is a senior who has played on the team for the past two years. Egan said, "While playing on a team is typical for many students at Greylock, there are some people who have never experienced it before. For me, it brought into perspective how other people experience high school."

Henry Art, a sophomore on the team, said he decided to play on the team because "it seemed like the perfect opportunity to try something completely different from anything I had ever done or seen before." The Unified Basketball team provides students of all ages and all abilities with the chance to play a school sport.

Aiden Barnes, a sophomore on the team, said he likes "passing with his friends." Aiden scored the winning basket in overtime against Wahconah, and has been on the team for two seasons. Another sophomore, Tim Beliveau, said he enjoys "being with people with similar abilities to mine, and helping others out when I can."

The Unified Basketball team has not only created bonds between the players, but has also become a large part of the Greylock community. Barrett commented, "What has been absolutely remarkable to me has been the support from everyone in the extended Greylock community."

Andrew Agostini, an eight grade history teacher, explained the environment for an onlooker at a game: "The bleachers are packed; no different than any other varsity basketball game. The fans are excited and everyone cheers for both teams. It is an electric experience." Additionally, after every game, the fans make a tunnel for both teams to run through. The Unified Basketball games have quickly become a popular sporting event for students and adults alike to attend.

The team plays in a final jamboree at Chicopee next week to finish off their season. ■

## Sportlight: Ciera Schwarzer

Girls Soccer

By AVA HOWARD

The Echo sat down with Ciera Schwarzer, a senior captain of the Greylock Girls Soccer Team, to hear a little bit about her experience playing soccer at Mount Greylock.

**E: What is the team dynamic like this for the team?**

Schwarzer: I think compared to past years, this is the best dynamic that we've had. A lot of the time it's very cliquey so we've had different groups going on, but this year I feel like everyone is just one giant friend group and you can always turn to the person next to you and feel 100% comfortable with them.

**E: How is it different being a senior?**

CS: Well I think just the role of leadership is more prominent in general. It's my last season, so I'm hoping for the best outcome.

**E: What are your thoughts about Western Mass this year?**

CS: I think throughout the season we all had bad attitudes going into different games, but I think winning the other night definitely boosted us forward, and now we have really good motivation. I think we could surprise ourselves.

**E: Do you have any plans with soccer moving forward?**

CS: I always thought I was never going to

play in college, because I had always liked basketball better, but this year I love soccer, so I would definitely consider playing for a club team or something along those lines.

**E: Is it hard to balance soccer and school life?**

CS: Yes, it's very hard, but once you get the hang of managing homework and time it starts to get easier, especially as the season progresses.

**E: How do you think the team has most improved this season?**

CS: Just having a good mindset. We have had games where we just aren't as motivated as a whole, and then we've had other games where we are super into it, so just finding that balance is key.



Photo courtesy of Ciera Schwarzer.

The Greylock girls soccer team made it to the quarterfinals of the Western Mass tournament this year, where they fell to Mahar 1-0. ■

Know an impressive senior athlete?

Nominate them for Sportlight!

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## Fall Sports in Brief

By ECHO STAFF

### Boys Soccer

Western Mass Finalists

The Boys' soccer team entered the postseason with only two losses on their record. A 7-0 and 2-0 in the first and second rounds of Western Mass, respectively, led the Mounties to a matchup against Belchertown, who the Mounties have seen countless times in the late stages of the tournament. An early goal from junior Leo Rossiter wasn't enough to keep the team from a 1-2 loss in the finals.

"It was a tough way to lose," said varsity goalkeeper Oscar Low, who recorded six saves against Belchertown. "But we'll treasure these experiences forever. Coming into the season I had very little expectations. I hadn't played varsity goalie ever. This season was an absolutely incredible experience."

Along with the finalist trophy, the Mounties earned a Berkshire North title this season, with zero losses to county teams. Seniors Finn Welch and Toby Foe-hl led the team in scoring, with 25 and 10 goals, respectively.

### Girls Soccer

Western Mass Quarterfinalists

The girls' soccer team's 13-5-2 season began with a bang with five straight wins. By the end of the regular season, they earned a fifth seed spot in the Western Mass tournament, beating Frontier 2-1 in first round PKs but suffering a 0-1 loss to Mahar in the quarterfinals.

Junior Clara McWeeny led the team in scoring over the course of the season, totaling 18 goals and 14 assists by the end. Right behind McWeeny were senior Madison Ross and freshmen Jane Skavlem and Livia Morales, with 17, 7, and 3 goals, re-

spectively.

"It was a good season," Morales said. "I think we keep improving every year, so I'm excited for next season. The Mounties only graduated three starters, so they look to make a strong run next year."

### Girls Cross-Country

State Finalists

The girls' cross-country team continued their long-time rivalry with Lenox this season, being edged by a few points by the Millionaires at the Western Mass championships. The girls still managed to bring home a finalist trophy from the state championship, with freshman Kate Swann racing to a third place finish and teammates Grace Malone, Lily McDermott, Jackie Wells, and Ainsley Able not far behind.

Senior captain Miriam Bakija, who helped the Mounties earn both finalist titles, said she felt very positive about the season.

"It was a really fun season," she said. "I was glad to have an awesome team. Even though we lost Western Mass and states to Lenox and had just beat them at Berkshire Counties two weeks beforehand, I think we were still happy that a Berkshire County team won."

### Boys Cross-Country

Western Mass: 6th Place

The boys' cross-country team returned this year having graduated five of their previous top seven and having just won nine consecutive Western Mass titles. Eighth grader Ollie Swabey led the team through most of the league races, winning several and placing fourth at the county championship. The team placed third at counties, with Swabey, sophomore Parker Winters, juniors Charlie McWeeny and Corban

Miller, and senior Brandon Fahlenkamp scoring. At Western Mass, the Mounties were sixth, led by Winters' 18th place and state-qualifying finish.

### Golf

Western Mass: 7th Place

The golf team played to a winning 9-6 record this year in the regular season, earning them a spot in the Western Mass tournament. At Western Mass, the team was led by Ben Prescott's 88, followed by Brayden Smith (92), Xander Axt (93), Owen Petropulos (97), Paul Roder (99), and Cayden Conry (107). The Mounties' 370 left them with a seventh place overall finish.

"I think our season was fantastic this year," senior Nicole Overbaugh said. "Our team got along so well, and I'm excited to see where it goes from here."

### Volleyball

Western Mass Semifinalists

The volleyball team finished the season with a 15-7 record, making it to the Western Mass semifinals, where they were defeated by Lee in four sets. This followed two tournament wins against Sabis and Ware, in which the fifth seeded Mounties beat both teams in three sets.

Freshman Lainey Gill played on the varsity team this year, and said the season would be unforgettable.

"The girls on the team were so much fun," Gill said. "Our daily practices would consist of warming up, laughing till our sides hurt, doing a drill, dancing, and laughing more. I was super proud of our unity at all times, winning by ten or losing or losing by twenty to a DI school. Our record, considering the fact that we lost eight starting seniors last year, was outstanding." ■

## 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 periodically. Any Mt. Greylock student is welcome to submit material or join the Echo staff.

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## Admin: Loosen Directed Study Pass Policies

By THE EDITORIAL BOARD

She was out for two days and missed two quizzes and new material. They need to work on that group project that's due tomorrow, and they live in different towns. He doesn't understand how definite integration works.

So they sit in their directed studies, staring at their textbooks, wondering if calculus will ever make sense. They didn't get a pass earlier to talk to their math teacher, because, well, they forgot. Now they're trapped in their directed study teacher's room.

When we moved into the new school building, we heard "escaping the prison cell model" thrown around a lot. The new building was to have vast, open spaces full of natural light. And yet, we spend directed study rooted at desks, unable to visit other classrooms or students. The flexible learning spaces, so aptly created with the idea of collaboration and freedom in mind, are practically empty from 10:16-10:41 each day.

In the past couple of years, the school has implemented strict rules that require students to have passes from teachers to visit their rooms during the free period. This rule is a hindrance to our struggling

calculus student, who may not have had their calc teacher's class yet and didn't have time to grab a pass from across the school during the four minutes between classes. And without a pass, students are stranded in their directed study classrooms, unable to collaborate or seek the help they need.

For many, directed study is the only time they have a chance to meet with teachers. Students who rely on the 2:32

rely on directed study as a time to catch up on work and retake tests, yet the strict rules and unreasonable requirements stand in their way. Sure, some teachers may let their students roam the halls and find the help they need. But these teachers would be breaking the rules, and they shouldn't have to be placed in that position.

The school and administration must trust students to use their time wisely in this free period, and let them test the limits of their

cell". By encouraging students to do this, Greylock has a chance to cultivate smart, independent, less stressed humans.

We understand that there are rules. Massachusetts state law requires 990 hours of "time on learning" for high schools students. This regulation was part of the reason that the administration considered removing directed study from the schedule two years back.

But extra help in calculus and group work is time on learning -- in fact, engaging with those around us through academic material is an enriching element of school. And sitting alone in a directed study, wishing to be somewhere else certainly isn't time on learning.

And yes, students do have the option to get passes. But even setting aside the fact that this can be tough, the pass system implies that staying put is the default. Loosening up the system would mean subscribing to a philosophy that not only allows but encourages seeking help from teachers.

Let's celebrate collaboration and the messages preached during our move to the new building. Let's use directed study as time on learning. ■

*Greylock has a chance to cultivate smart, independent, less stressed humans.*

bus for transportation are unable to meet with teachers after school. Break can act as a time to meet with teachers, and perhaps more students should take advantage of this, but break was designed to be just that—a break. Having fifteen minutes to eat breakfast or catch up with friends in an otherwise hectic day is valuable. And a delve into definite integration probably requires a little bit more time.

With these obstacles in mind, students

responsibility. For the most part, students at Greylock wish to do well. We are confident that given the option, students would use the added freedom to further themselves as students. An open-door directed study will benefit students once they've graduated from the bubble of high school. Directed study should serve as a time where students can expand as learners and discover their own limits when it comes to schoolwork and social life, and not as a "prison

## Charlie's Angels: Refreshing Perspective, Excellent Music

By CLARA MCWEENY

The third take on Charlie's Angels, following the original TV series and the 2000 movie adaptation, hit the box offices last Thursday, earning just over eight million dollars in the United States and 27.9 million world wide. In other words, it tanked. In the US, it came in second place for earnings this week, falling behind Brad Pitt's Ford vs Ferrari, which posted an impressive \$31 million dollars.

Directed and starred by Pittsfield local and Pitch Perfect actress Elizabeth Banks, Charlie's Angels presents a new take from its past counterparts. A franchise that first began as a television series in 1976, its plot follows three "angels" (first played by Kate Jackson, Farrah Fawcett, and Jaclyn Smith), who take orders from a mystery man on speakerphone whose identity is never revealed -- Charlie. The women fight crimes, lock up bad guys, and jump out of airplanes, all while keeping their hair in a perfect high pony. No surprise here, the original series was produced by men. No woman can jump out of an airplay without a few fly aways coming undone.

In 2000, the concept was rebooted, this time as a movie starring big names like Cameron Diaz, Lucy Liu, and Drew Barrymore. The "angels" once again took orders from Charlie, fulfilling their assigned roles as international spies as well as fashion

icons. 2003 saw the sequel Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle hit the big screen, starring the same actresses. Once again, entirely written by men.

Heading into the theatre last Friday, I kept the premise in mind. I myself had never seen any of the originals, but knew the general concept. I was skeptical, to say the least. What was originally advertised a feminist, "girl power" movie turned out to be just of models taking orders from a man? I hoped that the 2019 adaptation would make some changes to the original structure, for the sake of feminism everywhere.

And it did, kind of. Starring Kristen Stewart, Naomi Scott, Elizabeth Banks, and newcomer Ella Balinska, the reboot had one important difference. It was directed and written by a woman. Finally! Elizabeth Banks played a role both behind the camera and in front of it, casting a female view on a typically male dominated series. The spies disrupted the typical gender norms placed upon them in the past, featuring scenes with mud on their faces and no makeup (gasp)! Also, there was a surprising and refreshing lack of love interests. They had no time to think about boys, they had villains to kill and citizens to protect. It was an enlightening change from the typical, every-hair-in-place approach to "chick

flicks". Charlie's Angels was a true action movie in an era of faux girl power movies watered down by romance and fashion. The romance and clothes can be fun, but hey, we have to make some sacrifices to further women's role as more than objects in the film industry.

Despite tough initial reviews, the movie was truly entertaining! Filled with fight scenes, villains, and plot twists, I was on the edge of my seat the whole time. The plot-line was kind of superficial, and some of the fight scenes were a bit far-flung, but it was an overall enjoyable experience. Former Twilight star Kristen Stewart provided comic relief, with dry, sarcastic jabs that showed off her unsung skills in the acting industry. Fresh-faced Ella Balinska took on the role of guarded, intense Jane, eventually becoming a bit more vulnerable after developing a friendship with Stewart. Banks, perhaps, is the main source of the critics' complaints: her lack of emotion in the film is striking, and her role as assistant to Charlie feels unnecessary. The movie as a whole would've been better off if Banks had stayed behind the camera, leaving more room for Stewart's acting prowess and comic relief.

The highlight of the movie, though, is not found in the plotline or characters. Listening closely, you'll find that the

once mediocre film is made (or saved) by the carefully curated, anthem-filled soundtrack. Featuring heavy hitters like Ariana Grande, Niki Minaj, and Miley Cyrus, the soundtrack creates the perfect backdrop for spy filled galas, car chases, and quarry fights. I left with songs stuck in my head and feeling very inspired to go become a spy. Or partake in a car chase. Or maybe just to go on a run. Early favorites include "How It's Done" and "Don't Call Me Angel". The latter again disrupts the typical gender norms seen in past remakes, with Miley Cyrus crooning "I make my money and I write the checks/ So say my name with a little respect."

Charlie's Angels makes a strong effort to topple the typical "girl power" movie premise, creating a few more cracks in the glass ceiling. Perhaps this effort is best exemplified when it is revealed that Supreme Court Justice and feminist icon Ruth Bader Ginsburg was an angel herself. All in all, the idea was there, and it was refreshing to see a version directed and written from a female perspective. The soundtrack is the biggest success to come out of the film, along with Kristen Stewart's new found comedy. ■

## Pro or No: HoCo Pros (No)

By MADDY ART

You know the scene: it's mid-October. Leaves are changing colors, pumpkins are on every doorstep, and fall jackets are replacing light cardigans. The spirit week days have been announced, the cafeteria is abuzz with lunch table conversations about pep rally shirts, and friendships are being destroyed by twin day plans. All of a sudden, exactly on time and as orchestrated, a boy stands on a table or walks through the doors. You read that right, people have really stood on tables. Where we eat! With a poster bearing an inside joke or a pun in one hand and some perfectly corresponding candy or stuffed animal in the other, he asks his desired date to homecoming. The puns are bad, the handwriting is worse, but she says yes, prompting an awkward smattering of applause, a more awkward hug, and an even more awkward photo op.

Homecoming proposals have become an institution at Mount Greylock, as time honored as the Dead Cat Room (RIP). Now that we're a month out from the dance itself, it's worth evaluating the role that this tradition plays in our social experience as Mounties.

I have heard adults criticize homecoming proposals for the fact that they are elaborate and frivolous. Who among us has not had a well meaning parent pontificate about how, back in their day, they "just asked each other to the prom!" I don't think this criticism is quite fair. All of spirit week—dressing up, bad lip syncing, homecoming itself—is elaborate and frivolous. The frivolousness is kind of the point—it's okay for us to have parts of our life that are over the top for no reason but to have fun. It's totally legitimate to find enjoyment in making or receiving a cute (or more likely, kind of ugly) poster for or from someone you care about. The social forces at play behind homecoming proposals, though, are a bit more nuanced.

The overwhelming majority of public homecoming proposals come from boys asking girls, or boys awkwardly holding a sign that the girl's friends made while never actually uttering those fateful words. The public and orchestrated nature of proposals makes it all the more difficult for girls and boys alike to break that mold. I vividly recall that, when a girl friend raised

the possibility of asking a boy to homecoming in tenth grade, another girl advised her, "please don't be that girl." This message—aided by the institution of public proposals—that girls who ask boys are something to roll your eyes at dissuades girls who genuinely want to break gender roles from assuming their prerogative to do such. I find it bizarre that girls still do not feel comfortable asking boys to a dance, and I think public homecoming proposals are a barrier to us collectively changing this culture.

Further, being asked to a dance in a public setting pressures girls to say yes, even if they are being asked by someone they do not want to dance with. If a girl says no in front of dozens of classmates, she looks fairly lame. He put so much work in! No, he didn't, Susan. That's literally an abbreviation on a piece of cardboard. But girls should not feel like they are obligated to dance with someone just because he asked. Adding an entire cafeteria to the personal dynamics between two people makes it harder for there to be an honest dialogue. While one dance may seem insignificant,

putting girls on the spot in such a position perpetuates the notion that we owe it to boys to go to a dance with them if that's what they want.

The homecoming proposals also put immense stress on boys! I can't even imagine the pressure not only to ask the right person, but to figure out the perfect Instagramable (or, at the very least, Snapchat story-able) way to do so. Putting yourself out there and asking a girl to a dance is nerve-wracking enough, but doing so publicly makes rejection feel that much more humiliating. Setting this as the expectation for boys is unreasonable, especially when their current Instagram doesn't even meet the Instagramable standard.

As someone who has been homecoming proposed to before and enjoyed it (kind of), I'm not suggesting that we abandon the concept. If you want to ask someone to homecoming in a cute or quirky way, regardless of your gender, you should go for it, but either do it privately, or ensure that both parties are on the same page, first. And please, put a little more effort into the sign. Have some respect. ■

## More Than OK: A Taste of North Adams' A-OK BBQ

By GABE GERRY

A-OK Barbecue is a simple little hole-in-the-wall barbecue place situated right outside the gate for Mass Moca, a refreshing take on Southern food in a normally lacking Western Mass. The seating for A-OK is outside, an area that seems to have been quickly thrown together. There are only picnic tables and an awkward counter plopped right in the middle of the tables. That being said, this leads to a sense of informality which is a perfect fit for messy barbecue. To match this mood, was even a meat smoker right on the patio. Every once in a while, an employee would open it up and the air would be filled with the smell of smoked meats. They serve barbecue, not fancy veggie burgers or avocado toast, and this was certainly emphasized by the decor. Indoor seating is available in neighboring Bright Ideas Brewing.

Now, onto the menu! Alright. The menu is fairly simple (perhaps too simple) but all in all, unless you are a vegan, it is hard to find something not to love. The menu also changes a little, so it may not be the same all year round. This time around, there were two main choices: chicken or brisket. These aren't sandwiches, just flat out MEAT. You can get a ¼ (\$6), ½ (\$12), or full pound of brisket (\$22). For chicken, you can get ¼ (\$7), ½ (\$14), or a whole (\$26). And yes, I do believe they mean a full chicken. Along with the meat option there were three sandwiches: pulled chicken (\$11), brisket (\$10), and a chorizo sandwich (\$10). All three are served on nice thick buns. The brisket and chorizo is topped with slaw and the chicken has onion and pickles. For side dishes (which could make up a meal themselves) there is slaw (\$3 / \$5), potato salad (\$3 / \$5), baked beans (\$4 / \$6), collard

greens (\$4 / \$6), and mac & cheese (\$4 / \$6). Finally there is lemonade (\$3), but be warned, there is very little to no sugar in it, and it tasted like straight lemon. I may not get that again.

Alright, the first time I went it was 6:30 on a Sunday and there was no bread. I was astounded, bamboozled, and flabbergasted, out of bread are you kidding me, that was insane and nearly put the nail in the coffin. Moving past that travesty, I decided on a ¼ chicken, mac & cheese, potato salad, and slaw. My dad got the ¼ lb of brisket and we shared the sides. The food came out quickly, thankfully, I was still seeming from the bread shortage. The sides were in the small paper soup cups and the sandwiches were wrapped in white paper. In the bags there were also compostable utensils (save the turtles). Upon first open, the chicken was delightful. It smelled good, and looked well spiced and tender. The brisket delighted as well. Wow, both of them are mouth-watering, but they have to taste good too. The first bite of the chicken very good, quite flavorful and moist but that flavor was unfortunately short lived and got old after a while. That being said, the brisket was nearly perfect. Very tender with unbelievable flavor. Both were great, but they were missing something. Bread.

The potato salad was great but a tiny bit bland over time. The slaw was good, but there was too much of a vinegary taste. And the mac & cheese was perfect -- no bad words about it here. I topped it all off with lemonade, which was very sour and next time I'm going to stick with water. Overall -- great sides, chicken, and brisket. But I wish they had bread.

So I went back, praying for bread, and

luckily this time they had it. Phew. I went up to the window again, ready to order the pulled chicken sandwich, and they were out of chicken. No way. This has to be some kind of sick joke. There must be a conspiracy surrounding my desire for a pulled chicken sandwich. I frantically ordered something because there was a line behind me and I had no clue what to get. Luckily the menu is not too extensive and I didn't get too stressed. This time I ordered the chorizo sandwich with slaw on it. Also I had to get some more Mac & Cheese -- it is too good to pass up. Again, thank goodness there was prompt service, because I had become hangry due to the chicken debacle. I unwrapped the chorizo sandwich and took a big bite. The sausage is really good, and pairs nicely with the slaw, cancelling out some of the vinegar taste. But because sausage is round and log shaped there were some bites in the sandwich with no sausage, and all I got were bun and vinegar.

All in all, the food is really good. And although I am zero for two on chicken sandwiches, I was still impressed by both the brisket and chorizo. The sides were amazing and I may go back for just those. If you are vegetarian and all of your meat-eating friends are going to A-OK, don't worry -- the sides are more than enough and even just the large Mac & Cheese is enough for dinner. The ambience is fun and is the perfect environment for a nice, informal dinner with friends or family. But the prices are steep. And \$10-\$11 sandwiches are a lot, so don't plan on making this your daily spot. ■

## Mounties Bring Shakespeare to New Auditorium

By LAURA DUPUIS

After nine weeks of rehearsal, Mount Greylock students participating in the fall Shakespeare festival performed "The Tempest" for their peers, teachers, and families. Performances took place on Friday the 15 and Saturday the 16, marking the first time Shakespeare had been performed in the new auditorium.

On November 23, the actors brought the story to Lenox as they performed at the annual Fall Festival of Shakespeare at Shakespeare & Company's Tina Packer Playhouse.

The performers weaved the tail of magician and former Duke of Milan, Prospero, who opens the play by creating a storm (otherwise known as a tempest). Prospero was played by Mallory Alden, Aurora Bullett and Ruth Weaver. The storm causes a ship carrying Antonio, the Duke of Milan (Victoria Melkonyan), Alonso, the King of Naples (Logan Gould), son Ferdinand (Sam Tucker-Smith), brother Sebastian (Tashi Rai) and Gonzalo (Jannah Simpson) to capsiz. Its passengers are thrown overboard and into the sea, eventually washing up on an island. This magical island is inhabited by Prospero, slave Caliban (Malina Woodbury, Krishan Rai and Julia Donati) and daughter Miranda (Claire Hall).

In a whirlwind of intertwining plots, Ferdinand and Miranda fall in love. Ferdinand becomes possessed by Miranda's father, magician Prospero. Across the island, Antonio and Sebastian plot to kill Alonso, the King of Milan, in order to make Sebastian king. Caliban convinces other island dwellers, Trinculo (Jonah Hane) and Stephano (Marleigh Briggs) to help him overthrow Prospero. Ariel (Jamie Meintjes) overhears the plan and reports it to Prospero. The play finishes in triumph when all the characters arrive safely back to the mainland.

When asked about this chaotic plotline, actor Sam Tucker-Smith (Ferdinand) said, "It's actually a lot simpler than most Shakespeare shows. Compared to the histories, it's relatively easy to understand, which makes it very engaging."

Illuminating the constant action on stage, the lights were a multitude of colors, straying from the traditional white lights.

After the performance on Saturday, the cast members honored seniors Eva Myers, Mallory Alden, Marleigh Briggs, and Logan Gould. The four were given flowers, a card, and a short speech recognizing their contributions to the program over the years and sharing fond memories. The speeches were filled with laughter and a touch of sadness for the graduating seniors, but, just as in "The Tempest," their ending was a triumphant one. Tucker-Smith said, "It was an exhilarating and wonderful experience. Shakespeare is a really great and surprising way to get a lot better at acting that you wouldn't necessarily expect." ■

## Students Headed to Senior District Festival

By JULIA BUTLER

January is approaching, which means that Senior District performers will soon begin to prepare for the Western District Senior Festival. Auditions were held on November 2nd at Westfield State University, and three performers from Mount Greylock—trombonist Oscar Low, clarinetist Ava Simon, and violinist Michael Faulkner—were accepted into the band and orchestra. The Senior Festival will be held on January 11th at UMass Amherst.

Senior District Festivals are musical concerts that are held across the state, with each general area being assigned a district. Mount Greylock is a part of the Western District, so accepted students will perform

sic.

Low has participated in the festival for many years in different capacities, ranging from a violinist in the orchestra to a trombonist in the jazz band.

"This was my first time on trombone for senior districts," Low said. "The audition song was a really fun one to play. When I got there it was surprising because I was only allowed to play part of it but part of me wanted to keep on going and play the whole thing."

Students hear whether they have been accepted into a Senior District seat within twenty four hours of the auditions. Then they will be sent music to prepare for the

*"They'll make lifelong friendships."*

Mr. Moors

performance. Students had not gotten their music yet as of November 15, but Moors said that "this is not unusual" and that he expects the music to arrive soon. Students must practice on their own after they receive the music, because the entire group only has two rehearsals before their performance. Although Senior District requires hard work, it provides an opportunity for students to showcase their talents in an accessible live performance and to form lasting connections with their peers. "They'll make lifelong friendships," Moors said. "I just talked to someone I met through this when I was in high school this weekend." "It's so much fun to be a part of a group where I can meet so many people," Low said.

In addition to being accepted for the Western District Senior Festival, Low and Faulkner also qualified for All-State auditions, a much more widespread festival that encompasses students from across Massachusetts. Low, Simon, and Faulkner perform at the Western District Festival at UMass Amherst on Saturday, January 11th. ■

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## Climate Strikes

Continued from Page 2.

I've never really led anything like this before."

The preparation for next week's strike will coincide with the development of an official local chapter of Fridays for Future, O'Connor said. On Tuesday, participants will begin to plan for the chapter as they make posters for Friday's event. Lerman said she hopes more teenagers will show up to strike after this development.

In September, while the main event occurred in the afternoon, a small group of students struck all day at Paresky, missing school as a result. This time around, the event will take place from 2-4 p.m. "The schedule of 2-4pm was chosen so that some students can officially strike from school, while leaving time for others to join after school finishes," O'Connor said.

Unlike some districts, Mt. Greylock has not provided students with excused absences when they strike from school. School systems that provided excused absences in September included New York City Public, Boston Public, and Chicago Public.

"The examples of excused absences does not specifically include absence from classes for political or social activism," Principal Mary MacDonald said. "So students who strike or attend a strike elsewhere -- some YES students headed to Williams during the last significant event -- were not and will not be excused."

But MacDonald noted that this consequence for striking is not necessarily meant to deter the activism.

"Sometimes you want to participate in an activity about which you are passionate, and you are willing to incur the consequence of an unexcused absence," she said. "It's laudable. The attendance protocol has some flexibility; missing one day for a cause important to you will not put you on probation."

Like September's, next week's climate strike will not be exclusively for students. "Anyone who feels passionate about this is invited to attend," Phelps said.

"We are organizing this climate strike, like the ones before it and every one in between, out of necessity," Lerman said. "We are here to show the people in power we will not quit." ■

*Record the news through pictures and words.*

**Join the Echo Today.**

**mountgreylockecho@gmail.com**

## Twin Advice: Twice as Nice

By CHARLIE and CLARA MCWEENY

Dear Twins,

Wow! School has me busy. I'm trying to keep up my reading outside of school, but I'm finding that I don't really have time for more than one book, and even then it takes me months to get through. I want to choose a good book, but I don't know where to start looking. Fiction? Non-fiction?

Thanks,  
Bookworm Betty

Betty,

You've come to the right family. I've beenfed Dickens and Wilde from even before I could walk. In fact, I still devour a healthy portion of Austen and Eliot mixed in with my breakfast. But you raise a good question: with such limited time, what should you read? I find that the little reading I do outside school keeps me going through the roughs of high school. It, in many ways, defines us, separates us from our peers, and allows us to pursue our own interests.

When I walk into someone's room I judge them, for better or worse, by the books on their nightstand. I've just run into Clara's room to check on what she's reading. Do you know what's laying beside her bed? A couple of old People Magazines (not even Teen Vogue), her copy of The White Tiger (I guess she never really developed an interest past school reading) and one of Mr. Davis' copies of The Merchant of Venice (I guess she can't return school reading either). Oh, and there's a copy of The Elements of Style. Do you really want to take advice from a prescriptionist? I didn't think so.

Next to my bed, you'll find books that will contribute to your existence as a human being; that will make you a better and more informed citizen of a representative democracy. Now, I haven't read all of them. I haven't even read most of them. But I recognize that I probably won't--they're representative of the person I aspire to be. I think Clara is working through Clarice Bean for the tenth time. Sure, maybe flip through a childhood favorite every once in a while, but at the very least might you move past a book with more or less your name in the title?

I bet Clara's making fun of me for my

handful of plane books right now. I knew she would. Tell her I, at the very least, have some interests other than Taylor Swift and Buzzfeed quizzes. You should know the Aviation industry provides great case studies for examining economics and foreign relations and serves as a solid indicator of economic development. Want to learn about sanctions on Iran? Check out the case in which a Norwegian Airlines aircraft was grounded there after having to make an emergency landing but not being able to receive a replacement part due to sanctions on aircraft pieces. National politics more up your alley? Consider looking at what happened to TSA workers and air traffic controllers during the government shutdown. Organized labor disputes more your speed? I swear those Air France pilots are going on strike every other week.

Now I concede, the occasional piece of fiction probably won't kill you. A good piece of fiction can be an escape from reality, a faraway world that sweeps you away from your own. Middlemarch, after all, was allowed in the British Library. For some time, though, it was the only piece of fiction permitted. With your limited time, read a book that you can take with you into the future; that is not a short-lived escape from your own world, but an introduction to a new way of inhabiting the world in which you live. Check out In Extremis, the book that taught me the intervention of an uncompromising idealist can save lives. There's Orwell's Down and Out in Paris and London and Bourdain's Kitchen Confidential, books that forced me to reexamine how I want to fit into society. Consider I'm Not Leaving and Our Man, books that remind me of the greatest atrocities we've allowed to happen, and Imagined Communities, a book whose examination of nationalism is pertinent to hundreds of the most pressing discussions. So, read your Dickens. Just don't forget how much more powerful that story is when it's real.

Cheers,  
Charles

Betty,

Thank you so much for your question! Yes, as Charlie so aptly stated before, you have come to the right family. But let's

not be pretentious about it. Sure, Pride & Prejudice would rank at the top of my book list, right behind Jane Eyre (both of which Charlie has not read). But you know what else my family reads? Harry friggin Potter. And it's just as appreciated (maybe more so) as any Dickens or Bronte. I never had success taking advice from people who work snobby literary references into their writing. Like, duh, we all know who Jane Austen is, get over yourself. I also have never had success taking advice from people who work snobby literary references into their writing without actually having read the work of said references. Again, let me repeat: Charlie has not read any Austen. Or Eliot. I think he made it to about page twenty of Great Expectations. You know who else made it to page twenty, Charlie? Nico.

Fiction has played a large role in my life for as long as I can remember. Longer than Charlie, as it took him a little while to learn how to read. And by a little while I mean...well, just ask his fourth grade teacher. That's beside the point, though. I was reading from a young age, whether that be Dr. Seuss, Nancy Drew, or yes, occasionally War and Peace. All of which are fictional books. These books had the power to transport me to a different world, away from my fourth grade troubles (which did not include learning how to read). I was suddenly in the colorful walls of Willy Wonka's Chocolate factory, or the chandelier-lit halls of Hogwarts. Anne from Green Gables was a friend, and Hermoine and I both hated Ron at the beginning. Ok, just to be clear, I had friends. Really. But these heroines offered me a view into their own lives, some not so dissimilar from my own. I could both take solace in their worlds while also finding bits and pieces that related to mine. Fiction was my safe place, and continues to be so in the hectic, stressful, sometimes sad world of high school.

High school doesn't leave much time for outside reading. From classes to sports to clubs, I rarely have a free moment to sit down and just read. I'm too busy studying for my three tests the next day, or almost winning Masslive.com's Athlete of the Week (haven't seen Charlie up there. Weird). And when I do find myself with

some free time, I want to use this time to get away from my own, chaotic life. I'll have time to fuel my weird airplane obsession later. Oh wait. I don't have a weird plane obsession. That's Charlie. Sorry, I said it. It's weird. And yes, he said I would be talking about it. And here we are. Sure, I bet there are some interesting aspects to airplanes. Like how they are literally destroying our environment and perpetuating the global warming crisis. But spare moments to sit down and relax are scarce. Hopefully, you're learning about this climate crisis in science. Or sanctions and tariffs in AP Euro. Use the few minutes you have to be whisked away. This is of great benefit to both your creative mind and mental health, and useful for a bit of childhood reminiscing. I'm not ashamed of still reading Clarice Bean! It's a wonderful series.

This is not to say that reading non-fiction isn't important. Just Mercy, by Brian Stevenson, changed my view of our justice system. 20 Supreme Court Cases that Changed America can be found by bedside table, right next to the latest edition of People Magazine. Again, not ashamed! I must know if Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper are actually dating. Non-fiction can educate, and advocate, and change. It can transform our views of the world, and threaten the status-quo. Yet fiction can do all that, and more. Let's take The Lorax, for example, a favorite of mine in kindergarten (not Charlie's though. You know why. Promise this is the last time for that joke). It's entertaining, and funny, and colorful, but it also makes you think. The lessons that can be learned from that strange orange creature with a mustache are innumerable, especially given today's situation. Fiction has the ability to take you somewhere you've only ever dreamed of going, while providing valuable revelations that will guide you in 'the real world'.

I think you know the right choice here, Betty. As my great-great grandmother (sister-in-law of Roald Dahl) once told me "Fiction reveals truth that reality obscures." Just kidding. Emerson said that. But look what fiction can do!

Happy Reading,  
Clara ■

## Girls on the Field from Page 3

When asked to elaborate about their gym class experiences, many girls cited the dress codes, particularly the no-tank top rule, as a source of gender imbalance. While the dress code technically applies to both genders, students feel the rule specifically targets girls, as they are more likely to wear tank tops. One respondent wrote, "The dress code is extremely favorable towards the guys." Another explained the reasoning behind this, saying "the whole tank top rule was put in place in volleyball so boys wouldn't get 'distracted.'" Out of 27 girls who said their gym class experience had been different than that of their male counterparts, 14 attribute this difference to the dress code. Another respondent addressed the discrepancy in enforcing the code: "Guys never get dress coded, girls do." And, "I've never seen a boy get dress coded."

Students also mentioned the role that coaches' decisions around gym class games play in creating perceived gender disparities. In regular gym class activities, coaches have split classes up into boys and girls teams, according to one respondent, to create "more experienced and less experienced games." One student said that coaches "always advise us to do less and sometimes expect us to be not as good" in such games and in fitness days, and another said that "the coaches favor the boys in fitness days, and assume they can do a lot more than girls."

Senior Lucy Shepard agreed that the coaches had a different set of expectations for girls than for boys. She said, "I always hated the thing with the push-up tests where the girls were expected to do this much and boys do this much. Like, why does it matter what number I get?"

While boys physiologically tend to be able to do more pushups, Shepard and others expressed that emphasizing the physical differences between boys and girls is counterproductive. Shepard said, "it's never the case that girls should get more

than the boys." Those different standards, she said, "always fueled me to just not do it at all. Because then it's like, what if I don't even live up to the girls' number?"

Some students also a perceived imbalance in the time and resources put into their sports teams as compared to the boys teams. A respondent wrote, "Boys sports teams are always favored above girls. Better uniforms, better fields, better practice times, announced more." Many feel that the boys teams are prioritized in terms of both attention and resources: "The baseball teams have so many more things than softball. They have three jerseys, while softball can barely afford one. The JV softball field is fully grass, when it should be dirt." Students also spoke about issues concerning disparities in game times and locations between the boys and girls team. One respondent wrote, "the boys lacrosse team always gets the Greylock field and we have to go somewhere else, like MCLA, because they destroy [the field] beforehand" Alayna Schwarzer, sophomore and member of the girls lacrosse team, said "In lacrosse, the guys generally got the "under-the-lights games." Another respondent commented on the practice time for basketball: "The boys basketball team gets better jerseys and gear, and they always get earlier practices."

The survey found a perceived discrepancy in the level of coaching, as well as the number of coaches for girls and boys team. Girls felt that there wasn't as much of an emphasis on finding high level coaches, or any coaches at all, compared to the boys teams. A respondent wrote, "The girls programs have less coaches. [There was] no JV girls soccer coach at the beginning of the year. I'm not sure that would happen with the boys team" Another said, "There are less intense practices and are taken less seriously."

Shepard, a former member of the girls lacrosse team, said that the game of girls lacrosse itself emphasizes gender imbalance,

as girls are required to wear skirts and the rules are "ridiculously made to protect" them. Boys lacrosse, in comparison, is much rougher. Shepard said that she felt the message of the difference in rules was, "you are fragile beings that need to not touch anything that might hurt you in any way."

Many students, though, spoke of positive experiences in regard to gender on sports teams. Respondents who play sports in which the boys and girls teams are relatively combined, such as cross country running, cross country skiing, track, and golf, tended to cite fewer instances of bias. One student said, "In track, I felt like we were all kind of treated as one. I felt like they did a very good job of making it a team sport," and another said that "it feels very equal in those sports." Senior Nicole Overbaugh, one of two girls on the Mount Greylock golf team, said that she is "so happy to have played for a team that treats me as equal for the last four years." In a male dominated sport, Overbaugh felt valued, saying, "Most coaches would kind of throw the girls aside and let the boys take the lead, but my coach recognized my talent and put me in." Across all sports, only 16 of the 46 student athletes reported experiencing gender imbalances.

Students were quick to state that many of the perceived imbalances were not necessarily Greylock specific, but influenced by society's perception of girls in sports in general. Shepard said, "UConn [women's basketball] is known as the girls powerhouse, and the people will watch their games. But other than that, nobody's watching women's college basketball." Concerning public perception of college volleyball, she said, "I've always had to go into the 400 channels to get volleyball because they're never on the main networks." Much of the time, girls sports simply are not advertised to the public in the way boys sports are, adding to the discrepancy in high school perception. ■

## Turf War from Page 3

representative on the Phase II subcommittee, expressed frustration with the speed of the project, especially given the potential benefit to gym classes. "We're continuously kicking the can down the road. We're at a brick wall right now. We're trying to look at alternatives to get the ball rolling for the huge proportion [of gym students] who would be using the turf every day."

Brian Gill, a gym teacher at Mount Greylock, spoke with The Echo about the opportunities a turf field would provide.

"I see a huge advantage for the physical program with a turf field. The numbers affected with athletics are minimal compared to potential opportunities with physical education. We see 270 to 300 students a day, and how many hours we miss because of the weather. A turf field could gain us seven to ten weeks more outdoor time than we currently have."

Gill also addressed concerns regarding the heat Turf Fields can reach in warm temperatures. "We're talking about minimal time spent on the field. We're not dealing with the heat issues like you do in the South... lets be honest, if it's hot enough to be worried about the turf then we're going to be in the grass because the grass is going to be dry." Gill added that a turf field actually had the potential to increase safety in some areas. "Turf fields are actually better with impact than grass fields. We're going to mitigate concussion better on turf fields than we are on grass fields."

With the loss of the football team, any new field would be used primarily by soccer and lacrosse teams. The Echo spoke with Tom Ostheimer, a teacher at Mount Greylock and the Varsity Girls coach. Ostheimer spoke of the disadvantage Greylock was placed at when playing on turf against teams who had the opportunity to practice on a turf field. Ostheimer emphasized the poor shape the Greylock field is in, and called for "major improvements, whether we go to turf or natural grass." ■