

MIAA Moves Forward with Tourney Redesign

By JACKIE WELLS

The MIAA (Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association) is in the final stages of a proposal that would eliminate regional sectional tournaments in favor of a statewide postseason tournament design, allowing teams from the same area of the state or league to play for the championship. Under this proposal, Mount Greylock athletes would no longer face a postseason Western MA tournament.

The tournament change proposal came from the MIAA's Tournament Management Committee (TMC) and is now headed for a special assembly on February 28, 2020. Present at the special assembly will be a representative from each MIAA member school. It will take a simple majority vote from the school representatives for the

proposal to pass.

This change comes along with redistricting. Berkshire County and Pioneer Valley now together make up District 1. Mount Greylock Athletic Director and MIAA Board of Directors Vice President Lindsey von Holtz clarified that the redistricting does not affect the league at this point, although it could in the future based on the competitiveness of each league.

"If we're able to have a competitive league in Berkshire country, we'll keep a competitive league in Berkshire County," von Holtz said.

What it does affect is the number of Western MA representatives to the board. Currently there are two representatives from Berkshire county and two represen-

tatives from Pioneer Valley, but that will go down a single couple to represent both regions as a result of the district changes.

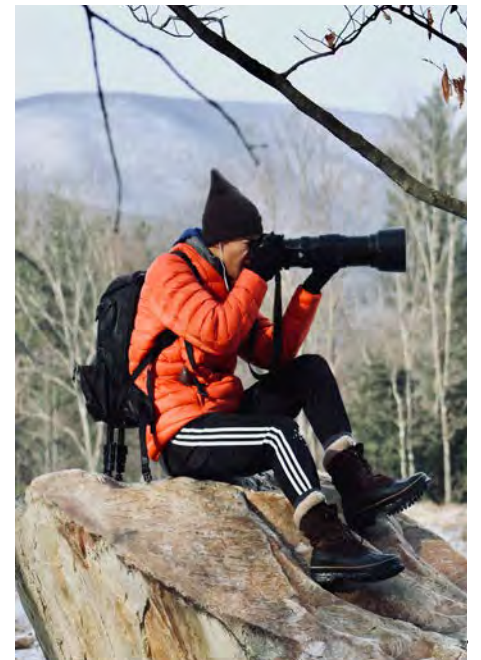
Under the TMC's statewide tournament proposal, it would be a local level decision up to the principles and athletic directors of District 1 to determine whether or not to hold a Western MA championship in each sport. This championship would have to happen before the postseason, with results counting toward qualification in the state tournament, shortening the regular season as a result.

The logistics of a self organized tournament are unclear, including whether this local decision would be made yearly or on

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1 in 650: An Interview with Emi Soza-Foias

By LUCY MCWEENY



Senior Emi Soza-Foias spends much of his time in the wilderness with a camera, trying to capture the perfect shot. The Echo sat down with him to talk about it.

Echo: When and how did your interest in nature photography begin?

Soza-Foias: I've always had a love for wildlife and animals since I was a little kid. I would always pet dogs, cats, anything I could find. I think when I really got into photography was about two years ago, and it was just my brother and I going out to take pictures. Eventually he stopped, but I kept going. When I first saw a horse and took a picture of that, I was just like "Wow." I got hooked on wildlife photography from there.

E: What is your favorite animal to photograph and why?

S: Probably deer. They're everywhere and they're a bigger mammal, which I really like.

E: If you had the chance to photograph any animal in the world, what would you choose?

S: Probably a polar bear. I think that would be an awesome species to photograph.

E: Where do you like to go to get the best photographs?

S: Around here, there's a little spot by my house, like a twenty minute walk. It's definitely my favorite place to go to photograph wildlife because animals are usually there year round, except in the wintertime. It's a pond and a forest, so I can really photograph any kind of wildlife there. My favorite spot in the whole country, for where I photograph, is definitely this little preserve in Arizona. It's called the Riparian Preserve and there's always species there to photograph, which is awesome.

E: Is there a specific photograph you are

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A skier trudges through the ice at a league race. Photo courtesy of Rob Mathews.

When Waxes Burn and Snow Melts

At the intersection of skiing, health, and climate: chemicals, shrinking seasons, ardent activists, less ardent leaders

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Greylock Considers Adopting MassCore

By MACKENZIE SHEEHY

For years, Mount Greylock has offered a wide variety of rigorous courses to prepare students for a wide array of post-high school goals. However, the current Program of Study differs slightly from the state's recommended guidelines to prepare students appropriately for college and the workforce.

MassCore, a state-created guideline for high schools, provides recommended guidelines for graduation requirements that set students up for the best possible chance at getting into their college of choice or entering the workforce well prepared. On Thursday, January 9, the School Committee considered adopting MassCore as a baseline for the 2021-22 Program of Study.

"Essentially what it does is it lays out a framework for graduation requirements," Principal Mary MacDonald said. "They are not distinctly different from what we recommend at Mount Greylock, but not what we require." The MassCore guidelines that differ from Mount Greylock's current Program of Study would require students to pass four years of math, three years of a lab science, and to take one year of an art-based elec

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Mental Health at Greylock

By MOLLY SULLIVAN

31 percent of teenagers face anxiety. That's one in every three high schoolers. At Mount Greylock, teachers have noticed students struggling with anxiety and other mental health disorders.

The Echo talked to Emily Leitt, health teacher, Peer Team leader, and Wellness Committee member. She said that there are positive and negative components of social and emotional health, and that she sees a lot of students struggling with stress and anxiety through her health classes and Peer Team.

The Wellness Committee is a collection of teachers and members of the community who meet to talk about vast issues in the different components of health and work to resolve mental health issues. "It's this whole group of people that are addressing social-emotional health, and talking about ways to implement more programs and strategies for our students to deal with that," Leitt said.

Alison Pardalis, the social worker at Mount Greylock during the 2018-19 school year, had to leave, leaving much disappointment with the students. Many students created close knit relationships with "Mrs. P." When students arrived back from the 2019-20 December break, Keith Jones, the new social worker, had arrived. The Echo sat down with Jones to ask about what he's noticed so far regarding mental health at MG.

"I've noticed a lot of students seem like

they're struggling with anxiety. That seems like that's been a concern," Jones said. He is hoping to set up a lunchtime group that is accessible to everyone, during which he would "help support those students and develop some skills to help them manage anxiety when it arises."

Jones stressed the significance of the disorder: "The importance of mental health is mental health impacts everything; students, individuals, people's functioning within...school, family life, community life. If we are talking primarily about school, if you're having mental health concerns or anxiety, it's going to affect your school work, which then is going to impact your future goals and your ability to achieve those future goals."

Leitt discussed the "Wellness Wheel," which includes the eight components of health that are taught in her class.

"There's all sorts of studies and research that show that mental health can impact your physical health. It can impact how you're feeling each day, so I think that it's definitely just as important as any other component of health."

According to childmind.org, researchers believe brain changes in teenage years increase the vulnerability to depression, anxiety, and other mental health disorders. Josie DeChaine, a sophomore at Mount Greylock, has experienced severe anxiety

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KOREAN GARDEN

Gabe Gerry writes about a gem in North Adams.

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INSIDE GREYLOCK'S GOVERNMENT

Maddy Art explains the roles of the different bodies.

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DOCTOR BROWN: STUDENTS REACT

Students outside Echo staff weigh in on this month's presentation.

See Page 6.

TWIN ADVICE

Clara McWeeny concludes the series.

See Page 8.

SEE Fund Awards \$20,629 in Grants

By SAVILLE KEYES and EMMA SANDSTROM

This year, fourteen grants totaling \$20,629 have been approved for new programs, materials, and more.

Eric Despard received a grant to organize a MGRS Guitar and Ukulele Program for seventh and eighth graders at Mount Greylock. In his SEE Fund grant request description, Despard said, "Students will learn the essential skills of music literacy while playing and performing music from a wide variety of musical styles and genres. The guitars and ukuleles will be a staple of an enrichment program for seventh and eighth grade students. High school students could access the instruments through clubs or directed study requests." He estimates that the program will impact about 80-100 kids.

Additionally, math teacher Mr. Thistle received a grant for new calculus books for his students, grades nine through twelve. However, this book isn't just any regular textbook: Mr. Thistle has been working on writing his own book "to simplify and make clear the complex concepts of Calculus and will be used as a supplement to help MG students prepare for the AP Calculus exam in MA," and would like to have his book professionally copied for his AP students. He estimates it will impact about 120 students.

Librarian, Mrs. Barrett, has received a grant for her "Help on the Shelf" Library display and equipment. Her main goal is to purchase the materials required to increase the aesthetic appeal of the library and "to help maximize student enjoyment and utilization of the library. We believe that creating an appealing library learning environment is a vital step in making

that happen." Seeing as the entire school has access to the library, she believes 600 students will be impacted by her changes.

Mr. Moors received a grant for a visiting artist, Nandi Plunkett (MG '07), to offer musical workshops for grades 7-12 during the school day and give an evening performance in late January. Based on Plunkett's commendable experience as a professional touring artist, Moors believes music students participating in her workshop "would benefit from her descriptions and demonstrations of her own music performance and production experiences." Due to the many ways she is capable of helping all styles of student musicians, Moors believes this workshop could impact approximately 250 students.

Four Mount Greylock seniors, Grace Sanchez, Cassidy Kiernan, Julia Jammalo and Saville Keyes, requested and received a grant to start their Senior Book Group. Their goals for this book group are "to visit local nursing homes once a month to read and discuss books." They have already communicated with the activities coordinator at Sweetwood and she has expressed significant interest. Using the money they have received, the students will decide on a crowd-pleaser to start with and purchase thirty copies of the book for the members of their group to enjoy. They hope to provide the residents with comradery and brighten their day in any way possible.

The Mount Greylock Model UN club received a grant towards hosting their first ever Model United Nations conference. They plan on using their granted money as a start-up fund to cover the basic costs in preparation for the one-day conference,

such as stationary, placards, lanyards and a website. In the club's request form, members explain that, "We are looking to host around 60 delegates/students from schools in the region to engage in a day of debate and civil discourse about important issues affecting the world today."

The seventh grade team sought a grant for a continuation of their orientation. They hope to continue funding activities to help make the seventh graders feel more comfortable during their transition from elementary to middle school.

Miriam Bakija received a grant for buying oil paints for the visual arts program. She expressed the need for five new sets of Grumbacher oil paints because they allow students to work on bigger canvasses over a longer period of time, unlike acrylic paints. She believes "This will further artistic education at Greylock and set students up for a bright future."

Mr. Price received a grant for a CS50 lecture for his eleventh and twelfth grade students. He wanted bring the students to a lecture at Harvard University on October 7th to help explain and create connections with the difficult topics that the students learn in class.

Mr. Welch and Kelly Turner of the Albany Berkshire Ballet received a grant to offer students in grades 7-12 taking Advanced Studio Art, Portfolio Art, and Painting attendance to the "Rockwell in Our Time Lecture and Performance." They believe the interactive activity "is designed to spur thoughtful reflection on the Four Freedoms." The program will begin with an assembly and discussions, but will transition to the more artistic side to increase

the student's understanding of dance: "As this ballet was choreographed on these dancers specifically, students will have the chance to gain insightful perspective of the development of the ballet as well as increase their understanding of dance as an artistic medium." It encourages a dialogue as well, evident in the question and answer session that will follow a 15 minute excerpt performance of Rockwell In Our Time.

Eva Myers received a grant to buy new books for the Mount Greylock Book Club, a group of seventh through ninth graders that meets once a week in school.

Ms. Mendel received two grants, one for a job shadowing program and one for hot glass. She looks to offer job shadowing to ten business students in each grade. On February 2, each student can choose an occupation and shadow a professional for the day. For her hot glass grant, Mendel plans on working with around thirty students in grades eleven and twelve to work with hot glass. One group will work on torch pulling and making glass beads, another group will watch a documentary of the history of glass and the third group will make glass paperweights.

Senior Marley Briggs was awarded a grant for new flooring in the auditorium as well as new props for productions of the winter musical.

On the evening of Thursday, March 12th, the SEE Fund will be hosting the second annual SEE Fund Trivia Contest. Student teams will have a chance to win prizes and make use of deep stores of arcane knowledge. Sign-up will begin after February break. ■

News in Brief

By CHARLIE MCWEENY

Phase I Update

Years after Williams College gifted Mount Greylock five million dollars, ground has been broken on an administrative building behind the school to host district offices that will be the first physical proof of these funds. After assessing needs not covered by the state in the new school building, administrators identified improvements to fields and office space for a regional staff as uses for the fund. In the meantime, Superintendent Kimberley Grady and district personnel have worked out of portable trailers behind the school building. The 2.5 million dollar building will also include limited storage space and public restrooms. While the foundation, plumbing, and electricity and being worked on behind the school, the structure itself will be built offsite. Construction is expected to be completed in August.

School Committee Update

During their January ninth meeting, the Mount Greylock Regional School District School Committee approved the use of up to 110,000 dollars for a prefabricated steel building on a concrete foundation to house waxing space for the school's nordic ski team and storage space for grounds equipment. Originally considered as part of the Phase I project out of the Williams capital gift, waxing and storage space were cut out of the plan to save costs. The building will be paid for out of the district's operating budget. At the same meeting, School Councils from Williamstown, Lanesborough, and Mount Greylock presented visions for the districts 2021 budget. Top among Mount Greylock's priorities were an increase in staffing in the performing arts department and funds to support social and emotional health programming.

Football Interest

Athletic Director Lindsey Von Holtz held a meeting for students interested in participating in football for the 2020 season. For the 2019 season, Mount Greylock did not have the numbers to field a full team, and students played with the Drury

High School team. Over 30 students attended the meeting.

Student Government Elections

The Mount Greylock Student Government is in the process of holding special elections for a number of positions. A representative and an alternate will be elected to attend Student Government Day in Boston, held in the Massachusetts State House. Juniors and Seniors are eligible to attend. Elections are also being held for a Junior class seat on the Student Council and a high school Representative on the School Council.

Auditorium Light Board

After months of working with a faulty and potentially dangerous lightboard, the Mount Greylock auditorium has a new "industry standard lightboard," as band teacher Lyndon Moors described. The original lightboard was included in the contract for the new auditorium, but required a high level of expertise to operate and would plunge the auditorium into darkness when turned on. In a letter obtained by The Echo, '62 Center Operations Manager Nathaniel Wiessner, who had been brought in to help fix the lightboard, described "significant issues with aspects of the lighting installation" with regard to "safety, functionality, and support." "Mount Greylock Regional High School has been thoroughly mistreated by Lehigh. From safety issues to missing functionality to woefully inadequate support, MGRHS deserves better from the trust they have put into the company not to mention the significant financial expenditure." Marleigh Briggs, a senior at Mount Greylock, said the lighting system "didn't work" and described a "ghost light" that was "always on." Briggs also applied for, and received, a SEE Fund Grant for a floor cover in the auditorium, meant to cover the blonde flooring at the front of the stage that limited use. The cover has not yet been installed. The new light board, however, has already been put to good use in the Eagles community concert. ■

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Robotics Kicks Off

By LIVIA MORALES

Early January brought with it the kickoff event for the Mechanical Mounties, Greylock's Robotics Team, and the official start of the season which entails the construction of a new robot from scratch. Senior Kayo Rosse said that "the event went well and we did as planned."

Despite a low seeding, Dan Louis, the club leader, emphasized the success of the event regarding the integration of new members and.

"We accomplished our goal of becoming an alliance captain and showing new members what competition was like," Louis said. He also highlighted the importance of teaching strategic thinking and increasing student's awareness surrounding skills in science and technology.

"We design mechanisms to fit the rules and the game and then program the robot," junior Anthony Welch said. This year, the challenge is called "The Infinite Recharge." With various methods of obtaining points, teams must program robots to pick up balls from the floor, launch them into an elevated target, and eventually execute what looks like a pull-up.

"Imagine you had a sports team but didn't know what sport you were going to perform," Louis said, explaining that teams must be prepared for anything.

Seeing a surge of new faces in their fourth season running, the team's expansion features a splattering of grades. Senior Brandon Fahlenkamp said that "this year we have about fifteen students, doubling our team from last year, which is pretty awesome."

The team stressed the importance of testing for potential deficiencies or breakdowns prior to competitions, a valuable lesson they have learned over the years.

"This year, the main difference is that we're working on prototypes, which is a way to test different mechanisms and ideas further before they go on the robot," Fahlenkamp said.

Two competitions, one in Woodstock, Connecticut and the other in Springfield, Massachusetts decide whether the team will attend the district championship, the team's ultimate goal. Last year, a mere five points separated the Mechanical Mounties from going on, a narrative they'd like to rewrite this season. ■

Sportlight: Brandi Gill

By JULIA BUTLER

Senior Brandi Gill has been a member of the ski team since seventh grade. She began skiing long before then, though.

Gill began skiing in Vermont when she was seven with the Bill Koch program, which offers opportunities for young people to participate in the sport. Skiing became an activity that Gill got into with her family.

"We went skiing two days a week, Tuesdays and Thursdays. We would listen to recorded books on the way up," she said. "We went through all of the Lord of the Rings." Gill said that although "jumping into something new is scary" she "loved it from the get-go."

In seventh grade, Gill took her skiing career to the high school circuit. For the first two years, she remained a part of Bill Koch in addition to being on the team so she could involve herself in both programs. Even before seventh grade, Gill hopped in on a few early morning practices at Jiminy Peak.

The ski community that Gill has become a part of is "very hardworking" and has played a large role in shaping the person she is today, she said.

"They push me to become a better athlete and a better person," she said. "They push me to be better because of who they are and how they approach the sport. Our coaches place a huge emphasis on sportsmanship and conducting ourselves well."

Gill said she values the challenge of what can be a grueling sport.

"Skiing as a sport is brutal, so it's definitely taught me a grit that I would not have learned otherwise," she said. "Skiing gives me a chance to enjoy the outdoors when most other people aren't outside."

Gill also has advice for those who think they may be interested in skiing.

"Go for it, but don't give up," she said. "Skiing is a hard sport to get good at. It takes time." She also advises performing all kinds of training, from arms to core to legs, explaining that skiing is a full-body sport and that "everything helps."

Although Gill participates in other sports, skiing is her favorite.

"Skiing just makes me happy. It's what I love." ■

AP Course Debate Continues

By LEO ROSSITER

As part of Mount Greylock's continuing study of social and emotional health and after a number of students raised concerns over the stress of APs and the rigidity of the curriculum, a number of forums have been held to discuss the role of AP classes at Mount Greylock. Several changes have been suggested, among them a cap on the number of APs a student could take at once, optional AP exams, and even removing them entirely from the course offerings.

At a recent Student Council meeting, where all students were invited and encouraged to come, the strengths, weaknesses, and potential changes to how APs are offered at the school were identified and compiled. One criticism of the current system, voiced by several attendees, was that students take AP classes more because of pressures from parents, peers, and the college application process than from a genuine interest in the course.

At the meeting, students also identified a number of benefits that AP courses provide; they offer a way for students to be challenged at the higher levels of the disciplines, which helps prepare them for college, not merely gain admission. Charlotte Rauscher, vice president of Student Council, said the meeting was a good start and she hoped things like it will "help us get closer to a program that students are happy with."

In interviews with The Echo, teachers of AP courses also weighed in on potential changes, speaking to insights on APs that did not come up at the Student Council meeting. Robert Thistle, a calculus teacher at Mount Greylock, critiqued the length

of the AP Calculus final test, saying that "there's a point when it's like a marathon, two maybe two and a half hours into an exam and you kind of hit a wall."

Despite this, Thistle also had good things to say about the test. Even if his class was no longer offered as an AP, he said he would "probably still use old exams," albeit less often. Thistle has come around from an earlier view that the test should be mandatory. He says that he would be more than open to students deciding "at the end if it's something they want to do."

Jeffrey Welch, speaking about his AP History courses, said that, although he would like to spend more time on the "so what of history" than he is currently able in the fast-paced AP history courses, they do serve a useful purpose. He applauds the AP program for giving students "a very in-depth, comprehensive context for all future study of history." Welch said this was important for students who take history classes in college as those are generally quite narrowly focused and having a good general knowledge provides a helpful background.

In the science department, Faith Manary said that following the AP curriculum holds her and her students to a "pretty high standard," and that removing that influence would change the way she taught her advanced chemistry class but she didn't know "if it would change for the better." All three of the teachers mentioned the cost of the tests as a problem and wished that taking higher-level courses did not incur a financial burden.

Despite all of the discussion, it remains

unclear if any changes will be made. If so, they would likely not take place until the year after next. Principal Mary MacDonald has been working with the School Council, the Student Council and the AP teachers to examine the current AP program. From conversations with students she cited reduced "flexibility" and increased stress and workload as problems stemming from APs.

MacDonald mentioned "keeping some APs and rethinking the other ones," or, going further, considering what would happen if "we got rid of APs," as potential changes. She described it as an ongoing conversation with "lots of perspectives being gathered." Addressing when potential changes might come into effect, she said, "this is not a decision we can make for next year," because more opinions and information are needed. MacDonald confirmed that she would make the final determination on developing the program of studies, but clarified that she "never does it in isolation."

MacDonald said she did not imagine "us getting rid of the AP program as a whole," because of the benefits it brings, but that changing certain AP courses which might better follow their own curriculum is, to her, more realistic. MacDonald also addressed the question of capping the number of AP classes that a student may take. She said doing so would "definitely require going to the school committee" because it is a change in educational policy, but which would not be required, for example, simply to remove the AP designation from advanced English. ■

School Weighs MassCore Option

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However, the most drastic change would be in the foreign language department, where students would have to pass two years of the same foreign language.

"This would be the most challenging guideline to meet," Principal MacDonald said, "and would require us to think creatively about scheduling and what courses we want to offer."

If Mount Greylock chooses to adopt the state standards, there will be quite a few obstacles in the way. The guidelines would be implemented for next year's incoming freshman class, the current eighth graders. Rising sophomores would be pushed to meet the requirements, but wouldn't be penalized for an inability to do so. Rising juniors and seniors would be exempt from the requirements. Therefore, it would take a few years to fully integrate the program across all grades in the high school. Also, MassCore guidelines have the potential to take away some of the flexibility in elective classes and in the schedules of students who take one or more academic support classes.

The foreign language department, including Spanish teacher Amy Kirby, is very excited about the potential new foreign language requirement.

"By learning a second language, we remove the emphasis from the individual person and local context to take into consideration the wider social, political, and cultural context," Kirby said. "Students studying a second language are given the opportunity to think about how we give meaning and value to words."

She also said that she'd like to see students start to learn a second language as early as elementary school so that teachers may go further in depth with their students once they reach the high school level. She and the other foreign language teachers hope that the new guideline would foster a greater love of language in Mount Greylock students.

Students had mixed reviews on the implementation of MassCore. The idea of a language requirement was enticing to students, as it allows them to dive deeper and immerse themselves in a language.

"A greater language requirement would allow us as students to be better prepared for the real world in which we might be required to use a different language," sophomore Alayna Schwarzer said.

Many students also like the idea of being required to take an art class as a relaxing break in the day, but some are concerned about the lack of flexibility in schedules.

"For a lot of people, art is a nice way to get a break in your day," freshman Annie Art said, "but I also think with some schedules it may be hard to fit that in."

In the coming weeks, the School Committee will look to gather more information on the pros and cons of implementing the guidelines through their academic sub-committee. They are hoping to gather as much information as possible in order to come to the best decision in time for the next school year. ■

1 in 650: Emi Soza-Foias

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most proud of?

S: Probably my photograph of a bobcat because I've always wanted to photograph a bobcat. Not only did I get the species, but I also got the good lighting, and it was during fall so I got some really nice colors behind it as well.

E: Have you ever entered a photograph of yours in a contest?

S: I have. The only contest that I've actually somewhat won was for a high school scholarship program. I got to go to Tennessee with nine other students, which was really great.

E: How does photographing animals differ from photographing people?

S: Wildlife is a lot more difficult because you never know if you'll see them [the animals] or not, whereas people you have them there and you just have to worry about getting good lighting. With wildlife, even if the light is good, you only have an hour of that good light, and they probably won't even be in that one hour. You really just have to just spend a lot more time with them.

E: You have a lot of nature photographs on your Instagram. Could you describe what role social media has played in this interest?

S: Really I use social media to share my

photos, but I also use it to inspire myself and motivate myself to get better photos, go out more, and stay out longer.

E: What equipment do you use to photograph the animals?

S: So I have a big lens; it's a two-hundred-five-hundred millimeter lens so I can get pretty close, although I still have to physically move myself to get closer a lot of the time. And then I have a pretty good camera that I can crop even more if I need to.

E: What do you find is the best part about nature photography?

S: Honestly the tranquility. Just going out into nature by yourself and just having your thoughts, and then finding that connection with wildlife; that they actually trust you out there with them, which is really amazing.

E: What is the most difficult part?

S: Probably just finding the animals, honestly. Especially the bigger bears, bobcats, and owls. I've always wanted to photograph an owl, but finding them is just so difficult, and a lot of times they're super skittish so you really have to play the waiting game.

E: What is the greatest length you have gone to, to photograph an animal?

S: It was a deer with snow on its face, and I still haven't gotten the picture. I have one picture, but it's not high quality, and it's

pretty far away, so it wasn't the best. But I think I spent forty-eight hours in one week out in the wintertime in the mornings, and any time it snowed.

E: How do you manage to balance your schoolwork and sports with photography?

S: That's a great question. I only play soccer, and that's usually during Fall and Spring, and a lot of time that's the best time for wildlife, so it is really difficult. Schoolwork I've been able to do in school, so even homework I usually find times in school to actually do it, but then sports eat up a good portion of the time I can go take pictures. On the weekends I'll usually have a couple hours in the morning where I can go take pictures since I usually have practice around 10:00(am) on Sunday. So I have a good chunk of that nice light in the morning to go take pictures both days, and that's usually when I do it.

E: As a senior, do you have any plans for after high school?

S: In college I'm hoping to do zoology or anything to do with animal behavior and that kind of stuff, or possibly environmental sciences, so my photography will keep going, which is awesome.

E: So are you looking to have a career relating to photography or nature?

S: Not necessarily photography, but definitely to nature. ■

Mental Health at Greylock

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over the past couple years. She expressed the struggle of the disorder and the few resources available.

"I think a lot of my friends have had anxiety. I don't know about diagnosed anxiety, but I feel like a lot of people suffer from feeling anxiety," DeChaine said.

Alayna Schwarzer, another sophomore, emphasized how students can be passive with these types of feelings. Schwarzer said that during midterms and finals, some students say that those underlying feelings are just stress when, in reality, they could be severe anxiety.

"There's not really anything in access to students in those times when you have

to take a really stressful test," Schwarzer said. "There's nothing really there to help them."

When asked about the resources available to students, DeChaine said that there are not enough steps being taken.

"I know the Peer Team is trying to do the [stress relief programs], which I think is a step closer, but it's still not enough."

DeChaine is referring to "Wellness Wednesdays," activities during Directed Study run by Peer Team and members of the Mount Greylock staff in which students can relieve anxiety. On January 15, Coach Gill led a guided meditation in the gym, and a couple months ago, Peer Team conducted relaxing coloring in the library.

The Wellness Department, which com-

prises all PE and health teachers at Greylock, meet to discuss the ways they are teaching strategies for dealing with social-emotional health issues. Coach Jordan teaches a social-emotional health class. Annie Art, a freshman, expressed a societal norm where people can be dismissive about the matter.

"I think there's a stigma around anxiety where, if you say you have anxiety, some people don't really believe you, but then if you actually have it, it can be hard to get the resources you need to get through it." According to Jones and Leitt, if you have a mental health disorder, the first step is to recognize it and reach out for help.

"You need support to work through that," Jones said. "If you're trying to deal

with it on your own, it seems overwhelming and often times people shut down."

"I would say utilize the people that we have in place," Leitt said. "They're very knowledgeable. If you don't know any of them, find a trusted adult in the building. The adult may not be able to give you the specific help or the strategies that you need, but they might be able to set you up with the right resources to do so."

"It doesn't just have to be me," Jones said. "It could be another guidance counselor, a teacher, anyone you feel comfortable with. It could be a parent, it could be a coach, but I think the first step is always asking for help if you are willing to reach out for it." ■

IN-DEPTH

When Waxes Burn and Snow Melts

In the Berkshires and Abroad, a Struggle Between Sport, Nature and Health

By OWEN TUCKER-SMITH

Berkshire Nordic Slush Fest

Berkshire Nordic Ski League director Joe Miller dubbed January 11's race a "Nordic Slush Fest" before it even happened. When the athletes arrived at the course Saturday morning, they found a field of grass where the previous week's start had been. A slew of last minute course changes had spectators trudging through a mile of ice to arrive at the 2-kilometer loop that had just enough powder to support the some 200 skiers in the league.

"We have less snow than we used to," Greylock ski coach Hilary Greene said. "People begin to question why we're even doing this, if we aren't able to ski."

For Greene, the community is looking at a new sport.

"Your sport that you know of as being cross-country skiing, where you go into the mountains and go for kilometers and kilometers, becomes reduced to skiing around a 1-k track," she said. "You start to lose numbers."

Research from the Climate Impact Lab predicts a significant drop in the number of skiable days over the course of the century. In a study titled "America's Shrinking Ski Season," authors Kelly McCusker and Hannah Hess predicted as much as 80 percent drops in the length of the season by late-century for some popular ski resorts if carbon emissions continue to rise. Oregon's Mt. Bachelor, where the U.S. Cross-Country Ski team trains every year, may see a 23 week season turn to 12 weeks.

The research includes two projections: one for a continued rise in emissions, and one for the controlled emissions outlined in the Paris Climate Accords.

The rapid changes occur under McCusker and Hess' "high emissions scenario." The low emissions scenario projects a less but still significant decline in the length of the ski season. For Mt. Bachelor, it's a 26 percent drop, compared to almost 50 percent under high emissions.

"It's useful to look at two different scenarios," Hess said, "to engage people in the exercise of imagining what the world could look like if we got serious about meeting our climate goals, versus what the world looks like if we don't take the threat seri-

ously."

For the Berkshire League, this threat means an inconsistent race schedule and competitions scheduled just days in advance. None of the team's races this season have occurred at their scheduled locations, and one has already had to be canceled.

"We've always had the ups and downs, but it's a lot more severe now," Lenox coach Joe Bazanno said. "Through the course of the year, week by week we don't know what we're doing."

In an informal, small-scale survey of around 20 members of the Greylock ski team, all but one mentioned that they have noticed unreliable weather patterns over the course of their years on the team, with respondents mentioning that "there's no snow anymore" and that "the league used to never have to cancel races, but now it's completely normal."

On the World Tour

Andy Newell has skied at the Olympics four times, giving him his fair share of snow. But he's also watched the glaciers he's trained on melt before his eyes.

When Olympic biathlete Maddie Phaneuf traveled to the Italian Alps to race, she expected to see powder. She found grass.

Noah Hoffman raced at Davos, Switzerland, on a course that had thrived with natural snow in the 1970s. He skied on "a ribbon of snow" through the woods.

Sam Shaheen's memories of endless snow in middle school disappeared as he skied in a college league full of "artificial stuff."

But Gian-Franco Casper, president of the International Ski Federation, hasn't expressed much concern. "We still have snow, and sometimes even a lot," he said.

The story for many professional skiers is the same. The snowy winters they experienced as younger athletes are faint memories. The culprit is climate change, and the responses range from activism to indifference.

Those fighting back against McCusker and Hess' high emissions scenario include Protect Our Winters, a nonprofit political action group advocating green legislation. The organization includes an athletic alli-

ance, which has grown to represent nearly 100 athletes.

"POW has done a really great job of bringing together athletes who have the common experience of 'oh god, something's going on,'" said Simi Hamilton, three-time Olympic cross-country skier and member of the alliance. "It offers us a platform to share our experiences and share what we see throughout the year."

While some organizations focus on encouraging environment-friendly personal practices, Protect Our Winters' efforts center around broader changes in government policy and regulations. They make frequent visits to politicians' offices. When President Donald Trump invited Olympic athletes to the White House, Maddie Phaneuf was instead representing the organization on Capitol Hill, talking to officials for the second time in her young career.

As an athlete who wants her sport to survive, Phaneuf said she wants to see political change.

"No matter how many U.S. citizens make our carbon footprint smaller, it's not going to change the effects climate change is having on our planet that much," Phaneuf said. "We need a systematic change. We need to be voting for people who are going to advocate for climate action."

Ski resorts and organizations are also trying to hold onto their businesses as the dollars trickle away. In a 2018 study, Professor Elizabeth Burakowski identified a strong positive correlation between a year's number of days with skiable conditions and amount of skier visits. Because the ski industry accounts for an annual \$20 billion, a year with little snow can cost over 17,000 jobs and a billion dollars, the study found.

Last January, the National Ski Areas Association, the Outdoor Industries Association and Snowsports Industries America responded to this threat with the creation of the Outdoor Business Climate Partnership. The Partnership represents industry businesses, including resorts and retailers, in the political arena. Together, the three organizations account for 7.6 million jobs.

"When you speak as the collective voice of an \$887 billion industry, it gives your message that much more power," Adrienne

Isaac of the National Ski Areas Association said. "There are so many members of Congress whose constituents rely on outdoor recreation for a vibrant local economy, to put food on their tables, or for their mental and physical health. Our members and our industry are directly impacted by the effects of climate change. It makes sense to band together to underscore the critical need for climate-smart policies at the federal level."

The goals of the Partnership center around a rapid drop in carbon emissions and a transition to clean energy. In May, the new group traveled to Washington to push for a price on carbon. They are organizing another trip, Isaac said.

An Uphill Battle

But next to an array of athletes and businesses determined to fight climate change is an array of obstacles, including the International Olympic Committee and the International Ski Federation (FIS).

"FIS leadership is incompetent," Olympian Noah Hoffman said. "President Gian-Franco Casper needs to leave. FIS is responsible for the health and well-being of all the skiing sports globally, and they are underperforming."

Casper, who has now entered a third decade of leading the organization, got widespread criticism in February when he referred to "so-called" climate change.

"He's just an old school Swiss guy who chain-smokes cigarettes and has no idea what's going on outside of his little bubble," Andy Newell said.

The International Ski Federation did not respond to multiple interview requests.

Newell also said the International Olympic Committee has made concerning decisions, notably in their choices of Olympic venues.

"The fact that the Olympics were held in Sochi seemed like a bonehead idea to me," he said. "The IOC was so concerned with making big dollars and forming deals with Putin and the Russian government and satisfying all these different international sponsors that they agreed to hold an Olym

Continued on Page 8.

There's a Council and a Committee?

The Echo's Guide to Mt. Greylock Government

By MADDY ART

As you hear about changes and potential changes to the school—including the discussions of AP classes and MassCore standards included in this very issue—you might be wondering where the final decisions are made. School Council, Student Council, Class Officers, and School Committee are all bodies of elected representatives who make decisions about our school. The Echo sought to clarify the distinctions between the structures and functions of these groups.

School Council

The Mount Greylock School Council is an organization of students, parents, teachers and community members dedicated to identifying the needs of the school and adopting goals in line with those needs and statewide standards. School Council additionally formulates the school improvement plan and reviews the budget. The school councils of each school in the district—Williamstown Elementary School, Lanesborough Elementary School, and Mount Greylock—remain separate entities after regionalization, but all report to the district's one School Committee. Members' seats are up for election every two years.

Senior Lucy Shepard has been on School Council since her sophomore year. Recently, she said, the Council has been discussing Mount Greylock's adoption of MassCore standards and the role of AP classes at Mount Greylock.

"We create a comprehensive list of things that we think could benefit the school and community members," Shepard said. "And then we kind of tidy it up and that's brought in front of the higher committee."

Student Council

Student Council is a body of elected students in grades nine through twelve. Five students from each grade are elected each spring, making an organization of twenty students. Student Council is designed to be a bridge between students and administration. Frequently, Student Council serves as the vessel through which the administration gauges student opinion and assesses student perspective. Every Student Council meeting is open to all students.

Senior Toby Foehl is Student Council President and has been a member for all four years of high school. This year, he has led the Council as they have hosted a corn-hole tournament fundraiser, bought lawn games to be used at lunches beginning in the spring and discussed the merits of AP classes at Mount Greylock. Over his time on Student Council, Foehl has seen a more active relationship develop between students and administrators.

"I think Miss McDonald comes to us a lot more for our perspective on things," he said. "Kim Grady came to talk to us once this year. That was the first time that has happened since I was here."

Foehl is optimistic about the Council's role in the school and feels that the elected

nature of members' positions attracts students dedicated to helping their communities.

"You're really only getting kids who actually want to do it and are committed to doing it," he said. Everyone brings a good perspective to every meeting."

Class Officers

Each grade in high school elects four students to serve as class officers—one as President, one as Vice President, one as Treasurer and one as Secretary. The primary purpose of the class officers is to raise enough money for their grade to have a successful prom, class trip and graduation, but the officers also serve as the face of the class and facilitate class bonding. As part of their fundraising, class officers are in charge of collecting class dues, the fees that students pay in order to participate in their senior week activities. Traditionally, the President and Vice President plan and manage operations, while the Treasurer keeps track of finances and the Secretary is in charge of organization and records. Class officers work with their grade's Class Advisor, a faculty member who oversees and assists with the class's fundraising operations.

Junior Alex Wilson the president for the class of 2021. Beyond the fundraising, Wilson views the role as a crucial leadership position in the class.

"I think it's important to be a leader, to be a classmate and to be a friend," he said.

"I think you have to be very healthy and positive. And you also have to reach out to the community. And I think that is important to having a strong class."

School Committee

School Committee is a body of seven elected representatives, four from Williamstown and three from Lanesborough, who serve as the legal agents of the school district and set policy for the district. School Committee hires and evaluates the Superintendent, and then works with her to the extent that Superintendent Grady takes the steps necessary to take the school in the direction that the School Committee has established.

Charlie McWeeny serves as the student representative from Student Council to the School Committee, acting as a liaison between the School Committee and the student body as a whole.

Chair Dan Caplinger has been a part of the full district's School Committee since the district, and thus the School Committee was regionalized in 2018. Prior to that, Caplinger was a member of the Williamstown Elementary School Committee. Caplinger cited this regionalization as one of the most crucial acts of School Committee over the past few years.

"More and more, we're starting to see how the three schools working even more closely together can have a benefit for all of our kids from pre K all the way through high school graduation," he said. ■

MIAA Considers Eliminating Sectional Tournament

Continued from Page 1.

some other timeline. Either way, as no longer an MIAA event, western mass tournaments would be likely to lose some of the attention and excitement surrounding them.

While local decisions are full of ambiguity, district to district, sport to sport and year to year, von Holtz praised the TMC's plan for its consistency: "I like the consistency of it. Every single sport and section of the MIAA would be doing the same thing. The MIAA was getting a lot of complaints about the inconsistencies within tournaments. For example, in the West we might play three games to get to a sectional while in the east they might have played six games to get to that same point, so it wasn't fair for teams meeting at the same level."

Von Holtz also brought up that in the past seeding was done differently from sport to sport across the state. Separate but connected to the tournament changes is the introduction of a new seeding system. The MIAA will now pay MAXpreps to do the seeding. Von Holtz said that one of the benefits of this system is that team sports will be able to see their seed each week. She said this feature will add an element of excitement and will draw more crowds to games.

Others have expressed concern over moving to one seeding and qualifying method for all teams. Mike Moran, Daily Hampshire Gazette Sports Editor, brought up that the Walker seeding system won't work in a statewide setting because there isn't enough crossover. "I have a hard time believing that a statewide tournament will be seeded in a way that is fair" Moran tweeted, "no amount of number crunching can accurately seed teams from across the state when a small percentage of them actually play each other."

As the MIAA is in the midst of a financial crisis, according to The Boston Globe's article "The hard part is, there's no crystal ball": MIAA facing its worst financial crunch," some have criticized the plan for paying a third party for seeding.

Another financial burden of the new system falls on the school districts. All the way through sectional finals the higher seed will host, meaning that if Mount Greylock is not the higher seed, rather than

a guaranteed travel to another Western MA site, the game could be held in Martha's Vineyard. With already tight school budgets, costly bus rides could strain many Western MA schools.

Mountie baseball player Jack Gitterman also expressed concerns over the long bus rides, remembering that athletes at Mount Greylock are also students. "The travel time and late nights may be an issue," Gitterman said, "If the game is on a Thursday night, teams may not get back home until extremely late and this isn't even accounting for time spent doing homework. I do like the idea of possibly playing teams on the other side of the state but I feel as if there are many issues that need to be addressed before the MIAA makes a decision."

Travel may also hurt local papers. Moran commented that, "from a media perspective, our focus as a small paper is HS sports. With sectional tournaments, there are times where I can have a reporter plus photographer get to two tournament games in one day because of proximity and time. That opportunity will diminish. We're not alone."

"There are definitely both sides," von Holtz said. "The hard part is going to be travel. But it's not a guaranteed travel. The better part is that if we are doing well and we're having a successful season, if we make it to a state championship, we're competing against someone that's the same size."

For boys' basketball, the 17 team Western MA pool will shift to a 70 team statewide pool. Coach Robert Thistle expressed concerns on how the change will affect his ability to scout teams. "Historically, I scout all the teams. Now I don't know the lay of the land, I don't know how competitive some of the schools are, I know it's aligned with school size. But my gut reaction is there's no way I'll be able to scout 70 teams."

Thistle also pointed to the rich history of the Western MA tournament and driving motivation it brings to their season. "There's something important about trying to win Western Mass and winning this challenging title that hasn't happened here, for boys basketball, since 1969," Thistle said. "We made it to the finals in 2017 for the first time in 50 years. That was a great accomplishment and we're hoping for a

good run this year, but it seems like it's taking away from the Western part of the state. That's my two cents right now, although I will admit I don't know everything about it yet."

Mount Greylock boys' soccer coach Blair Dils pointed to the benefits of the new statewide divisions. "I like the set up," Dils said. "I think it establishes a more competitive balance because if you look at it, Mount Greylock in particular had been going up against schools that are two, sometimes even three times bigger than we are in division III. To create five divisions we'll be in the middle of the pack, in terms of school size, in division 5. I'm all for leveling the playing field, and I think it will actually probably benefit Greylock, and we might see more state titles from our teams."

In September, when the Echo sat down with Dils to discuss the teams goals for the 2019 season, Dils said that, "for us they're always the same, in order we we try to qualify for the tournament, and then we hope to win our northern division in Berkshire County, and then we hope to win Western Mass, and then a state title."

Embracing winning Western MA as a long time goal for the team, 2019 co-captain Finn Welch felt that "there is something special about a regional tournament like Western Mass. It has become a sign of pride and a goal for teams."

As a baseball player, Oscar Low expressed the same fond sentiment for the Western MA pool. "It's sad to think that a team can no longer win a Western Mass championship," Low said, "I understand wholly why they are making this change and agree that it speeds the process up. I also like the idea of playing new teams and traveling across the state to compete. One thing, though, and especially for baseball, is that this new system all but eliminates the county/Western Mass rivalries that are super fun to play in — for example, we look forward to playing Taconic every year. The tournament will become less personal."

One of the benefits of a Statewide Tournament highlighted by the MIAA is that it "addresses gender equity issues." This refers to the change in how ADs submit enrollment numbers. Rather than submitting a number for boys and another number for girls in the school, the AD will submit only

the number for total students. Von Holtz explained the MIAA shifted to this system because "some people will not fit in one of those categories." As a result of this, the boys' and girls' teams at a school will always be in the same division.

The Mount Greylock girls' lacrosse team is one that understands the frustration of playing a schedule without a postseason Western MA. Player Carolyn Jones pointed out that "technically the girls' lacrosse team has been the best Western Mass team for the past two years but have never won the title because it is western/central."

"Schools play like-sized schools," the MIAA further listed on a powerpoint of the benefits. Jones questioned the value of this statement for the Mount Greylock girls lacrosse team. "It's really hard to compete with the central teams where lacrosse is more popular," Jones said. "They just have more highly competitive clubs and more access to places to play off season. While playing teams our own size might help to a degree, there are still schools like Bromfield who don't have a ton of kids but are really into lacrosse and have the resources to be incredibly good."

The MIAA's support for the plan on the basis that it brings the state together and allows ADs to meet ADs from other parts of the state has drawn criticism from those who point out that ADs meet ADs at MIAA meetings, and that we should be thinking about the student-athletes first.

Thistle said that "this is an Eastern Mass driven thing, from the idea that smaller pools in Western Mass meant that Western Mass teams had an advantage in getting to state championships."

And ultimately, the overwhelming number of schools in the Boston area and structure of the MIAA will mean it will be a decision up to the Eastern half of the state. Even if every Western and Central MA school was to vote against the measure, the eastern schools would still easily pass the proposal with the majority needed.

"I will admit there are many things at the MIAA that are Eastern Mass driven because the number of schools," von Holtz said. "This one, our voice has been heard and they've changed many things based on the feedback that we have given."

Still, it's hard not to wonder if Western mass interests will ever have their own place on the state playing field. ■

Winter Sports in Brief

By AVA HOWARD

Note: Records are as of when the Echo went to print, which is significantly earlier than publication. Most records will be several games behind.

Girls' Nordic

The girls' nordic ski team has emerged victorious from their first two races of the season. The defending state champs had their season opener in early January at Notchview Reservation, where they dominated with 13 points. Junior and race winner Jackie Wells said that "we had a very strong showing at the first race and a lot of people on the team are beginning to step up—it's a strong pack." The next weekend, they competed again at Notchview, facing record high January temperatures and risky conditions. The Mounties finished with 15 points and 6 MG girls in the top ten.

The team is supposed to compete every Saturday from now on, however, depending on snow and weather conditions, it can be unpredictable.

Boys' Nordic

Similar to the girl's team, boys' skiing is also returning strong. Having lost seniors, the team is adjusting to the new dynamic. Sophomore Simon Klompus, said, "we lost a lot of seniors, who were great leaders. They're kinda big shoes to fill for everyone, but the current seniors and upperclassmen are doing a good job." Teague Murphy added that "practices and games are definitely a good environment for all team members"

The boys filled the first five spots for their season opener at Notchview and won by a long shot, leading second place Lenox

by thirty points. They were also successful in their second race, placing 4 athletes in the top ten.

"I think with the way the first two races have gone and the dynamic we have seen in practice, it looks to me like we will only get better from here," Klompus said.

Boys' Basketball

"Speaking on behalf of all coaches, players, and captains, I think we have really good chemistry--no drama and a truly hardworking group," said varsity boys' basketball coach Bob Thistle. The Mount Greylock Boys' Basketball team finished their tenth game with a record of 7-5. Despite a tough loss against Drury, the team has clinched wins against all other teams they have played in Berkshire County, including shut-outs of both Lee and McCann. However, Coach Thistle is pushing the team beyond the county and said that "we worked in the off season to get some harder games which I think will help to make the team better."

Though it is a team goal to make Western Mass this year (as it is every year) the team trying to not look too far in the future, and keeping their focus on upcoming contests.

Girls' Basketball

It's about halfway through the basketball season and the girls' varsity record is 5-6. The team is coached by John Jacobbe and because of low numbers, is open to grades 8-12. The team is working to adapt to the new dynamic and the more the season progresses, the better the bonds are becoming.

The team had a slow start and senior captain Ciera Schwarzer said, "it started off a little awkward, just because of the age groups, but now we are coming together as a team." With improved team development, they have successfully won both their recent games against Monument and Southwick. Freshman Molly Sullivan is a member of both the JV and Varsity teams.

"We've had a couple players step up and take on leadership roles, which has been good to see," Sullivan said.

The start of the season has been a learning experience for the Mounties, and now that they are working harder as a team, Schwarzer believes they will only improve.

"Our highs are really high and our lows are really low," Schwarzer said. "We've seen us at our best and now that we are fully getting into the swing of things we can try to reach our full potential."

Wrestling

This year, the Mount Greylock wrestling team is a co-op team, with participants from other Northern Berkshire high schools. "It doesn't really change that much," said captain Jack Rosier, "given everyone who is there is all there for the same reason."

So far the team has had six meets, and the growing size and interest in the wrestling team from Mount Greylock students, as well as the outcome of the meets, fore-shadows an optimistic outlook on the rest of the season.

"As a whole, the team is a lot better than it was last year and the season is looking good for us," Rosier said. ■

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 join the Echo staff.

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OPINION

Doctor Brown: Students React

By THE EDITORIAL BOARD

We've heard you guys talking about Adolph Brown's presentation over the past few weeks. We've heard enthusiasm, frustration, and thorough, meaningful discourse. That's why we made the conscious decision to scrap our editorial and defer to you. Below is a loose collection of unfiltered reactions from students in virtually all grades. Our editorial opinion: keep caring so much.

Guest Columns

By ANNIE ART '23

I am writing today in response to the assembly we had Thursday with the speaker Adolph Brown. Although he was funny, the performance made me uncomfortable and wishing I was elsewhere.

From the beginning, Doctor Brown's performance felt awkward. He called out people who were not paying their whole attention to him by saying he loved them. This was a weird choice of words to address a group of teenagers, but it only got worse. At one point, while calling out someone, Doctor Brown said, "I love you, but not in a prison sort of way." This was alluding to prison rape. Rape jokes are never okay. Making those types of comments in front of an entire school is completely inappropriate.

When Doctor Brown called for a female volunteer, Charlotte, an unsuspecting teenager, went up. He acted out how he met and fell in love with his wife, with Charlotte playing the role of his wife. This

was very odd, because a full-grown man was approaching a girl and telling her how he found her brain attractive and how much he loved her. He also made a religious comment, saying the only thing he loved more than his wife was God. This should not have been said due to the absence of religion in public schools, a rule enforced to make sure everyone feels welcome, and because of the fact that he was still addressing this comment to a high schooler who was not educated on what she had agreed to. I understand that he was showing us what happened between him and his wife, but nonetheless, it made me and many others extremely uncomfortable.

At the end of that segment, I felt that my sole purpose was to please men. I was told that my pants cannot be too tight, because then I would be a "bad apple" instead of being higher on the tree. I like to believe

that, in our community, we do our best not to label and alienate people based on what they are wearing. He also said not to be the type of person who went for "apples on the ground," then continued to say those "apples" were the ones that he and his friends had passed around and taken many "bites" out of. Shaming women for their sexual past is not okay. If a woman has been with multiple people, that is her business and has no place in a school assembly. Moreover, it was made clear my intelligence was arousing for the young men in my class. This disgusts me. My academic achievements are not for pleasing men. Doctor Brown started moaning while telling us how his crush would answer all the questions in the class they shared. This is an inappropriate

thing to do in an assembly for middle and high schoolers who spend all day raising their hands to answer questions. Talking about how he found it arousing when a woman is trying to get ahead in her education sends the wrong message to girls who are all in the process of their education. My stomach flips while just thinking about this part of the presentation.

From my understanding, the intended message of Doctor Brown's assembly was not to judge a book by its cover, but the messages he actually conveyed were that changing yourself to impress women is completely okay, that a woman's only job is to get noticed by a man, and that you should not be one of the bad apples on the ground. The presentation had a strong theme that guys are supposed to be trying to get girls and that girls' jobs are trying to be "gotten" by guys. Although they were hidden between jokes and dancing, sexist and heteronormative comments were still evident throughout the assembly. Those remarks have no place at Mount Greylock.

I felt that my sole purpose was to please men.

Anonymous

It was wildly inappropriate to direct a prison rape joke at a student, first off. Second, the slut shaming and sexism were ridiculously blatant--when he talked about women as apples, and attempted to teach kids that "fallen women," i.e. women who have casual sex, are to be avoided and are apples that fallen to the ground, I couldn't believe what I was hearing. Especially with that disgusting comment about he and all his friends "taking a bite." And don't get me started on using a teenage girl to reenact your relationship with your wife when you could have easily done the bit without it, and the mention of the antiquated practice of asking a father for his daughter's hand (as if she were property). Additionally, he spent almost the entire talk reinforcing negative stereotypes about African-Americans (for example, correlating saggy pants or braids to lower worth.)

That money could serve the school in innumerable better ways.

Max Rhie '20

I thought that some of the points he made were overly blunt and needed a little more attention to nuance. But, his messages were heartfelt, passionate and genuine, and everyone in the gym felt that--this is probably the most important thing a speaker can do, anyways. And I found his ability to engage the audience and simultaneously encourage enthusiasm and thoughtfulness to be very impressive and inspiring.

Eva Myers '20

If "real talk" was encouraged more by teachers and students, we could have more of an open conversation about our community and diversity. We could have less speakers and more open forums for students to speak up about their own situations and our community.

George Munemo '24

I thought it was kind of weird. I think the message he was trying to send is good but he didn't deliver the message well. I liked the dancing parts but that didn't really have to do with the message. I think he was too focused on entertaining the crowd so he didn't do the best job.

Elena Caplinger '23

While I did, admittedly, think parts of his presentation were funny with good messages attached, the commentary treating women as apples, that are supposed to be "bitten" for the enjoyment of men, made me very uncomfortable and tainted the rest of his performance.

By JIMMY BRANNAN '20

The school wasted an uncomfortable amount of money on Dr. Brown's assembly that should have been invested elsewhere.

Dr. Brown's spiel definitely had some points of value, but it was overshadowed intensely by off-color jokes, cringe-worthy actions, and misogynistic lines and behavior.

His apple metaphor (which he incorrectly called a simile) was truly disgusting. That women are considered low hanging fruit and easy is very gross. There was no consideration for a girl's perspective.

There are girls who enjoy having sex and that is entirely their choice. Just because they enjoy sex doesn't mean that they are low-hanging fruit (rotten apples, as Dr. Brown put it) or that they're less intelligent. Wearing tight pants doesn't affect intelligence either. Dr. Brown's statement that you don't want an apple with a lot of bite marks, or in other words, a girl who has had a lot of partners, is inherently counterintuitive to his "don't judge a book by its cover" message.

His statements on being a sapiosexual was also rather uncomfortable. Dr. Brown mimicking having an orgasm when describing how his wife answered biology questions was absolutely inappropriate for a high school audience, let alone a middle-school audience. It also further promoted the idea of female sexualization, sexualizing a girl's intellect.

There were strong themes of heteronormativity spliced throughout the assembly. Dr. Brown's speech was very much, "guys if you want to get a girl" and "girls, if you want a guy to notice you."

The prison rape joke was completely out of place. Saying, "I love you, but not in the prison sort of love," is absolutely inappropriate. Dr. Brown is an adult man joking about a prison-style rape between him and an underage student.

This trend continued when he proceeded to propose to a requested-female volunteer. He could've easily told the story of how he met his wife without a volunteer, standing creepily close to an underage, uncomfortable participant. The participant was on stage for almost half an hour and was re-

warded with a ring pop.

Other participants who were on stage for much less time, doing much easier tasks, were rewarded monetarily. Also that Matteo's reward was a crumpled up \$20 that Dr. Brown has crushed, stepped on, smudged, and kicked has its own implications.

Overall, I think this speaks to the effectiveness of motivational speakers entirely. Dr. Brown did have some good points but they were only revealed after a deep-dive analysis done by an entire class.

Dr. Brown's good points, such as "stay true to yourself" and "don't judge a book by its cover" were told in a very roundabout, counterintuitive, backwards way and were almost entirely mute when compared to his more uncomfortable, misogynistic, off-color comments and actions.

I firmly believe that everything Dr. Brown said and wanted to get across could've been said much more easily (and more effectively) with a poster in the hallway. If the school wants to have motivational speakers, invite people from the county who are actually working on important things. Invite somebody who's working on the opioid crisis in Berkshire County or someone who works on affordable housing or a representative from Habitat for Humanity or any one who is actually doing something productive for the Berkshires. The assembly was truly a testament to how genuinely out of touch Kim Grady actually is.

If the school wants to actually do something with motivational and informative speaking, spending thousands of dollars on a "motivational" speaker is not the thing to do. Instead, take that money and invest it in the Greylock Talks program. Strengthen it, maybe even providing the opportunity for further school assemblies that hold actual relevance to Mount Greylock. Instead of having 25 minutes to talk quickly about one topic, maybe expand that into having 90 minutes to actually present a topic.

The assembly has a whole just left me with a bad taste and bad memories. I think it was a waste of money and that the student body would be arguably better off if the assembly didn't happen in the first place.

Nima Darafshi '20

It encouraged understanding of respect towards other people while also helping teach students their importance of self worth. I think the most memorable thing from his presentation was that "Education did not save me. Educators did."

He could have dived deeper into the topic of growing up different. I think he sort of generalized the idea of acceptance, but I don't blame him because he is speaking to a school with an overwhelming white and middle class population. I think with our student population, it is difficult to understand everyone's differences because lots of students of all backgrounds put on a facade when at school.

Dr. Brown's point was executed perfectly.

Anonymous

I didn't really get his overall point. There were a few jokes he made that to me seemed quite inappropriate, specifically the 'I love you, but not in a prison way' and when he mentioned being aroused by intelligent people. Also, looking on his website, the description on one of the shirts he sells, to me, seems pretty sexist.

Description on a shirt with a man climbing up an apple tree reads: "Doc positively uses the simile of 'Girls are like apples on trees, the best ones are on the top of the tree.' (Makes an ideal gift from school administrators to young ladies who forget to appropriately cover the 4 B's - Br@*t, Back, B*#t, & Belly (sic))."

Kiersten Simpson '23

It all felt very heteronormative. I felt like all of the relationship advice mainly pertained to male/female relationships.

The whole sapio-sexual bit opened up with 'people are calling themselves a lot of things these days,' which felt like he was degrading the LGBTQ+ community. Also, liking intelligent people is a preference, not a sexuality.

Along a similar line, the thing he said that was along the lines of "I can love you...and not in a prison way" also just felt weird. If I remember correctly, he was speaking to a sophomore in high school.

The 'Share the apple' quote felt very degrading. Even if he finished with 'if the apple is willing to be shared!' it still felt like a cheap joke. The 'I'm going to only love God as much as I love you' line didn't really feel necessary, as he does not know the religious background of the school.

Overall, I felt like he was trying to be edgy and it didn't land at all.

At Korean Garden, Sushi is King

By GABE GERRY

Hiding in the shadows of the MCLA's dorms lies the restaurant Korean Garden. A block or two behind the North Adams Movieplex, the restaurant is removed from the traffic and congestion of the downtown MASS MoCA area. Although it is nice to be away from the hustle and bustle, its subpar location causes it to lose many prospective patrons.

Armed with the knowledge and understanding of owning and running a restaurant, Yong and Jenny Pae opened Korean Garden in early 2016. They had previously been a part of a small Korean eatery in Boston. Since it opened, Korean Garden has been a hotspot with locals due to the low prices and delicious meals. MCLA students, who just have to cross the street for a quick meal, are also quick to flock to the storefront.

Upon first glance, Korean Garden looks a bit unassuming. The simplicity of the beige outside continues inside with a plain interior consisting of a long sushi bar and a series of tables lined up against the wall. Larger tables can be found at the back of the restaurant. As you enter you are greeted by a Maneki-Neko (literally meaning beckoning cat) and small bamboo plants. Adorning the walls are photos of sushi next to posters advertising Budweiser, and a TV behind the sushi bar has an Arkansas State football game on with the volume muted. Luckily, more was invested in the food than in the decor.

Although named Korean Garden, the restaurant also proudly serves Japanese cuisine. The menu is about half Japanese delights like udon and maki and half Korean classics like bulgogi and kimchi.

Almost immediately after sitting down we were greeted by Jenny, our server, who came bearing a wide smile and five free starters. This is the Korean Garden equivalent to the pre-appetizer bread and butter traditionally served at other restaurants. There was seasoned broccoli, cucumbers, beans and tempura fried sweet potato, all of which were delicious and a well-appreciated bonus.

After discreetly looking around at neighboring tables, bi bim bap, a typical Korean rice dish, seemed to be the most popular order. Ordering bi bim bap is somewhat like ordering fajitas at a Mexican restaurant. It comes in a sizzling, oversized, stone bowl and is clearly fresh out of the kitchen. Aside from presentation, the bi bim bap itself was delicious. With

four "base" options available (salmon, beef-chicken, tofu, and pork), there are choices for everyone. Best of all, like most of the items served at Korean Garden, it is affordable — just \$13.

Another favorite at Korean Garden is bulgogi: translated to "fire meat" in Korean, the house's "special sauce" elevates it to another level. With choices of salmon, pork, or beef, the bulgogi comes with a plethora of steamed veggies. Just like the bi bim bap, the bulgogi is a large portion—big enough for two—that is equally as cheap, meaning that every budget will leave with a full stomach. And as far as bulgogis go, look no farther than Korean Garden, because you are not going to find one as good anywhere else in the Berkshires.

The reason to venture out to North Adams for Korean and Japanese food is the sushi, and there is no shortage of that at Korean Garden. There are about twenty different types of maki rolls, in addition to five other sushi from the bar. There is a maki for everyone. From the Boston themed Bruins, Red Sox, and Celtics makis to a crunch and even a chicken crunch, everyone will find one to love. The MCLA roll with surprisingly fresh spicy salmon and avocado was superior to the deep-fried Williams roll. Both rolls consisted of six pieces that were priced at \$8 and \$9, respectively. The sushi chef at the bar seemed to be continually churning out perfect rolls. The Pae's have sushi down, and it reigns supreme at Korean Garden.

Perhaps the dark horse of the night was the Udon. Five varieties of the noodle soup would satisfy eaters of all types: su-udon, shrimp tempura udon, vegetable udon (in vegetable broth as well), seafood udon, and udon noodles in a spicy Korean broth with both vegetables and seafood. The vegetable udon was nearly perfect, with an authentic yet basic broth and an array of fresh vegetables that all came together in one great dish. It is such a stripped down staple that should find its way onto your table at Korean Garden.

Jenny did an amazing job and served everything with a big infectious smile. Her and Yong's experience can be seen in the way they efficiently run the restaurant, and they have done a great job over the past years at creating a perfect little spot. With forgiving prices across the board and a diverse and delicious menu, put Korean Garden on your list of places you must go. ■

High School, Eagles Bands Collaborate in Evening Concert

By JOHN SKAVLEM

The high school band collaborated with local Eagles band this month for an evening performance open to members of the community. Festivities kicked off with three pieces played by the High School Band, before the Eagles Band stepped in and played their three pieces, one of which was accompanied by a slideshow dedicated to those who have served and given their lives for our nation.

After each band performed separately, they shared the stage and played together, with members ranging in age from fourteen to ninety-four.

"The janitors initially believed we would not have enough room on the stage," band director Lyndon Moors said.

The Eagles band can be traced back to the year 1936 and "is the oldest continuing performance ensemble in the Berkshires," according to their website. A previous mayor of Pittsfield declared it "the official band of the city." The Eagles perform various concerts throughout the year, including a holiday concert and a Williams College alumni concert.

Eagles Band conductor Carl Jenkins was already in familiar territory working with high schoolers.

"I did high school band work for 36 years in North Adams," he said. "I still get

comments from some of the Eagles people who say I go into teacher mode."

Jenkins had worked with Moors when they directed the Drury and Mount Greylock bands, respectively.

Organizing the collaboration posed logistical challenges for both bands.

"We only had one rehearsal together, only one hour," Jenkins said. The Eagles band only had two of their own rehearsals for the performance, as many of the members come from their day jobs to meet, making rehearsals more difficult to organize than simply a high school extracurricular, Jenkins said. "We avoided all trainwrecks, which is always the goal for us," he said.

"This is the largest group to collaborate with us," Moors said. "We have had smaller ensembles of Mount Greylock alumni, but this was the only time we have had two full concert bands on stage at the same time."

When asked about the most important contribution the Eagles members brought to the younger members of the Greylock Band, Moors said that "it shows them that they have a lifetime opportunity to participate in music. You can do this for your entire life and appreciate good music and play well." ■

Little Women, Big Impact

By MADDY ART

Since Greta Gerwig's recent film adaptation of Little Women came out I have seen it in theaters three times, and if you've had a conversation with me since I first saw it, you've probably heard me talk about it. This movie is a work of art on its own, telling a familiar, poignant and emotional story through beautiful shots, smart dialogue, and remarkable acting. But more than that, Gerwig gives audiences dynamic, complicated, and human women and female relationships that fundamentally redefine what it means to be a little woman.

Louisa May Alcott's Little Women was published in the late 1860s. I often find that in literature published that long ago—or films set that long ago—the characters often come across as aloof and unrelated. The dialogue and emotions feel tempered, and I find myself asking, "did they actually talk like that?" Little Women was one of the first books I felt truly proud to read, and I remember trying to relate and see myself in each of the March sisters. In Gerwig's adaptation, though, relating required no effort. Meg (Emma Watson), Jo (Saoirse Ronan), Beth (Eliza Scanlan), Amy (Florence Pugh), and their mother, Marmee (Laura Dern), are women you know—your mom, your sister, you.

The Marches are messy. They wrestle and throw pillows on Christmas morning. When Marmee asks them to give their breakfasts to a poor family nearby, they feel conflicted. They want things that other girls have, even when they are impractical. And while trading limes in the style of Amy and her classmates may not be all the rage at Mount Greylock, every teenager can understand the often ridiculous pain of wanting material status symbols that others have and you do not.

Jo March, the second oldest sister, defines herself by her fierce independence, her passionate feminism, and her writing. She is smart, obstinate, and convinced that her will can solve any problem. Jo projects strength, through and through, and she works to maintain that projection. She spends the movie asserting that she will never get married and cuts off and sells her hair for money for Marmee to visit her father in a display of her lack of interest in looks.

After Jo cuts her hair, once she is alone, she weeps. Despite her belief that women should not be focused on looks, she wants to feel pretty. And after Jo tells Marmee that she is sick of the expectations that women will care only about marriage, she confesses that she is incredibly lonely. Despite her insistence that more than her heart's needs are fulfilled, she wants her heart's needs to

be fulfilled. Jo wants to be the independent and steely feminist, but she is also vulnerable and emotional. She longs to be allowed to be simultaneously angry, and tender, and loved, and Gerwig allows it. Gerwig's characters, even more so than Alcott's, are nuanced.

Because we see all of this messiness come to life in a fresh and modern way on screen, audiences not only feel that the characters in front of them are real, but also that the young women in the 1860s were messy, too.

This phenomenon extends to and redefines the very concept of femininity.

When men are the gatekeepers, women's stories are not always told.

The March sisters consider themselves ladies, but to them, an acting "club for ladies" can mean dressing up like men and making lots of noise. Many girls today grew up playing in a similarly rowdy fashion, at least in some capacity, and seeing that girls taking up space is not new is powerful.

Gerwig's adaptation is framed with a vignette of Jo selling her writing: first just stories, but eventually the book Little Women itself. When the male publisher reads her manuscript, he rejects it as boring until his daughters find it and urge him to publish it—both factual to Alcott's story and a valuable reminder that when men are the gatekeepers, women's stories are not always told.

Once he does decide to publish, is incensed that Jo remained unmarried in the first draft. So Gerwig's Jo revises, essentially writing Alcott's Jo into marriage so the book would be published, resolving the incongruity in Alcott's novel between Jo's defining distaste for marriage and her ultimate fate as a married woman. "Marriage," Gerwig's Jo remarks, "has always been an economic proposition for women, even in fiction."

With this delicate maneuver, Gerwig has allowed Jo to remain true to herself as a character by not actually marrying and to Alcott's novel, by writing herself into marriage. And even while Jo is changing her fate in writing, she is advocating for her pay and ownership of her book. It doesn't get much more "Jo" than that.

If old portrayals of women depicted them as prim, proper, and focused on a husband, that's because that's what the men in charge of such portrayals wanted to see, not because that's how the women were or felt. Gerwig gives space for these portrayals—thankfully, because we know that they do occupy a space in our world—while still showing that women in the 1860s were no less dynamic and complex than women now. ■

*Record the news through pictures
and words.*

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Twin Advice: Twice as Nice

By CLARA MCWEENY

Charlie will be leaving Greylock this semester and attending SEGL, a policy school in Washington, DC. Because he's really who we want as an elected official--if all you care about is planes and running and the occasional Chobani yogurt. Not to worry, he'll be back to school next fall (ugh), but his absence will leave a hole in The Echo staff, and has made me realize that doing twin advice alone might be impossible. And also wouldn't make a ton of sense. Sad, but I will not miss the weekly fights we get in about what to fight about in twin advice. I will also not miss his really loud chewing at 6:30 in the morning. Or his weird obsession with planes. Guys, I know we joke, but it's gotten out of control. Wow. I guess there's a lot I won't miss about him. Is this going to be the best semester of my life? But, as someone who's lived with him for 16 years (make that 17. Time in the womb definitely counts), I've pretty much memorized his weird habits, midnight snacks, and generally all the really annoying things he does. So, readers, this segment isn't as much advice to a definitely not fictional student at Greylock, as it usually is, but some tips for his soon-to-be roommates in DC:

1. He will blame you for everything he loses. And he loses a lot of things.

A daily occurrence in the McWeeny household is Charlie running around, screaming about whatever object he has lost. Ask Nico to imitate the sound he

makes when he's realized he's misplaced, say, his permit. It's pretty funny (and accurate). Here's how it usually goes down: it's 7:13 pm, exactly 4 minutes before we HAVE to leave for the bus. Charlie can't find his laptop. He swears he left it on the

times. Consider yourself warned.

2. He never gets up when his alarm goes off. Ever.

When my alarm goes off in the morning,



dining room table last night. So, the only logical explanation for this occurrence is that Nico must have stolen it. Yelling ensues. Until his laptop is found, usually by Lucy (the only even-tempered one), in his backpack. Where he swore he checked five

I roll over, hit snooze, and then fall back into a half-sleep type thing (NREM-1? Tom?) until I absolutely have to wake up. Charlie, on the other hand, does not hit his snooze button. And that's not to say that he just springs out of bed, ready for the day.

No. Every single morning, without fail, he sleeps through his alarm. No one else sleeps through it, of course, meaning that Lucy and I spend the first 15 minutes of our morning listening to a sound that will literally haunt me for the rest of my life. I'd like to say that in DC he'll change, and actually will jump out of bed, but I'd be lying. He will 100% sleep through at least one Supreme Court session. It's possible that you'll have to nudge (shove?) him awake. Enjoy the alarm. (I think it's called Illuminate?)

3. It's possible I will miss him. Just a little bit though.

Surprise! Admittedly, this is a bit off brand for the Twin Advice(TM) franchise. But recently I've been told we need to get friendlier--as if that was possible. Whoops. Still trying to master this whole kindness thing. But, really, anyone who happens to have Charlie as a roommate for the next four months should consider themselves lucky. He is annoying and mean and pre-tentious but he is also my best friend. I can't imagine going through the last 16 years of life without him, and I can't wait to see the amazing things he does in DC. I also can't wait for his run for House, his Senate campaign, and finally, his Presidential candidacy (although I think being president of United might come first). Sometimes, being a twin really is twice as nice.

Sincerely,
Clara ■

When Snow Melts and Waxes Burn

Continued from Page 4.

pic venue in a new area where they had to literally clear cut national forests to put in alpine ski areas, and they had to divert waterways to put in Olympic villages. So much environmental destruction, just for the sake of making a few dollars for their sponsors."

Ski activists also face another, less direct obstacle: Skiing isn't always green. For high school and college skiers, races often mean long drives, especially when teams must make the trek to resorts that can make their own snow. Plane rides to World Cup races and water-based snowmaking make for a sport that isn't always environmentally friendly.

"Cutting carbon footprint is something people try to pay attention to, but it's also something that I haven't seen that active of an effort for in the ski community," former Bowdoin skier Sam Shaheen said. "We're a sport whose fate is tied to climate change, but we're also dependent upon carbon."

Greylock senior captain Miriam Bakija noted that skiers may have a hand in climate change while bearing much less of its consequences than others.

"It's a bummer that we can't ski," Bakija said. "But it's going to be a bigger bummer as more and more people in developing countries die because of the climate crisis."

Shaheen brought up another element of skiers' role in the environment, frequently discussed quietly -- the long, carbon-backed molecules stretched out by as many as eight Fluorine atoms. Or, in less, chemical terms, the fluoros.

Waxed On, Never Waxed Off

Nearly a decade ago, a team of Swedish researchers at Orebro University tracked eight world cup wax technicians' blood levels of Perfluorooctanoic acid (or PFOA -- a chemical found in some of the fastest ski waxes). An unexposed, or control, group was found to have on average 2.7 nanograms of PFOA per milligram of blood. The wax techs boasted a number over 40 times larger -- 112.

Just this month, another group of Swedish scientists identified eleven waxes still containing significant levels of PFOA. Researchers involved said the wax manufacturers had claimed that they had moved on from PFOAs, but the waxes tested contained up to 1,200 times the amount of

PFOA allowed under a new threshold set to take effect this summer.

In a 2019 report, Food and Water Watch said that "these chemicals are forever," referring to PFOAs and similar substances. The acid stays in the environment, and doesn't leave.

"These substances continue to persist in the environment and in our bodies even after a partial phase-out of their production in the United States," the report read. "They're resistant to even the most advanced water treatment technologies."

Fluorinated waxes -- a broader category, the fastest of which include PFOA -- have endured criticism from coaches, scientists, and officials for years, especially for their health and environmental footprints. Bloomberg's Will Donahue wrote of the sport's "Dirty Little Fluorinated Secret," describing fluoros as an addiction. The EPA has been investigating the substances, and has categorized the waxes as in violation with US toxic chemical legislation. Leagues across the world have set bans.

Vermont has set a ban, said Greene. So has New York. So has the Massachusetts state team qualifier. The European Union is banning the import, sale, and production of PFOAs in 2020 and fluorocarbons, the acid's close sibling, two years later.

Early this winter, the International Ski Federation (FIS) announced a ban on the waxes for competitions starting in the 2020-2021 season.

And 41 days after the pros voted to de-fluorinate, the Berkshire Nordic Ski League followed suit.

"It seemed to us like a no-brainer," Greene said. "Why would we ever continue to use it?"

Greene said once league coaches started hearing about the bans in Europe and gained access to more information regarding environmental and health concerns of fluorinated waxes, they met to discuss. Greene and fellow Greylock coach Hiram Greene pushed for a Berkshire League ban. "Coach [Hiram] Greene said that even if the league doesn't ban them, Mt. Greylock's not using them," Greene said.

Also at the meeting was Bazzano, who said the ban was a frantic decision.

"I was the antagonist," Bazzano said. "The decision was made quickly. I feel that it was made without all the facts. It was more like 'it's a good idea, let's just do it.' I just didn't feel like that was a decision to make that quickly."

Bazzano said he questioned some of the information used to decide.

"In Norway, only U16 is using fluoro," he said. "Everybody above U16 is using fluoro. That's kind of information we got afterwards. We've been using Low Fluoros for 30 years. We just didn't see health issues right away; we didn't see it as an issue. Health issues have been reported for wax techs on the world tour, but I think they're in a different element than we are."

"In my mind, that was ridiculous," Greene said, referring to such dissent at the meeting. "We don't know everything, we're still learning about them. Just inhaling the particulates is really bad for people."

Greene said concern over the ban also originated from financial reasons--that a coach had already bought fluorinated waxes for the season.

Senior captain Miriam Bakija said that avoiding the ban for financial reasons would be "really stupid."

"In the long run, regardless of whether you've bought them already, everybody's going to be saving money by not using these super expensive fluorinated waxes," she said.

Green noted that eliminating fluorinated waxes can level the playing field financially.

"It should be a concern," she said, "because it shouldn't be that the skiers with the most money get to be the fastest on skis."

"Some people and teams can't afford to buy fluorinated waxes," Bakija said. "And in a sport in which so much of your race depends on the equipment you have, it's nice to level the playing field in some way."

In the end, the league voted to ban the use of all fluorinated products from racing. According to the new rules, skiers must wax as a team with NF (non-fluoro) and their skis must be stored overnight in a consolidated location.

Fifty percent of respondents to the Echo's survey said they strongly supported the league's ban on fluorinated waxes. Only one respondent reported they strongly disapproved of the decision. Reasoning largely captured the sentiment of the coaches who voted on the ban.

"If there are ways to help the environment then we should support that," one respondent said. "Communities all over should do their best to not contribute to the climate crisis," another noted.

Skiers also appeared to be concerned about the health impact, saying that "it is good to lower risky health factors" and noting that "without proper ventilation kids can be exposed to toxic fumes."

But other skiers noted the complexity of the situation.

"I definitely support the decision, but it does raise some issues in the sport," one said. "It makes it far easier to cheat the system now by using the better wax that has been banned because there is no way to actually regulate what people are putting on their skis."

Moving Forward

Bakija said she is expecting the ski community to do more in the future to reduce skiers' environmental footprint and keep the sport safe.

"We're going in the right direction in terms of banning fluorinated waxes," she said, "but there are definitely more steps. Do World Cup skiers need fifteen pairs of skis? Not really. Do we really need even CH waxes? Probably not. As long as the playing field is level, it's still going to be a good sport. You don't lose what's great about skiing when you lose the waxes."

Survey respondents shared similar sentiments, noting that they "really have never seen that great of a difference," and therefore that there's no reason not to move forward with the bans.

Beyond waxes, Newell said the ski community should do several things to ensure a future for the sport. Less infrastructure should be built, and large events like the upcoming Beijing Olympics should move toward carbon-neutrality, he said.

But he's also looking to see a change in the culture of the sport.

"We need to breathe some new blood into these organizations," he said. "There's going to be an insurgence of younger athletes who are much more socially conscious and mentally conscious than the ones before them. I have no doubt that the changes will happen over time."

Greene said she hopes skiers at the high school and professional level will set good examples.

"When you reach the highest level of your sport, you have a responsibility to be a role model and activist," she said. "We don't just want good skiers. We want good people." ■