

The Greylock Echo

December Edition

Mount Greylock - Williamstown Mass

December 8, 2022

AP Exams Made Optional for Seniors in One Year "Experiment"

By LUCY MCWEENY

Mount Greylock Regional School has made Advanced Placement (AP) exams optional for seniors for the 2022-2023 school year. Excluding 2020, this is the first time that AP tests have not been required for any Mount Greylock students. Until this point, every student taking an AP course had to take the AP exam in the spring.

In removing the exam requirements for seniors, Mount Greylock's decision signals a shift away from the traditional relationship that schools hold with the College Board. "Hopefully, it gives us some insight into how we approach AP testing and how we approach testing and standardized assessments in general," Mount Greylock principal Jacob Schutz said.

This decision was made by the administration in conversation with curriculum leaders. The idea of taking away exam requirements has been on the table for years, but only now has the school actually brought it into action. AP Language and Composition teacher and English curriculum leader Rebecca Tucker-Smith said, "[The decision] comes from a feeling of discomfort of there being this external entity that students are required to engage with in order to take the most rigorous level of classes."

Tucker-Smith said different versions of how to approach AP testing have come up, ranging from keeping the exam requirement for all students to getting rid of it entirely. "This became our something in the middle," she said.

The main reasons behind making AP exams optional for seniors is based on the stress that the exam can cause. "Some think that it's sort of too much pressure senior year," Schutz said. "We just know that there's a lot of angst and anxiety when it comes to standardized testing, and there's a lot of standardized testing that is pushed on us." In taking away the exam requirements for seniors, the school hopes to relieve some of that stress.

As of right now, the change to test requirements is not necessarily permanent. In coming years, Mount Greylock still has the option to revert back to requiring the test for all students. However, the school could also expand to not requiring the test for other grades as well. Schutz said, "It's a pilot sort of experiment."

We're going to do it in a controlled manner, and we're going to assess and take it from there and see what's best for us."

Resistance to making the exam optional in the past has largely had to do with the credits students could receive in college if they scored well on the exam. However, this idea doesn't hold as much influence anymore. AP Literature teacher Blair Dils said, "Quite honestly, [students] are not getting the kinds of college credit that they used to get."

As it is the first year with this new approach to the AP exam, the question remains of how it will affect different AP classes at Mount Greylock. Some teachers, like Dils, do not necessarily teach the test to begin with, meaning this decision won't have a huge influence on their course.

Additionally, since most students have to pay for the AP exam, this could be a way for people to save money. Dils said, "If that's going to cut back on the amount of dollars that families are spending, I think it's a great decision."

Senior Sam Tucker-Smith said, "I think it's fabulous that it's not a requirement to pay these obscene amounts of money to go take a mandatory test."

Seniors still may choose to take exams. Subsequently, some teachers have raised concerns about teaching their class to two groups of students, one that will take the exam and the other that won't.

"I worry that it's going to be a kind of two-track environment in the class, especially when we're doing test taking skills like multiple choice and free response questions," AP Psychology teacher Tom Ostheimer said. "However, I do like this idea that the students now have the option."

For many students, the idea of no longer requiring the exam for seniors poses both new opportunities as well as constraints. The main driver of this hesitation is whether or not a student who does not take the AP exam will have to take a final in the class.

In past years, students in AP classes usually are not given a final exam, and instead just have to complete a final project, taking away a lot of stress. However, there is now the possibility that

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1 in 650: An Interview with Olivia Zoito

By MAGGIE NICHOLS



Photo Courtesy of @mgmounties Instagram

The Greylock Echo sat down with ninth grader Olivia Zoito to talk about her project which featured Tribute Stones for victims of 9/11 on the front steps of the school. Zoito discussed her goals with painting them and her involvement with the nonprofit organization Project 351.

Echo: Can you tell me a little bit about the 9/11 Tribute Stones?

Olivia Zoito: The Tribute Stones are the stones I painted for the fallen heroes of 9/11. They are the names of the people that died either in the buildings or in Afghanistan afterwards.

E: About how long did it take to put them together?

OZ: I would like to say around 7 hours.

E: What made you decide to take on this project?

OZ: Project 351 put out a bunch of project options for 9/11 tributes. You could paint stones, you could create care packages, but I chose stones. The people I did the stones for were

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Judge Martin discusses an undefeated regular season on the Drury-Mount Greylock co-op football team

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Taylor Swift's

Midnights

Kiersten Simpson evaluates Swift's song writing and production in her new album

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NEWS

Shakespeare Fall Festival: Community and Expression

By ANABEL GONZALES

For many students, the Shakespeare unit in English class is an unpopular one. Shakespeare plays are hard to read as they have humor, slang, insults, and plots that were written in the 17th century. But a select group of students in the Berkshires and at Mount Greylock look forward to Shakespeare all year.

As the school year began and extracurriculars started back up, Shakespeare and Company, based in Lenox MA, returned to Mount Greylock for the annual Fall Festival of Shakespeare. Fall Festival is a nine week affair where directors come to high schools and produce a Shakespeare play with students. These shows are first performed at the high schools, but shortly after, all Shakespeare shows from the area perform at Tina Packer Playhouse in Lenox, Massachusetts over one weekend.

On Friday, November 18, at Tina Packer Playhouse, Mount Greylock performed *As You Like It*, a romantic play written about upper class French lovers who find themselves together in the woods after mishaps and banishments. Lenox, Mount Everett, Pittsfield, Taconic, Lee and Monument also performed their respective shows that weekend.

Shakespeare cast members consistently comment on the close nature of this program. "Shakespeare is a community," says junior Levi Cohen-McFall, who has been doing Shakespeare since seventh grade. Cohen-McFall said he "appreciates the friendships [he's] made in other schools as well" thanks to the festival piece in Lenox at the end of the production.

Shakespeare appeals to many students

because of its casual auditioning and uniqueness. Olivia McKeon, a senior and first-time participant in Shakespeare, said, "I've done theater a lot, but it's a very different vibe, and I like it."



The Fall Festival focuses on having fun, as the end of the season performances are not competitive but made to celebrate acting, each other, and art. Junior Luka Lash-St. John said that their favorite part is the chance to "express yourself without any judgment."

According to cast members, Shakespeare Fall Festival is just a place for fun, expression, and for many, a place where you can be open and yourself. 9th grader Yeshe Rai said he "really enjoys going to rehearsal even when [he's] not called in because it makes [him] so happy and there's always someone to talk to."

"I never feel more open than when I'm at Shakespeare," Senior Cailean Fippinger said. ♦



Photos Courtesy of Clarissa Louis

Seniors Create Photography Club

By KRISHIV MALHOTRA

At the start of the 2022-23 school year, the Photography Club was created at Mount Greylock Regional School. The club, founded by seniors Clarissa Louis and Bryn Angelini, was started for students who want to sharpen their photography skills by capturing events at Mount Greylock and in the community.

"We are so excited to be starting this club at Greylock, which will hopefully continue for a long time," said Louis.

"[Photography] teaches students to learn about photographs in a bunch of different environments," said Angelini.

Karin Stack, an art teacher at Greylock who specializes in photography, is the advisor for the club. The club is an extension of Stack's photography courses at Greylock, and she hopes that photography is something that students can carry into their future.

"[Photography] is a great real-world skill to have, and everyone takes photos every day, but it's hard to capture good images for events, which is where we plan to help," said Stack.

Club meetings are mostly casual, and in meetings, students discuss what events are coming up and what events they will take pictures at. They also plan which specific camera settings

and techniques should be used for each event.

So far, the club has taken photos of the band, orchestra, and chorus concert and of Spirit



Club co-founder Bryn Angelini's photograph from Mount Greylock's *Get Acquainted* Concert in October 2022.

Week, which both took place in late October. Angelini took the majority of the photos for the concert, and all members took pictures for Spirit

Week. Junior Tommy Art has been taking pictures at many sporting events, including soccer, volleyball, and football. Junior Jackie Brannan took photos alongside Louis and Angelini at the recent Shakespeare performances at the school.

The members of the club have many goals for the school year. They want to take pictures for the yearbook, specifically of events like concerts, Greylock Talks, and spirit-related things, and have these photos showcased on the school website and around the school on walls and TV monitors. By the end of the year, the club members hope to set up a system where any student can get pictures taken by one of them.

"I love getting students involved in community events and in supporting each other," said Stack. ♦

NEWS

AP Exams Policy Cont.

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seniors in AP classes who do not take the exam might have to take a final exam, which would influence their final grade in that class. This decision of what form of a final to administer is up to the individual teacher.

Although senior Foster Savitsky supports the decision to make exams optional, he does not think that he will take a final over an AP exam. "I definitely prefer taking an AP test over a final the way it's structured right now because a final impacts your grade and an AP test doesn't and it allows you to get credit for a college class," Savitsky said.

Despite the possibility of finals influencing decisions about whether to take AP exams or not, many seniors see numerous positive benefits to being able to choose. "So much of the school system is test oriented," senior Annie Art said, "and I think not having this overhanging pressure to take this test and do well on it really gives the space for students to actually want to learn the material and really participate in the class on their own terms and want to be engaged."

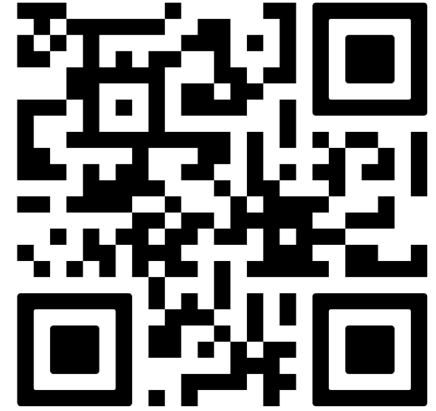
For Rebecca Tucker-Smith, though, there is

a remaining logistical problem. Students have to decide whether or not they are taking the exam by November, only a few months into the school year. Tucker-Smith said, "The way it's playing out is tricky because they have to make this choice very early."

"The only reason to take the exam is if it's going to help you in terms of placement at a school or getting out of a semester or something," Tucker-Smith said, "but [students] have to decide before they really know where they're going."

This year is a sort of test run in regards to AP classes and exams at Mount Greylock. Depending on how it goes, the school could move to make AP exams optional for other grades and evaluate more closely its relationship with these classes and the College Board.

According to Schutz, the main idea of getting rid of these tests is to continue to push students to learn at higher levels. "We want to continue to challenge our students, whether that's through AP classes, college classes, or college-like classes that we're teaching at Mount Greylock that aren't necessarily AP classes." ♦



Read about the Film Club and American Sign Language Club formed at Mount Greylock this year

Williams Students, Local Business Owners Participate in Greylock Talks

By KNOWL STROUD

On Tuesday, October 18, the Greylock Talks series returned to Mount Greylock in full form. Charles Bonenti, a Berkshire Immigrant Center employee, and Kyungmin Yook, Williams College '25, spoke in the MG auditorium about immigration and resources in the Berkshires. On Friday, October 21, a new series called "Entrepreneur Fridays" kicked off. Three local small business owners, Elinor Goodwin, Jack Miller, and Lindsay Neathawk, shared their experiences with entrepreneurship and local business in Berkshire County.

The Greylock Talks was organized by Student Council representative Caleb Low. The ultimate goal of Greylock Talks is to cover student interests that may not be included in the standard curriculum by utilizing local contacts and resources.

"Historically, Greylock Talks has been a program organized by the students, specifically Student Council members, to bring in members from the community or Greylock alums to talk about their profession, their story, or their lives," Low said.

The first speaker in this edition, Charles Bonenti, is the volunteer coordinator at the Berkshire Immigrant Center (BIC). Bonenti explained the family ties that caused him to start volunteering, as well as the work the center is doing around the region. Although BIC normally restricts themselves to legal work and relies on referrals to other agencies to provide full assistance to immigrants, they have begun to provide more holistic backing to the Afghan families displaced due to the recent Taliban takeover.

Bonenti's trip to the school was dual-purpose as well; he received a check for over \$1,000 from eighth graders Lillian Howe, Abbe Ali-Nixon, and Esme Aalberts, who raised money for the Center over the past summer selling homemade cookies.

Kyungmin Yook is a senior at Williams who recently completed a paper titled "Assessing the Resources Available to Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Berkshire County." In her presentation, Yook outlined the many challenges faced by those immigrating to the Berkshires. Yook outlined how a simple visit to the dentist could, for a family without a car, eat up an entire day between finding bus routes, planning, and executing rapid sprints between bus stations with little room for error.

Low is already working on the next edition for Greylock Talks and is open to any and all student input on possible topics and speakers.

Organized by arts and business teacher Lisa Mendel, the new monthly Entrepreneur Fridays series puts a twist on the traditional Greylock Talks structure while maintaining the goal of expanding educational opportunities for students.

On October 21, Elinor Goodwin from the Williamstown Print Shop, Lindsey Neathawk from Neathawk Designs Carved Signs, and Jack Miller from Jack Miller Contractors, shared advice, told stories, and conversed with students interested in business. On November 4, Matt Wooliver of DJ Wooliver and Son, Sadie Swicer of Sadie Elizabeth Photography, and Sarah and Greg Holland of Bloom Meadows spoke. ♦



Photo Courtesy of @mgmounties Instagram

NEWS

1 in 650: Olivia Zoito

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assigned to me. I also think I wanted to enjoy the process more so than feeling like I had to do it. I thought it was really fun.

E: What did you learn from this project?

OZ: I think something I took from it was learning the true meaning of what it means to lose something or someone. It was a lot about understanding loss and how those people suffered, but also the courage they used.

E: Could you talk about your involvement with Project 351 and the organization itself?

OZ: Project 351 is built up of leaders from the 351 cities and towns in Massachusetts. We implement service projects to make a more closely knit community. We bring the community together through these projects. My teachers and principal both elected me in eighth grade to be the Project 351 leader.

E: Is there anything else you would like readers to know about your project?

OZ: I will be continuing Project 351 throughout high school. I am not done yet! ♦

A Breakdown of Ballot Question 1

By JENNAH SIMPSON

In early November, Massachusetts once again arrived at the polls to vote on midterm races and ballot questions. Question 1, nicknamed the “Fair Share” Amendment, was a hot topic in the state. The basis of this proposed tax raise is straightforward: a 4 percent increase on incomes over one million dollars, with the money specifically designated to support transportation and education in the state of Massachusetts. 52 percent of voters in the state voted “Yes” on this question, putting the new tax raise in effect.

According to the Executive Office of Administration and Finance, the tax raise could have a significant impact on those with a taxable income over one million dollars. For a small portion of those people, it could raise their taxes by as much as 80 percent. It could increase the state’s budget by 1.2 billion dollars. However, the Office of Administration and Finance admits that these numbers may vary wildly from year to year.

People who are for the amendment say that the increase will help the underfunded parts of the Commonwealth’s economy. They also say that for those who have to pay the increased tax, it would be a small enough amount that it would not have a large effect on their overall wealth. The money would be constitutionally required to go to the places that are listed in the question.

“We can fix our roads, expand access to vocational training, and make public colleges more affordable,” Cynthia Roy, who works for Fair Share Massachusetts, wrote to the Secretary of the Commonwealth. “Excellent roads and schools help our small businesses grow, create new jobs, and build strong communities. Question 1 means creating opportunity for everyone.”

Those who oppose the tax raise argue that the tax increase will hurt small businesses and

drive them out of the Commonwealth. They also worry that the money that is said to be guaranteed for the Commonwealth’s schools and infrastructure will not actually go to those groups. They are concerned that it will either be cut or moved to another section of the budget. They also argue that with inflation being high, now is not the time to raise taxes.

Paul D’Amore, the Small Business Representative at the Coalition to Stop the Tax Hike Amendment, said, “Question 1 nearly doubles the state income tax rate on tens of thousands of small-business owners, large employers, and retirees. Question 1 treats one-time earnings—the sale of homes, investments, businesses, pensions, and inheritances—as income. This would suddenly force many residents into the new, very high tax bracket, depleting the nest eggs of small-business owners and longtime homeowners whose retirement depends on their investments.”

Voting for and against the amendment picked up a large list of endorsements. Both Massachusetts Senators, Ed Markey (D) and Elizabeth Warren (D), Governor-Elect Maura Healey (D), and the Massachusetts Teachers Association all endorsed a “Yes” to this question before the election. Former candidate for Governor Geoff Diehl (R), the Pioneer Institute, the Massachusetts Association of Realtors, and the Citizens for Limited Taxation all endorsed a “No” answer.

In Williamstown, 75 percent of people voted “Yes” while 25 percent voted “No.” In Lanesborough, 64 percent voted “Yes” and 36 percent voted “No.” In Hancock, the “No” vote won with 53 percent of votes while the “Yes” side only received 47 percent. In New Ashford, 59 percent of voters selected “Yes” and 41 percent said “No.” See below for more extensive election results. ♦

State and County Midterm Election Results

The 2022 Midterm Elections took place on November 8th. Here is a compilation of statewide and local election results. Results and descriptions courtesy of Politico and New York Times.

Governor

*Maura Healey (D) - 63.5%
Geoff Diehl (R) - 34.9%
Kevin Reed (Libertarian) - 1.6%

House: 1st District

*Richard Neal (D) - 61.4%
Dean Martilli (R) - 38.6%

Secretary of State

Rayla Campbell (R) - 29.6%
*William Francis Galvin (D) - 67.5%
Juan Sanchez (Green-Rainbow) - 2.9%

Attorney General

*Andrea Joy Campbell (D) - 62.6%
James McMahon (R) - 37.4%

Berkshire County District Attorney

*Timothy Shugrue (D) - 63.7%
Andrea Harrington (D) - 36.3%

Mount Greylock School Committee: Two seats available

*Carrie Greene - 2,661 votes
Christine Enderle - 1,465 votes
*Steven Miller - 1,736 votes

Question 1: Tax increase on incomes greater than \$1 million

*Yes - 52%
No - 48%

Question 2: 83 percent medical loss ratio requirement for dental insurance providers

*Yes - 71.5%
No - 28.5%

Question 3: Regulation change on number of alcohol licenses a business can own and other state liquor laws

Yes - 44.7%
*No - 55.3%

Question 4: Reinforce the right to get driver’s licenses without proof of citizenship or immigration status

*Yes - 53.7%
No - 46.3%

NEWS & FEATURES

Staff, Students Discuss Cell Phone Policy

By QUINLAN REPETTO

The first quarter of the school year is finished, but the strictness of cell phone regulations continues to be a question for teachers and administrators. Currently, teachers choose the cell phone policy in their classroom; they can be as strict or as lenient as they'd like.

The only rules set in place by the administration is a 'progression response' policy, mainly for offenses like cyberbullying or major disturbances. On the first offense, the cell phone is confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the day. On the second offense, the cell phone is again confiscated and can only be returned to the student's parent or guardian. After the third offense, the phone will be confiscated, only returned to the student's parent or guardian, and can not be brought to school for the rest of the school year.

Beyond this policy, teachers are allowed to manage cell phone usage in their class themselves. Math teacher Robert Thistle had students place their phones in a box at the front of the room. However, this was only done for the first month of the school year, and after that, Thistle told his students that he expected them to keep phones in their bag. "Humans are in some range of addiction, but the other side of the coin is that we need to use technology," Thistle said. However, he added, it's more difficult to learn math with phones out.

Chemistry teacher Faith Manary also has

students place their phones in a designated area—but only for her honors class. For her AP students, she expects them to keep them in their backpacks. Students using their phones in class "is annoying," Manary said, "but if you're going to miss stuff because you're not paying attention, that's on you."

"Humans are in some range of addiction, but the other side of the coin is that we need to use technology."

Robert Thistle

Many students disagree with the proposal of an increased restriction on cell phones, finding it unnecessary. Junior class president Vincent Welch said, "I don't think [phones are] necessary in class, but confiscating our phones isn't going to help. Break is our time, lunch is our time, it's our choice if we want to use our phones then."

"It's not like the phone is calling to me,"

said Junior Matthew Daley. "It's more that if I get distracted, I would then turn to my phone."

Vice Principal Colin Shebar advocated for a stricter policy, while still acknowledging cell phones are a "very useful tool, a very important tool... if used correctly." While he personally isn't the biggest fan of his mobile device, he also wants to try to contain cyberbullying and mindless posting. Students can delete posts but others can screenshot and repost. "It's a chain reaction that can never fully be contained again," Shebar said.

However, Shebar also wants to introduce a way of "supporting students in learning proper usage of a device like this." This would include providing instructions on time limits, correct usage, and appropriateness of behavior.

Shebar just wants the school's cell phone policy to be more proactive. According to him, one of the school's problems is that it can only address situations reactively, responding to incidents without preventing them in the first place. "It's never going to lead to the optimal result," he says. "Any time you have to be reactive instead of proactive, something's going to go wrong."

"Do I think there should be more regulations on cell phones? Probably," Shebar said. "Should there be a purpose to that regulation? Absolutely." ♦

COVID-19 Updates: Booster Shots

By CHARLOTTE HOLUBAR

The COVID-19 pandemic may have lost prominence recently in many people's lives, but the pandemic is still present in many parts of the country. Berkshire County is currently on "low alert," after being on "medium alert" for the previous four months. According to the New York Times COVID Case Tracker, an average of 15 cases per day were reported in the county this week.

As of November 27, there have been 33,279 total reported cases and 429 total deaths in Berkshire County since the beginning of the pandemic.

The vaccination of many individuals in Berkshire County against COVID-19 has proved highly effective in reducing cases. Across all ages, Berkshire County has a 78 percent vaccination rate and a 48 percent booster rate in addition to the vaccine (New York Times).

In August, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued emergency use authorizations for new bivalent COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna. Bivalent COVID vaccines include antibodies for both the original strain of COVID and the Omicron variant. The FDA believes this second "booster" shot could potentially save tens of thousands of lives if Americans received it before a winter surge. As a result, they authorized the shots ahead of the scheduled results from clinical trials in order to get them out into populations quicker.

The bivalent booster shots have had more positive results than their original booster against the BA.4 and the BA.5 Omicron sub-variant. In Harvard professor Dan Barouch's

study, "Immunogenicity of the BA.5 Bivalent mRNA Vaccine Boosters," he found that antibody concentrations were 15 times higher after the original boosters and 17 times higher after the bivalent boosters. He evaluated 15 people who got the original booster and 18 people who got the bivalent booster shots.

Protection against the different variants begins to lessen in efficiency a few months after each dosage of vaccines. However, the protection against severe outcomes like permanent side effects, hospitalizations, or death lasts dramatically longer. This is most important to vulnerable groups, such as people with weakened immune systems, underlying medical conditions, or people over 65 years of age.

At Mount Greylock, COVID-19 restrictions have lessened immensely in comparison to the 2020 and 2021 school years. There is no longer any mask requirement for students or staff at Mount Greylock or the elementary schools in the district. Students are still required to quarantine for six days if they test positive, but the school no longer conducts contact tracing. Although students participating in after-school activities were required to test last year, there are no longer any testing requirements enforced by the school. There are also no spacing requirements, meaning that students can eat lunch and sit together in classrooms as they did pre-pandemic.

According to Nurse Nichole Russell, approximately 91% of students at MG are vaccinated. During this school year, 57 students and staff have had COVID so far.

For the most part, Mount Greylock and the elementary schools are working as they did before COVID-19. Though online school, masking, and testing requirements aren't currently in place, the possibility for such practices to return because of a resurgence always looms. ♦

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NEWS & FEATURES

Student and School Councils Collaborate to Change Dress Code

By NORA LOPEZ

Two years ago, Teigan Brady and Madison Drake showed up to school and found themselves wearing matching shirts—by accident. Amused, the two seventh graders showed their teacher the coincidence. The teacher, ignoring the humorous nature of the twinning outfits, instead warned the students about their choice of attire. Brady and Drake were told that they needed to be careful wearing cropped shirts to school; their shirt was against the dress code in place at the time during the 2020-2021 academic year.

Later that day, Drake was dress coded. A different teacher saw the shirt and informed Drake that it was too short and too tight. She was asked to put on a sweat-shirt.

What had been such an unexpected and humorous coincidence turned so quickly into a sour spot of these two middle schooler's days. It left them questioning the dress code policy at the school and the outfits they had chosen to wear.

Brady and Drake's experience with the dress code is not unique. Countless others have been told to cover up or change their clothing. In 2020, the Mount Greylock Student & Family Handbook had strict rules on attire, and controversy over these set off many conversations in the community.

The previous Handbook stated that students' dress will be "clean, neat, and in good taste" and "show the respect that we encourage for self and others." The rule which affected Brady, Drake, and many other students prohibited cropped shirts: "The bottom of the top (shirt, blouse) must overlap the top of the bottoms (pants, shorts, skirt)."

During the 2021-2022 school year, two groups began to work on changing the dress code and eventually collaborated to propose changes. The Student Council, led by sophomore Polly Rhie, evaluated the effect that the dress code was having on students and raised their concerns to the administration and School Council. Simultaneously, the School Council's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging, and Acceptance (DEIBA) subcommittee, chaired by community member Bilal Ansari, was examining the language in the dress code.

Rhie began work on getting the dress code in October 2021, and in June 2022, the code was officially updated. Rhie said that the Student Council's effort to change the dress code was "greatly helped by the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging, and Acceptance (DEIBA) subcommittee of the council."

Although the project soon grew beyond the control of the Student Council members, they still had a powerful say and continued to push the project. Their main

concerns were two lines in the previous dress code: the overlapping top and bottom line, and one which read "A student's dress should show the respect that we encourage for self and others."

Ansari, chair of the School Council's DEIBA subcommittee, recalled the dress code being brought to his attention during the 2021-2022 school year.

"It became important to me once it was raised on my watch. I insisted student groups, especially marginalized voices, were heard," Ansari said. "I remember asking if our process included student groups at MGRS. Last year's [School Council] student reps made sure those voices were involved."

These efforts were successful and a new dress code was adopted recently. In the 2022-2023 Mount Greylock Student & Family Handbook, the values of the school community are stated before dress code rules are listed. The dress code "will under no circumstances be used to reinforce any gender stereotypes/binaries or increase the marginalization of any group on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, class, gender presentation or identity, or cultural observance."

The new code also eliminates "shaming tactics," such as "kneeling or bending over to check attire fit, measuring straps or skirt length, asking students to account for their attire in the classroom, and directing students to correct a dress code violation during instructional time."

The updated dress code reinforces the right of students to wear religious attire, clothing that expresses their gender identity, and clothing which they are comfortable in. It also removes the line about overlapping tops and bottoms, effectively allowing students to wear cropped shirts. However, clothing promoting hatred, profanity, alcohol, tobacco, controlled substances, pornography, or weapons is not allowed on campus.

The previous standards were "rooted in misogyny and the sexualizing of student's bodies," Rhie said. The removal of rules regarding cleanliness also created a better dress code, according to Rhie, because not all students have the resources or financial means to meet the old "clean and neat" requirements.

When asked about dress codes in general, Rhie said, "I believe they're important just as a method of reducing insensitive material and propaganda on clothing. I do dislike the part of dress codes as a whole that dictate what styles/cuts of clothing students can wear. I think people should be able to wear whatever they want so long as it does not promote hate or violence." ♦

Requirements and Choice: A Closer Look at Summer Reading

By LUCY IGOE

On the last days of school, Mount Greylock students look forward to a summer without homework and classes. But one task hangs over their heads until the first day of school the next year: summer reading. Although some students see this work as disruptive, many also find that it is important for a smooth transition into the school year.

These differing ideas regarding summer reading have prompted English teachers at Mount Greylock to reexamine the form of these assignments, particularly for middle school and college prep classes. For these English classes, students have greater freedom in choosing what their summer reading book is.

English department head and teacher Rebecca Tucker-Smith explained that the English department is handling summer reading differently based on the grade and level of the class.

"Broadly we are just trying to encourage people to keep reading. That is what we are doing with the 'your choice' assignments in college prep and middle school," Tucker-Smith said.

She added, "For honors classes, we are assigning a book so that they will have a shared experience to begin the year with something to discuss. For AP classes, we want to have those discussions and expose them to the kinds of texts they will be looking at so that they are prepared for what they are getting into."

Sophomore English teacher Jessica Cook said that it is helpful to have summer reading especially in honors classes so that students can "hit the ground running with meaningful discussion and writing."

Similarly, Blair Dils agreed that summer reading was necessary to give his classes the opportunity to start at a similar place. "There is a push in our department to allow students to choose what they want," said Dils. "We suggest a genre and hopefully, if we give more student choice, we get more buy-in from students."

This summer, Dils had his Honors English 12 class read their choice of a dystopian novel before the school year started. Senior Bryn Angelini, a student of this class, said, "I liked that a lot and I have enjoyed reading about futuristic worlds. I think summer reading is annoying but definitely a way to get everyone started and it keeps students on their toes."

Other students share similar opinions about summer reading. Junior Liam Berryman said that summer reading can add unnecessary stress, especially if the book is long. "More than one work of literature is too much to read," Berryman said. "One or two books is good."

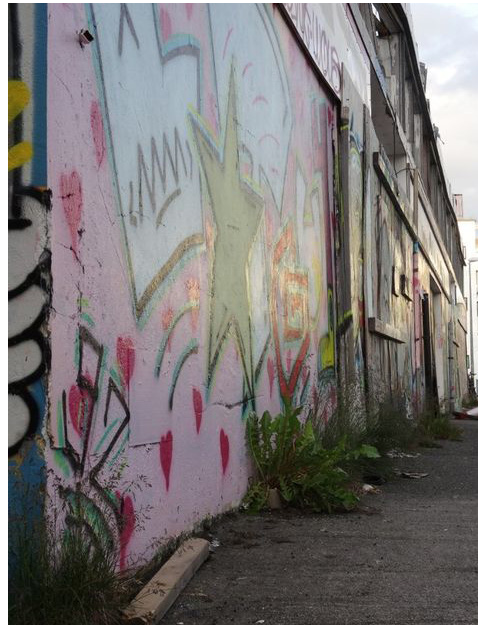
Junior Ava Anagnos said that although it could be irritating, summer reading helped her get ready for the school year. "I actually really enjoyed the essay collections that we read this year for (AP Language and Composition), particularly the one I got to choose," said Anagnos. "I thought that the one we picked on our own was a good way to keep thinking academically but it was also something that we were interested in."

Tucker-Smith said that the English department chooses the summer reading books through "lots of discussion among colleagues," creating a "low-stakes" way to test out new books. A few years ago, Tucker-Smith tested *Between the World and Me* as a summer reading book and decided to keep it in the curriculum.

Though students are gaining more freedom in choosing their books, summer reading is not a practice that will be leaving Mount Greylock anytime soon. ♦

NEWS & FEATURES

Student Art Features



Senior Dan Warren

Artist's Statement: "Over the summer I had the chance to go to Reykjavík, Iceland. While I was there, I was able to experiment with street, landscape, and wildlife photography. It was an incredible learning experience and I am so grateful for the opportunity. Since then, I have grown more and more interested in wildlife photography. I am currently saving up for some more powerful gear and hope to explore more of the wildlife photography scene." ♦



Junior Jackie Brannan

Artist's Statement: "This piece represented my feelings as a student giving up my head/identity to the school for good grades. We, as students, willingly give ourselves away everyday at school." ♦

YES Club and Administration Evaluate Recycling Habits

By FRANCES EVANS

At Mount Greylock, there were previously brown paper bags in every classroom for paper recycling. Recently, these bags switched to new blue recycling bins. After a few weeks of conversation about recycling habits at MG, the Youth Environmental Squad club and administration changed a few flaws in the system so that all items are being recycled.

"We've always been recycling our paper, that never went away," YES club president Celina Savage said. "The problem that we had was that our recycling dumpster was too small, so there was excess recycling that was being thrown out."

After talking with Principal Jacob Schutz and custodian Ryan Skrocki, Savage and the YES club advocated for a larger recycling dumpster.

The previous recycling bin was three yards. The new recycling bin, a six yard size, costs about \$15 more per month. Both dumpsters are single stream, meaning all of the recyclables are

grouped together. The blue bins recently put into classrooms can be used to recycle plastic cans, paper, and all other recyclables. However, food and water should not be put in the bins.

"We don't want to end up having our six yard be too small," Savage said. Reducing waste and getting rid of cardboard in the dumpster will help with this. [The cardboard] takes up so much space because it's from our cafeteria. All of our packaging and shipments, it's all cardboard. We are trying to figure out a way to put them into the communal recycling dumpster in Williamstown."

According to Savage, not having a big enough recycling bin "made our school more performative. By taking action and actually talking about that, we'll fix [more problems]."

Savage is hopeful for the future and thinks that YES club can make a lot of change. "The more students that take action and think about

what they're doing and how it affects the school, the more it will elevate the school," Savage said. "That's all we try to do at YES club." ♦



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FEATURES & SPORTS

John Allen and A Winning Football Culture at MG

By MOLLY SULLIVAN

On Saturday, October 15, football was played on John T. Allen field at Mount Greylock for the first time in five years. The co-op Drury-Mount Greylock football team beat Pathfinder 43-13 on Greylock grass. The team's uniforms, band, and cheerleaders were blue, but the Greylock spirit came through, with students, staff, families and community members supporting the undefeated team.

"It was an amazing experience just being able to play at Greylock and get the Greylock community back at a home game," Greylock junior and defensive lineman Judge Martin said. "The team was extremely excited to play there too because it was a big game to us and we knew many people were coming. It ended up being one of our best games of the season and one of my favorite high school football experiences."

Another Greylock team had an unforgettable experience on John T. Allen this year as well. The girls soccer team finished their season 12-0-1 when defending their home ground, effectively making them undefeated at home. They let in just 4 goals while scoring 53 on their opponents on John T. Allen.

When both the football and girls soccer teams glanced at the scoreboard, they saw big wins. But they also saw a name at the top, one unfamiliar to most current students: John T. Allen.

Looking back on my time as a Greylock soccer player, I realize how much this field has meant to me. I've celebrated massive wins and cried many tears on this field. But I've never known the history behind it and the people who planted their own memories on this field in decades past.

John T. Allen was a football coach at Mount Greylock for almost 40 years as well as an athletic director. His impact on county athletics is undeniable and can be seen here in the Greylock community even today.

What is now known as John T. Allen Field was previously just a football field with no lights and no scoreboard. All home football games were played on Saturday afternoons. Classic "Friday night lights" games didn't exist, but Friday night celebrations and gametime excitement filled this gap. These traditions also give a glimpse into who Allen was as a Coach and a community member, and what he expected from his teams.

In preparation for games, Allen had mandatory Friday night meetings that all his players attended with their parents. Film from previous games was analyzed, and the game plan for the next day's game was covered.

"For Coach, it was a way for him to know where his players were on Friday night," Jane Allen, John Allen's wife, said. "And for parents, it was a way to spend quality time with their teenage sons."

Before big games, bonfires and pep rallies took place. And then, on Saturdays when they took the field, cheerleaders and a marching band welcomed them, and the Greylock community cheered on Allen and his teams over the years.

Allen attended Drury High School before going on to play college football and baseball at Holy Cross. He was hired by Mount Greylock in

1964 as a part time Physical Education teacher and a football, basketball and baseball coach. He dropped both basketball and baseball and eventually assumed a full time position as a PE teacher and head football coach.

In 1967, Allen collected his first of two (1983) Berkshire County Coach of the Year awards and led the Mount Greylock football team to their first county championship. From there, the wins only kept coming. Allen added eight more county championships to his name, and at one point in his career, held a 41-game



Photo Courtesy of Molly Sullivan

winning streak. In 1978, Allen was named Athletic Director at Mount Greylock and brought the athletic department and student opportunities to a new level.

After 26 years of successful coaching, former players organized a John T. Allen Day on October 20, 1990. Over one hundred former players returned to Mount Greylock's campus for a Saturday game, and a commemorative rock and plaque were placed at the field. Five years later, cumulative efforts from former players, parents, and community members resulted in lights installed to the field, and to Allen's surprise, a scoreboard with his name engraved in it.

"As a family, we are extremely grateful to the players who cared enough about their Greylock experience to initiate such an effort," Jane Allen said. "The field is a testament to their love for the school and the value they place on athletics."

With the installation of lights, football's relationship with the community changed. Community support increased at Friday night games, as the Mounties were no longer competing with Williams College for fans. However, Friday night meetings and traditions were nixed, a sad reality for many families. Now, Greylock soccer

teams have the opportunity to play their biggest games at night, and this year's co-op football team was able to play a "home" game at night, as the Drury home field does not have lights.

A year after the scoreboard was unveiled, Allen was inducted into the Massachusetts High School Football Coaches Hall of Fame. But despite being 32 years into his career as a football coach, Allen was far from done. In 2000, Allen's team scored 11 points in the last 63 seconds of the game to beat Sheperd Hill for their second straight Division IIA Super Bowl title.

Finally, in 2003, Allen hung up the whistle and retired from his job at Mount Greylock. However, in the spring of 2008, longtime Drury football coach Fran Millard passed away unexpectedly. Allen filled the position for a year while the school mourned the loss and began the job search for a new coach. According to Jane Allen, the hardest part of the season was the game at John T. Allen field where Allen had to coach on the opposing bench against Mount Greylock.

Allen still resides in Williamstown with his wife Jane. When asked what his favorite moments from his career were, a collection of answers came along, including Friday night meetings, spaghetti dinners, and Super Bowl wins. "But," Jane said, "knowing Coach, it was really just the opportunity to spend every day coaching the most amazing student-athletes any coach could ask for." ♦

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SPORTS

Fall Sports Recap

By MOLLY SULLIVAN

Boys Cross Country

Accomplishments: Western Massachusetts Division II Runner-Up; MIAA Division III State Tournament Race Runner-Up

Individual Accomplishments: Ezra Holzapfel, Andrew Petropulos, Ryan Keating, Rafa Mellow-Bartels, Jude Bakija, and Zeke Singer earn All-Berkshire County recognition; Holzapfel, Petropulos, Keating, Mellow-Bartels, and Ollie Swabey earn All-Western Mass recognition

Girls Cross Country

Accomplishments: Western Massachusetts Division II Champions; Placed third in MIAA Division III State Tournament Race

Individual Accomplishments: Ainsley Abel, Annie Art, Adriana Carasone, Paige Tudor, Vera de Jong, and Katherine Goss earn All-Berkshire County recognition; Abel, Carasone, and de Jong earn All-Western Mass recognition

Golf

Accomplishments: Western Massachusetts Division III Runner-Up; Placed 12th at MIAA Division III State Championship

Notable Moments: Seventh-Grader Jacob Hillman hits 5-over-par to give Mount Greylock its first win over Taconic; Junior Thomas Art (82) and Benjamin Dingman (87) lead the team to a second place finish at Western Massachusetts Championships with a score of 354

Boys Soccer

Final Record: 9-7-5

Accomplishments: Western Massachusetts Class C Finalists (seeded No. 5); MIAA Division V State Tournament Quarterfinalists (seeded No. 8)

Notable Moments: A last minute comeback win against Westfield where they scored 2 goals in 5 minutes to win 2-1; a 7-1 statement win in the State Sweet 16 against Keefe Tech

Individual Accomplishments: Junior George Munemo scores a hatrick in 7-1 Sweet 16 win; Senior Dan Warren stops two penalty kicks (one in regular time and one in a shootout) in loss to No. 1 Bromfield in State Quarterfinals; Seniors Josh Rudin and Eamon Hetherington selected for Western Mass Senior All-Star Game

Girls Soccer

Final Record: 17-2-3

Accomplishments: Undefeated regular season; Western Massachusetts Class D Finalists (seeded No. 2); MIAA Division V State Tournament Quarterfinalists (seeded No. 8)

Notable Moments: A 3-1 win against previously unbeaten Drury; a 2-0 win against Lenox to complete an undefeated regular season; a 2-0 State Sweet 16 win against Hull to complete an undefeated season at home

Individual Accomplishments: Senior co-captain Jane Skavlem earns All-State Designation; all 5 seniors (Lucy Igoe, Maggie Brody, Emma Newberry, Skavlem, and Molly Sullivan) selected for Western Mass Senior All-Star Game; Junior Lily McDermott wins iBerkshires Athlete of the Week in late October

Volleyball

Final Record: 20-4

Accomplishments: Western Massachusetts Class D Champions (seeded No. 1); MIAA Division V State Tournament Finalists (seeded No. 3)

Notable Moments: A 3-set sweep against Turners Falls in the Western Mass finals; a 4-set win over No. 2 Hopedale in the State Tournament Semi-Finals

Individual Accomplishments: Junior Jackie Brannan wins iBerkshires Athlete of the Week in early October; Junior Celina Savage records 24 kills and 5 aces in State Semi-Final win

Drury-MG Co-Op Football

Final Record: 6-1

Accomplishments: Undefeated regular season; Tri-County League Champions

Notable Moments: A 39-6 statement win in their last regular season game against Monument Mountain to finish season undefeated and clinch the Tri-County Championship

Individual Accomplishments: Junior Judge Martin wins Berkshire Eagle Defensive Player of the Week in late September; Martin and Jayshawn Moore named to Berkshire County first team; kicker Parker Smith named to Berkshire County second team

Unified Basketball

Notable Moments: Sophomore Devika Sharma hit 200 points; the first ever Unified Basketball Classic: Red versus White took place in the Mountie Dome, team Red was coached by senior Seamus Barnes and team White was coached by senior Jackson Shelsy ♦

Athlete Spotlight: Judge Martin

By ANDREW PETROPULOS



Photo Courtesy of Tommy Netzer

The Echo recently sat down with Judge Martin to discuss his football season on the Drury-Mount Greylock co-op team. Martin plays defensive line and was named Berk-

shire Eagle defensive player of the week in late September after his performance against McCann Technical School. The Drury team ended their season 6-1. They completed an undefeated regular season and lost in the first round of the MIAA state tournament to the defending state champions, Cohasset High School.

Echo: Looking back, how did your season go as a whole?

Judge Martin: The season was awesome. Personally, it was my best season of football yet, and our team was succeeding and getting recognition from around the county. Personally my favorite game was Monument because we really proved ourselves there and dominated. We did have some costly injuries right before playoffs though which was rough. We ended up losing badly in the playoffs, but it was a really fun experience playing good competition in the former state champions. Overall, it was a fantastic and successful season which actually proved that even though we are a co-op, we can go out there and win and dominate.

E: Tell me about your individual season.

JM: I did pretty well this season. I'm trying to do college recruitment for football right now. I got defensive player of the week in my game against McCann. We played at Greylock one weekend and I had a sack and a forced interception which was a pretty good game.

E: What was the team's reaction to making the tournament and playing in the playoffs?

JM: We were all really excited and surprised because we were told all season about how we have zero shot at playoffs. Our whole season was playoffs to us...every game was win or go home if we wanted a shot at playoffs, so with us actually in [the playoffs] we started to see that our work was paying off.

E: How and when did you start playing football?

JM: Second grade was my first year of football. Honestly, I pursued it because I had major anger issues. My mom wanted to sign me up for something I could take it out in and that developed to be football in Lanesborough. I quit three times though in my career and I think it was in fifth grade, seventh grade, and my freshman year of high school. I quit because I hated

Continued on Page 12

OPINIONS

Avoiding Unhealthy Relationships with Online Grades

By KIERSTEN SIMPSON

During my sophomore year, I became addicted to my *Canvas* app. Much of my time was spent refreshing assignments, impatiently waiting for a grade to go in. That year, before February break, one of my friends told me that what was best for my mental health was to turn off all notifications from both *Canvas* and *PowerSchool* for the week; that way, any grading teachers do over the break would only be a problem for me upon return.

This was a relatively peaceful break for me; I still checked *Canvas* once or twice, but only to make sure that I had not forgotten to submit an assignment. For a brief time, I was cured of my psychological dependency on learning management apps.

Two years later, I am mostly safe from my *Canvas* problem. I still have notifications on, but I no longer sit on the assignment page patiently waiting for a grade.

Of course, this is not just a sweet story of a friend looking out for another, nor is it a problem that only applies to me. Many of my friends have, at some point or another, found themselves obsessed with checking their grades. Grades are much more easily available now than they were ten years ago.

Canvas and *PowerSchool* certainly have their advantages; for instance, in the days of distanced learning, they allowed for students who

stayed remote to have easy communication with teachers. Turning in a paper online also completely eliminates the risk of a teacher losing it, so the “I don’t know, I think you may have lost it” excuse students often hurl at their teachers no longer works.

However, I don’t think that these advantages outweigh the burden that accompanies a student’s constant access to their grades. Even when notifications are turned off, it can be hard to ignore an app on a phone. Especially if one has *Canvas* set to send them daily emails.

There is also an element of work-life balance tied to having such easy access to grades. Living life with grades so available can make it hard for students to have moments in their lives that are distinctly about relaxation and not tied to school. Mindless TikTok scrolling can quickly turn sour when one gets a notification that a particularly difficult test grade has been submitted. This lifestyle—one where being thwarted back into your academic life during movie nights, long weekends and birthday parties—is an unhealthy one.

I am not advocating for the total eradication of *Canvas* and *PowerSchool*. They have plenty of advantages and are generally useful tools to have. It’s nice to be able to see what my teachers have planned for the week in advance, and I like being able to physically check things off of my

to-do list via submitting assignments.

I am not even advocating for some great change amongst the Greylock population; I am sure that there are plenty of people who are able to ignore the *Canvas* notification that pops up in the middle of their TikTok scrolling session. I just firmly believe that there is some level of self-care that is required in living in the digital world. Turning off emails and notifications for *Canvas* and *PowerSchool* is likely better for student mental health as it will allow all students to truly rest during the weekend and on school vacation. ♦

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Obi-Wan Kenobi: An Impressive Star Wars Spin-Off

By DREW SCANLON

In August 2016, the *Hollywood Reporter* announced that Star Wars character Obi-Wan Kenobi was the winner of a poll that asked fans which Star Wars character deserved a spin-off TV series. However, Disney canceled this partially developed idea after the financial failure of *Solo: A Star Wars Story*. In August 2019, a new Obi-Wan Kenobi series was announced and, finally, after 3 years, *Obi-Wan Kenobi* was released on May 27, 2022. My review of the show’s episodes reveal my many opinions after watching the series. Just as a heads up, there are spoilers. The show can be watched on Disney Plus along with other Star Wars spin-off shows, such as *The Mandalorian* and *Star Wars: Rebels*.

Episode 1

We pick up ten years after *Revenge of the Sith*. Obi-Wan Kenobi is hiding in a cave on Tatooine. He has lost his connection to the force and is watching over a young Luke Skywalker. We are also introduced to Reva, an Inquisitor, who is super obsessed with finding Kenobi and goes so far as kidnapping a young Leia Organa in order to draw him out. As far as first episodes go, this one isn’t bad. It does exactly what it needs to do and is still somewhat interesting.

Episode 2

Obi-Wan tracks the kidnapers and follows them to a planet where he manages to find and rescue Leia. However, the Grand Inquisitor learns they are there and puts the city on lockdown. We also

learn that Obi-Wan does not know that Anakin Skywalker is alive as Darth Vader until Reva tells him. This episode wasn’t bad either, but it wasn’t outstanding.

Episode 3

Darth Vader sends Reva to find Obi-Wan and Leia, who have landed on a mining planet. There, they find Tala, a member of an organization called the Path, who leads them to a secret passageway to escape. However, Darth Vader arrives and Obi-Wan tells the two to go ahead while he takes on Vader himself. That doesn’t go very well for him and, even worse, Leia is captured by Reva. This episode was the best of the first three for sure, but still wasn’t astounding.

Episode 4

Leia is taken to the Inquisitor base, where she is interrogated by Reva about the Path. Meanwhile, Obi-Wan and Tala hatch a plan to save Leia. The plan works and they escape with the other members of the Path. To me, this episode was the weakest of the six.

Episode 5

These last two episodes are very important and have quite a few twists, so I won’t go into too much detail about them. We finally got to see Hayden Christensen in this episode, which was awesome. We also learn more about Reva’s backstory. This episode was really good overall.

Episode 6

This is a fanservice episode. And it’s the best episode in the whole series. That’s all you need to know. ♦



Photo Courtesy of Disney+

OPINIONS

Lyricism and Sound Effects in Taylor Swift's *Midnights*

By KIERSTEN SIMPSON

On October 21st, Taylor Swift dropped her tenth studio album, *Midnights*. The album is meant to be an amalgamation of the things that keep Swift up at night, including, but not limited to, falling in love, revenge, and self-loathing.

At 3am on release day, Swift released 7 more tracks in addition to the original 13 of *Midnights*. The 20 songs together are called *Midnights (3am Edition)*. After releasing the full album, Swift pushed two songs in particular. "Anti-Hero" received a music video a day after the album and currently has 5 remixes. Swift also released a music video for "Bejeweled" a week later.

The album as a whole is excellent. Stand-out songs include "You're On Your Own, Kid," "Would've, Could've, Should've," "Bigger than the Whole Sky," and "Lavender Haze." Though it is certainly not her best album, a title that will forever be held by Swift's eighth studio album *folklore*, it is still an excellent piece that closely resembles Swift's pre pandemic work: upbeat, peppy, and complex pop. *Midnights* is an album that is not just about lyrics; it gains its aesthetic and era from its production.

This revival of a more poppy Swift has led to something of a divide within her fanbase. While some fans argue that the old Taylor coming to the phone is for the best, others contend that Swift was at her height when her lyrics were foremost in the song: namely during her indie, Phoebe Bridgers-esque *folklore* and *evermore* eras.

There is no denying that *folklore* and *evermore* feature some of Swift's most poetic lyrics. A strong example of this can be found on track three of *evermore*, "gold rush": "I don't like slow motion, double vision in rose blush/I don't like that falling feels like flying til the bone crush." These lyrics, which are simply about being attracted to someone, are undoubtedly beautiful. The albums also contain some more simplistically beautiful lines, with one of my favorite examples being from *folklore*'s "this is me trying": "I had the shiniest wheels, now they're rusting." While not necessarily as poetic as "gold rush," this is a beautiful way of describing hitting rock bottom. However, Swift has always had beautiful lyrics, even when they were set to more upbeat tunes than *folklore* and *evermore* provide.

One of Swift's most popular songs is "All Too Well," from her fourth album *Red*. The 2021 extended version of this song, released with Swift's re-recording of *Red*, features clear imagery such as "sipping coffee like you're on a late night show," but perhaps the most shining lyric in the song comes from the original 2012 version: "so casually cruel in the name of

being honest." Here, Swift's burning comment at her former partner—that he was willing to be cruel to her for the sake of honesty—is beautifully put. Simply beautiful lyrics can also be found on many of Swift's older albums. Bonus track "You Are In Love" from Swift's 1989, an album widely known as the height of her pop era, features my personal favorite: "One night he wakes/strange look on his face/pauses, then says/'You're my best friend.'"

While these past albums all showcase Swift's lyricism, *Midnights* shows that Swift still hasn't lost her touch. My favorite lyric on the album comes from the track "Would've, Could've, Should've," a song likely written about Swift's relationship with 32-year-old John Mayer in the latter parts of her teenage years. Swift writes: "Living for the thrill of hitting you where it hurts/Give me back my girlhood/It was mine first." The first part of these lyrics showcase Swift's poetic talents; the second part, her simple beautiful touch, stating plainly the way that this lover has harmed her permanently.

This is not to say that all of Swift's more pop-based lyrics are perfect. I am fairly certain that the lyric "Sometimes I feel like everybody is a sexy baby" from "Anti-Hero" will go down in infamy, and the lyric from *Lover* "Shade never made anybody less gay" may have made me less gay. But her lyrics from the more stripped down albums also have flaws. I felt my gut drop when *folklore* opened with "I'm doing good, I'm on some new shit." Swift is not a perfect lyricist, and this is clear across all of her albums.

So then, if all of Swift's albums have highs and lows, why do some fans view the lyrics on *folklore* and *evermore* as inherently better? It seems, at least to me, that this is primarily because of production.

folklore and *evermore* are far more stripped down than Swift's typical pop albums. "dorothea" from *evermore*, a simple piano tune lamenting over a girl who left her podunk town in Mississippi, is a clear example of this. Because of the production of this song, it is much easier to focus on the lyrics, especially when compared to a song like "Lavender Haze" from *Midnights*, which is roughly on the same lyrical level as "dorothea." "Lavender Haze," while excellently produced, appears to be lesser because the focus has been somewhat shifted away from the lyrics and more towards the sounds and effects.

Swift is never going to be a bad lyricist; she entered the scene a decade and a half ago with "He said the way my blue eyes shined/Put those Georgia stars to shame that night." It is, instead, simply a question of how important the lyrics are to her album. ♦

Sylvie's Book Corner

By SYLVIE CLOWES

House of Hollow, by Krystal Sutherland, is a horrifyingly beautiful novel. Similar to old folktales about changelings, worlds under fairy hills, and eerie fog filled with children's laughter, this mixture of mystery and horror revolves around three sisters who went missing on a crowded street when they were young, only to be found on the same street a month later, unable to remember what happened to them.

When they reappeared, the girls looked different; their once dark hair had become white, their blue eyes were now black, and they had matching hook-shaped scars on their necks. Ten years later, Iris, the youngest of the three, is enjoying a normal, quiet life, when her eldest sister Grey, a famous designer, goes missing again. Iris and her other sister, Vivi, work to find Grey, untangling clues that she left for them, while running from a mysterious man wearing a skull mask. The more they search into Grey's life, they realize just how much she was hiding from them and how far she would go to keep them safe.

The insanity that follows these girls seeps into everyone they meet, including their parents. The girls' father, Gabe, went insane after they were found, believing that these girls were not his daughters, going so far as to attempt to kill them before killing himself. Their mother became overprotective, causing her two eldest to leave her home before they finished high school. The effects of the instability that comes after believing someone to be dead and soon finding them alive haunts the characters in this book.

A large part of this novel focuses on the sisters coming to understand that they are not normal human beings. This is first displayed on the first page when Iris recalls her realization that she and her sisters were not normal. The sisters have always known that they can control people with their beauty and power. Deadly and gorgeous, just like the flowers that bloom from the blood and bodies, the Hollow sisters are enchantingly dangerous.

I fell in love with this book so quickly, reading the entirety of it in two days. Although the book is filled with action, the slow unraveling of Iris' understanding of her past and identity was my favorite part. By the second chapter, I thought that I knew what had happened to the girls and was correct in predicting where the plot was going. I was pleasantly surprised to see that although I had gotten the main idea correct, there were a thousand twists that allowed originality. I went into the book thinking it would simply be another book based off of folktales, but it goes beyond that, borrowing common ideas and plots from traditional fairytales and mixing them together with a mystery to make a thrilling modern day tale. ♦

ETC.

Images Cinema Shows *Don't Worry Darling* and *Moonage Daydream*

By OLIVIA MCKEON

In the month of October, Images Cinema, located on Spring Street in Williamstown, Massachusetts, has shown a diverse lineup of both independent and big budget films. The theater usually features a movie for a 1-2 week run and then moves on to a new one. Often, Images features films that are not shown at larger movie theaters, allowing for a unique viewing experience.

The first week of October brought the showing of the highly anticipated film *Don't Worry Darling*, directed by Olivia Wilde. Despite the movie's massive media coverage and various scandals (did Harry Styles really spit on Chris Pine?), it opened with highly mixed reviews.

Christy Lemire, a critic on the Roger Ebert website, stated, "*Don't Worry Darling* aims to explore the tyranny of the patriarchy, disguised in domestic bliss. This is not a new idea, but then again, there aren't many new ideas here."

Going into the film, I was quite skeptical. When I exited the theater, I can't say I was any less conflicted. Like Lemire, I agree that the film does not introduce any new ideas or perspectives to the audience. The 1950s housewife trope is just that: a trope. Although I believe that the premise had potential for a new and fresh take on feminism, the screenplay fell short of conveying whatever that message might be.

On the other hand, what made the movie worth watching was Olivia Wilde's beautiful direction. While a bit heavy handed in certain parts, the shots were perfectly framed, the colors were vibrant and deliberate, and the choice of music added greatly to the overall vibe of this simulated reality.

Similarly, Florence Pugh delivered a stellar performance as Alice Chambers. Her facial expressions and body language were both unmatched by any of her costars in the film. I do not feel the need to mention Harry Styles' acting in the film because I am sure you can find an adequate review on TikTok.

The next movie I attended at Images was the David Bowie documentary by director Brett Morgen. As a Bowie fan I had high expectations for this authorized film, *Moonage Daydream*. I had seen trailers in the week leading up to my viewing and they all seemed to indicate an unforgettable viewing experience.

The first word that comes to mind when describing the film is trippy. The visuals were creative and bright, leading the audience down a path of both music and exploration. As a documentary, it followed a vaguely linear plot of Bowie's life and career, but the film itself was mostly concert footage. While this caused controversy among some viewers, I enjoyed the more immersive experience into Bowie's art, rather than a salacious exploitation of his experiences.

What I found particularly interesting was the amount of collage footage used in the film. Morgen pieced together clips of Bowie himself, scenes from classic films, and bits of animation done specifically for the film. Overall, I found the film to be highly artistic in its own right, and dissimilar from any music documentary I have ever seen.

So, whether you go to Images on a regular basis or watch movies on your couch through streaming services, I would recommend both of these films, if only to see Harry Styles act and to listen to Bowie's best songs. ♦

Athlete Spotlight Cont.

Continued from Page 9

the practices for elementary school, and in freshman year, I only wanted to play for Drury. It sounds weird but I wasn't going to sign up for a co-op unless it was with Drury. I wanted an actual season that didn't end early because we didn't have enough kids.

E: Do you plan on playing in college?

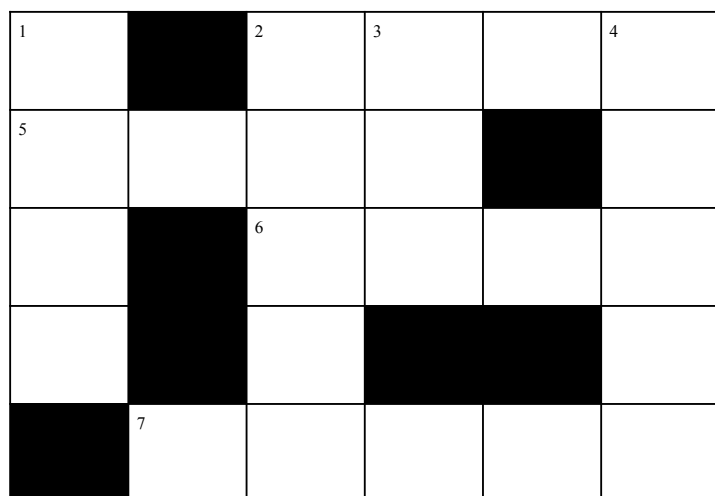
JM: I would love to. I wouldn't go high but I'd love to continue playing the sport. I haven't gotten many looks but I have started my recruitment process. I would definitely like to play though. I'm looking to go anywhere but if I could play anywhere, I'd love UMASS because I love their educational program.

E: If your team was an NFL team, which would you be?

JM: I think we would probably be Buffalo because we're the best in our division. ♦

Mini Crossword

Created by EZRA HOLZAPFEL



ACROSS

2. Boys Soccer had 9 of them
5. BIG game announcer
6. Vibe synonym
7. ____ Like It

DOWN

1. Batting average or field goal percentage
2. What Girls XC and Volleyball won
3. Debt document
4. Bad situation

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