

The Greylock Echo

Graduation Edition

Mount Greylock - Williamstown, MA

June 10, 2023

Final Exams Return to Mount Greylock

By CHARLOTTE HOLUBAR

Mount Greylock's policy for finals has recently been adjusted to change from the policies instituted under COVID-19. During the years of online school finals were canceled entirely, which then shifted to a loose policy in 2022 that made finals up to the teacher's discretion, meaning that in most AP classes teachers decided not to give a final.

However, there is now a universal final policy for the high school. All classes, including AP classes, require finals. These finals can take the form of a sit-down test, but they can also be a project or another form of testing.

This change in policy came directly from the administration. In turn, many teachers and students have varying opinions in response to the policy.

English teacher Blair Dils sees the new change to be important for students in order to prepare for college. Dils said, "One thing you see is that in a semester in college, things get really busy and there's a lot to do. If we don't somewhat prepare students for that heightened work load and high anxiety, we are not really doing those students who are going off to college a service. So we need, on some level, to replicate the end of year push at the higher academic level, which makes a reason for requiring finals."

Dils teaches a range of grades and classes, including AP Literature. In all instances, Dils believes in the importance of a final push. He said, "I do think we need to get students out of their comfort zones by giving them some higher stakes tests so they are prepared for that when they go to college."

Spanish teacher Joe Johnson and science teacher Shawn Burdick see the requirement of finals as a chance to keep students engaged and add a cumulative assessment. Burdick said, "I

think it is a great idea and long overdue. It is a good culmination we can use as a part of the class."

The AP scores do not come back in time for teachers to utilize the results for class work.

Burdick said, "If you are studying for your AP exam, you are also studying for your final. Most teachers, including myself, would probably use an older version as a final so all the studying you are doing you can get actual class credit for."

Likewise, Johnson agrees with requiring a final. He added, "I feel like it helps keep people focused in the last weeks of school. We still do the regular class activities, but lightened for the seniors."

However, some teachers like Jeffery Welch and Robert Thistle disagree with the new policy. Welch and Thistle believe that students have already put in enough work studying for the AP test itself and enduring the difficult exam. Welch, who teaches several AP history classes, said, "I think that in an AP class you have done a lot of hard work and you have had your exam early."

Similarly, AP Calculus teacher Thistle said, "I respectfully disagree with the policy because I know the rigor that the AP exam is, and you could even argue that the AP exam is too long. Because it is a culminating assessment to a year long college course, I feel like that should take the place of a final."

An additional reason for requiring finals is to keep students engaged in their classes. However, Welch argued, "I think the question of student engagement between the [AP] exam and the end of the year is a separate conversation, and if there is a problem, that's not necessarily solved by saying you have to take another test."

One overarching senior policy was the 93% rule. It allowed senior students to be exempt from taking finals if they had a 93% or above in the class. However, this year it was universally



Photo Courtesy of Charlotte Holubar

2 in 650: Interviews with Graduation Speakers

By NORA LOPEZ



Photos Courtesy of Sullivan and McIntosh

Every year, the student body and staff each choose one speaker for Graduation. Altan McIntosh, president of the Chess Club and a member of the Varsity Tennis team and Varsity Cross-Country Running team, was chosen by the student body. Molly Sullivan, captain of the Varsity Soccer team, editor-in-chief of the Greylock Echo, and member of the Student Council, was chosen by the staff. The Greylock Echo sat down with both speakers to discuss their time here at Mount Greylock.

Echo: What does it mean to be a graduation speaker?

Sullivan: It's actually a really big honor. I'm really appreciative of the staff. I think over my time at Greylock, I've tried to make relationships with the staff members and teachers that I have and to be honored by them and to be recognized for my hard work is really amazing. I'm also excited to give a speech with Altan because he's definitely a good choice for the students' chosen speaker.

McIntosh: It's definitely a very high honor. I understand that it's also very nerve wracking because you kind of have expectations. I definitely see it as a great opportunity. I'm honored to be able to do it. Especially chosen by the students. It's such an honor.

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Thistle to Leave Mount Greylock

Repetto reports on the math teacher's legacy.

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A Senior Playlist

Kiersten Simpson reflects on the defining music of high school

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NEWS

Student Art Featured at MASS MoCA Teen Invitational

By CHARLOTTE HOLUBAR

On April 15, the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art Teen Invitational gathered hundreds of community members for the 2023 high school exhibit. This was the invitational's 11th year, and it highlighted a total of 300 pieces of art from eight high schools.

The invitational was first organized by the Eclipse Mill and then transitioned to MASS MoCA. The Saturday evening event typically lasts a little over two hours with a reception and awards ceremony. Awards are granted in various categories that include the Berkshire Eagle Grant, Gold awards, Grand Prize winners, and Grand Prize finalists. The students' artwork remains hung up in MASS MoCA for the weekend and is then exhibited at the Milne Public Library for the month of May.

After the tumultuous COVID-19 years, Mount Greylock art teacher Karin Stack wanted

students to have a space to express their ideas. She continued to curate artwork for the invitational so that students could be "in a group endeavor that represented Mount Greylock."

Many art pieces from the Mount Greylock art department were recognized during the ceremony, with several receiving cash prizes. Students also won year-long family passes to MASS MoCA to help inspire future artwork.

Stack expressed excitement over her students' success and how that correlates to a successful art program at Mount Greylock. "We have been able to do really well as an art department, and that feels great because I have been working with art students for many years," Stack said. From Stack's photography and video classes, to Lisa Mendel's mosaics and glass electives, to Jane-Ellen Desomma's painting and studio art classes, Mount Greylock has established and grown an art department dedicated to creativity for students.

DeSomma and Stack were recognized at the ceremony for their dedication to cultivating and supporting high school artists. They were the recipients of the Phoebe Pepper Award and received \$500 each with the award. ♦

The Echo would like to congratulate the following Mount Greylock students who were recognized at the invitational:

Gold Award:

First Years: Teigan Brady, Luca Mellow-Bartels, Madison Powell, William Svrluga
Sophomores: Rafael Mellow-Bartels, Ava Costa

Juniors: Finn Carothers, Levi Cohen-McFall, Karlie Dowling, Erin Keating, Cecilia Malone, Parker Smith

Seniors: Claire Grupe, Dylan Harrison, Bella Jannini, Lyla Kocsis, Clarissa Louis, Elliott Moore, Zenalyssa Packer

Honorable Mention for the Grand Prize:

Noah Klompus and his complex teapot made of ceramic titled *Torii* (pictured below)



Photo Courtesy of Karin Stack

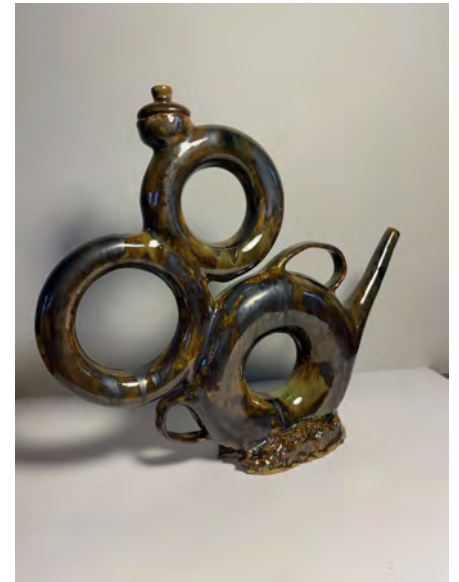


Photo Courtesy of Noah Klompus

Students Graduate Berkshire Youth Leadership Program

By FRANCES EVANS

The Berkshire Youth Leadership Program is a program available to juniors interested in learning more about and becoming more involved in different opportunities in Berkshire County. Students apply during the middle of their sophomore year and begin at the end of that school year in June. It is a 10-month-long program and is open to students from all over Berkshire County, including those attending public, private, and charter schools, as well as students who are homeschooled. The juniors in the program this year graduated in April.

Over the 10 months, 12-30 students meet once a month from about 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Participants meet during the school day, and absences are excused. The goal, according to IBERKSHIRE, the organizer of this program, is to prepare participants for "constructive and responsible involvement in community affairs, while also thinking seriously about potential career pathways."

The program starts with a retreat, where participants miss a few days of school. At the retreat, students get to know each other through bonding experiences and other activities.

Then, during the monthly sessions, participants visit different employers on site for the

day. Junior Ché Guerra said they visited "a bunch of businesses and organizations." Some of these occupations include fields like hospitality, entrepreneurship, agriculture, and health. Junior Emily Oulette said, "I didn't even know some of the places we visited existed."

Other than visiting businesses, participants also work on a project throughout the year. At the first monthly session, the participants vote on what project they'd like to work on. Then, during each session following that, they get about 30 minutes to two hours each day to work on their projects. This year's class worked on a pamphlet about mental health.

Guerra said they enjoyed getting "to meet a ton of awesome people through [the project]." They said, "It's cool to meet other people from the Berkshires."

"I made so many friends," junior Bella Garivaltis said. If you enjoy taking the lead, "you get to work with people who are similar to you," she said.

According to the Mount Greylock participants, the program has many benefits, helping students make connections in the community and receive internships. Students also get to see more of what the Berkshires have to offer.

Oulette said that students get "to see that there are a lot of opportunities here that a lot of us do not know about." She added that she learned how to "better communicate with people, especially adults." Garivaltis said, "[The program involves] a lot of information, a lot of friends, and a lot of leadership skills."

Although Guerra enjoyed the program, they said they would have preferred not to have missed school. "If it could have been on the weekend, I think that would have been awesome," they said.

For students interested in applying, the application asks about applicants' opinions on the Berkshires, their employment, availability, educational background (schools), involvement in the community, past accomplishments, and any references. Also part of the application process is their GPA, "proven capacity for growth," a brief essay, and an interview. There is a tuition fee of \$700, but the program provides tuition assistance and scholarships.

"Do it!" Garivaltis said. "It was so much fun. I was so nervous. I was like, 'Oh, I have to write an essay, I might as well not even do it.' But I did, and it was honestly such a fun experience." ♦

NEWS

Spring Drama Hits the Stage

By MAGGIE NICHOLS

Mount Greylock's production of *Peter and the Starcatcher* hit the stage on Friday, May 12 and Saturday, May 13. The play is based on the 2004 novel *Peter and the Starcatcher*, centered around Peter Pan's backstory.

The production marked Mount Greylock alumna Amanda Goldmakher's return as a director at the school. She said, "I had directed a play in high school as a senior at Mount Greylock, so it was great to be able to come back and become involved with a production at the school again."

Her work as a director proved to be a success for the actors, production crew and audience alike. "It was awesome to be able to come back and work with middle school and high school students. It really is a positive atmosphere," said Goldmakher. She also noted the importance of student involvement and contributions, emphasizing how having students step up as choreographers, graphic designers, and even directors "made the production possible."

Alongside Goldmakher, junior Quin Repetto shared the director spotlight as Assistant Director. This was Repetto's first year with directing experience, though she previously acted in other productions at Mount Greylock. Repetto said she helped to "keep things organized" and "help others read their parts," emphasizing how her role as Assistant Director allowed her to make a positive impact on her fellow cast members and the production as a whole.

The play itself focuses on the history of



Photo Courtesy of Bryn Angelini

Peter Pan and how he came to be stuck in his eternal childhood. Senior Kiersten Simpson played Peter, otherwise known as "Boy" in the play. Other performances by junior Che Guerra and first year Frankie Evans were a smash hit. Guerra played villain Black Stache, while Evans took on the role of Molly, who befriends Peter during the play.

The production crew was a largely student-led effort, working on tasks like props and lighting design. This included students Quin Repetto, Jennah Simpson, Sunnie Warax, Storm Colandria, Scales Rudin, Levi Cohen-McFall, Kaeya Durley, Cailean Fippinger, Jaden Lash-St. John, Syllas Velazquez, Che Guerra, Sabine Guerra, Morris Israel, Claire Burrow, Mai DeKel, and Cassidy Cohen-McFall.

Junior Levi Cohen-McFall took on the role of choreographer for the production, working to create and organize several scenes, including the dance number, "Mermaid Out of Me." Cohen-McFall said, "It was very ensemble heavy...a lot of miscellaneous moments...I choreographed the dance number which was super cool."

Senior cast and crew members included Bella Janini, Kiersten Simpson, Cailean Fippinger, Jennah Simpson, and Sunnie Warax. Jennah Simpson, Fippinger, and Warax worked together on the production crew, with Jennah Simpson as stage manager and lead narrator, Fippinger on sound design, and Warax as prop manager and lead narrator. Janini starred as Mrs. Bumbrake, and Kiersten Simpson as Peter Pan.

Highlighting the sense of community of theater, Kiersten Simpson said, "I feel really strongly that a lot of my time at Greylock and my identity has been formed in conjunction with theater...[those involved] are such positive people to be around."

Among the student performances, directorial debuts, and contributions from tech crew, *Peter and the Starcatcher* highlighted the talent of theater at Mount Greylock and excited the audience for next year's Spring Drama. ♦

Williamstown Holds Local Elections

By LUCY MCWEENY

On Tuesday, May 9, Williamstown residents voted in the town election for several local government positions. In the only contested race, for Select Board, Stephanie Boyd and incumbent Andrew Hogeland were elected to the two open seats on the five-person board, beating out Andre Bryant and Paul Harsch.

All other races for this election were uncontested. Alexander Carlisle and Katherine Evans were elected to the Library Board of Trustees, and Cory Campbell and Benjamin Greenfield were elected to the Planning Board.

Hogeland has been involved in town politics for a number of years, having just been elected to his fourth straight term on the Select Board. He said, "I like being part of my community by helping serve in the government part of it."

Though Boyd was just elected to her first three-year term on the board, she has also had a large presence in town politics over the past few years. For the last five years, Boyd has been on the Planning Board, and was also on the Conservation Commission. She said, "I really enjoy being part of town government." Describing why she decided to run for Select Board, Boyd said, "I thought that the scope of this board is broader and there are some issues that I would like to work on."

Both Boyd and Hogeland have big visions for the next three years on the board, hoping to connect with and serve the community as

elected officials. For Hogeland, and for many residents of Williamstown, a huge issue that must be addressed is the need to make housing more affordable in Williamstown. This would be achieved, he said, likely through some combination of financial support to individuals as well as helping to build new housing.

"Part of our problem is that there's not much available flat land left in Williamstown," he said. "But that's part of the mission, to see if there's a financially feasible way to actually construct new housing."

For Boyd, this issue of housing affordability is also one she hopes to address in her term, citing the ability to work remotely as contributing to the issue of rising housing prices. She said, "We're seeing more remote workers move to Williamstown and housing prices go up. It's a complex problem."

Along with this issue of housing affordability, Boyd is also looking to work toward the net zero carbon reductions for Williamstown that the town committed to a few years ago. Boyd has been involved with the COOL (CO2 Lowering) Committee, which has been putting together a plan for this. But, she said, "I think we need more support at the Select Board and town administration level. So I'd like to help encourage that to happen."

Hogeland, too, has a number of goals outside of the issue of housing affordability that he

hopes to work on. One such issue is continuing to review and revise the town charter, the foundational document that outlines how Williamstown government works. This charter was approved in 1956 and hasn't been significantly reviewed since.

"We are halfway through our process of revisiting everything in the charter and seeing if there are things we want to change," Hogeland said. "That, to me, is an interesting way to see if we can make government work better."

Both Boyd and Hogeland emphasize the importance of community involvement. Hogeland said, "I would encourage everybody to consider doing some kind of community service or public service as part of their work going forward. It's a great way to be a part of the community and to give back to it."

Local politics also took form in Williamstown's most recent annual town meeting, in which all residents of the town are encouraged to attend and vote on certain issues. At this town meeting, voters approved expanded eligibility for senior homeowner's tax exemptions. Those attending the meeting voted against a proposal to allow mobile homes in the town. ♦

NEWS

Graduation Speakers cont.

By NORA LOPEZ

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Echo: What was your most memorable class here at Greylock?

Sullivan: My most memorable class was AP Lang, shoutout Ms. Tucker-Smith. I love the books we read. It's really interesting, but I'd also say I had some great history classes with Mr. Welch and obviously the conversations we've had in AP Lit with Mr. Dils and my classmates have been great this year.

McIntosh: Most memorable would probably be eighth grade Latin because so much wacky stuff happened during that year. And it's definitely imprinted in my memory as one of the most fun and also strangest classes during Greylock. But yeah, I'd say that's probably the most memorable.

Echo: You were involved in a lot of extra-curricular activities. Which one made the biggest impact on your time at Greylock?

Sullivan: I definitely have to say that the Echo did. I was on that for four years and I'm really sad to leave it but just to go from coming into the Echo not really wanting to be on it and going all the way to being editor-in-chief was a really cool experience. I'm really appreciative of the time I got to spend on that, writing and editing stories.

McIntosh: I'd say the cross country team just because I did it from 7th grade to 12th grade and after every season, I was like, "Ah, I don't really want to do that again." But then I kept doing it again, and it just kept getting more and more fun with all my friends. Even if I wasn't good at it, it was still a great experience.

Echo: What song reminds you of your senior year?

Sullivan: Oh my gosh, that's a great question. Really deep. It was my favorite song for the college post, but probably "Thunder Road" by Bruce Springsteen. It means a lot to me and it's about moving on and I really like it.

McIntosh: That's a tough one. I don't know if a singular song would remind me of senior year, more like a whole album like *Graduation* by Kanye West. It definitely marks a period in your life that is a great transition.

Echo: What are your plans for after graduation?

Sullivan: I will be going to Medford, Massachusetts, for four years of college at Tufts and probably studying relations and civic studies with some kind of minor in peace or justice studies.

McIntosh: After graduation I'm going to go to Northeastern University for political science

and economics, and then hopefully law school.

Echo: Do you have any parting advice as you graduate?

McIntosh: Well, my biggest advice... I see a lot of people not doing things. Just run for stuff because we're such a small school but I think a lot of times colleges don't really take [size] into account when they're looking at your transcript for positions for stuff. So, like, I think for student council this year, at least two grades were completely unopposed, which means if you ran you were guaranteed to win. So just put yourself out there and run for something because in the long run, it just helped me so much. Like in ninth grade, I didn't think I was going to win for class president, but there were only two people running so I was like, "Alright, whatever, I'll go for it," and I ended up doing it. So just put yourself out there. Don't be afraid to run for something.

Sullivan: Yeah, I'd say do as much as you can but don't overextend yourself. You've got a lot of time in your four years, but you also don't have a lot of time. So go to everything you can, go talk to anyone you can talk to. Don't be afraid to reach out to people and hang out with them or be friends with them. Have a lot of fun. Enjoy the years while they last. ♦

Senior Art Features

*Both Grupe and Packer's pieces won awards at the MASS MoCA Teen Invitational.
Warren won an award for a different piece.*



By Zenalyssa Packer

Artist's Statement: This is an acrylic painting of my cat in my dining room. ♦



By Claire Grupe

Artist's Statement: When creating this piece, I had nothing specific in mind, I just wanted to try something new. I put blobs of paint on the paper and just began swirling it about. This took me about 3 class periods until I was finally satisfied with it and it is definitely my favorite piece I created this school year. ♦



By Dan Warren

Artist's Statement: This picture is from one of the first photoshoots I did for Greylock. The significance behind this photo is it showed me how much emotion I could capture in just one photo. This picture helped inspire me to continue with sports photography for the rest of the year and it is one of my favorites because of that. ♦

NEWS & FEATURES

Robotics Team Battles in FIRST Competition

By KRISHIV MALHOTRA

From March 16 to 18, the Mechanical Mounties, the Mount Greylock robotics team, competed in a FIRST Robotics Competition at Western New England University. This competition is often what the team works toward all season. The Mounties won four matches and lost eight, ending up ranked 27th out of 36 and missing out on a top-eight alliance spot for the playoffs. An alliance is a group of three robots that compete together in matches against another set of three robots.

This year's challenge that FIRST Robotics designed was for the robots to pick up cubes and cones and drop them in small boxes or on poles. The robots also had to climb on top of a pressure-activated ramp, which would tip towards the robot when a robot pushed on one end of it. The goal for the robot is to deposit as many cubes and cones as possible and climb the ramp by the end of the match.

The Mounties also competed at Hartford Public High School from March 31 to April 2. At this competition, they won five matches and lost 7, ranking 31st out of 40.

For the Mounties, this season was one full of learning opportunities. Daniel Louis, Mount Greylock physics teacher and the advisor of the club, explained the takeaways. He said, "It went well. Our robot didn't do as well as we thought it would in the challenge, but our programming went well. It was still a great season with our seniors in their last year on the team. They learned a lot while being on the team, skills that a classroom can't teach."

There are six graduating seniors on the team: Elliot Louis, Beatrice Pedroni, Will Marsh, Effie Skinner, Noah Shin, and Cailean Fippinger. Louis and Shin are the co-captains of the team, with Shin leading the programming

and electronics and Louis leading the mechanical and safety aspects of the team.

Louis said, "The soft skills I've gained from robotics—time management, teamwork, and analytical and creative thinking—are invaluable. Especially combined with the hard skills of mechanical and electrical engineering, FRC [FIRST Robotics Competition] has prepared me for my education beyond high school and developed my skill set to be more well-rounded."

Many students on the team emphasized the importance of team-building and collaboration for the FIRST competition and robotics more generally.

Shin said, "This season really represented a passing of the torch to the members who are going to have to lead the team next year. We may not have built a robot that could win tournaments, but we built a team that I think will continue to hold their own for quite some time." He added, "Being a part of this team over the years let me develop and utilize skills that I wouldn't have been able to otherwise, but it also helped me develop more interpersonal skills in terms of team coordination and leadership. I also made lifelong connections with other students and mentors that I never would have."

Skinner said, "I have not been involved with robotics for a long time, but FIRST has taught me the importance of collaboration. Greylock's individual team works together and integrates different parts into one robot, so collaboration is necessary. FIRST also creates collaboration between teams at competitions by creating alliances at competitions."

Other students noted that being a part of the robotics team introduced them to new learning-models and ways of thinking that cannot be found in the school's normal curriculum.



Photo Courtesy of Daniel Louis

Pedroni said, "Robotics showed me a side of engineering and STEM that I haven't been able to experience much of otherwise at Greylock since most of our science classes are core classes and not very hands-on. There was a big learning curve for learning tools and working with others. It got me interested in the engineering field and is a well-known program so it opened up more connections with engineering schools and scholarships at colleges where I'm hoping to continue learning about it."

"Robotics made me really interested in STEM, and it was great to get to know a lot more people on the team," said Marsh.

The team will next compete in Robot Rumble in November, a one-day competition, before the new season begins in January of 2024.

Daniel Louis has high hopes for next season. He said, "Next year, we need to recruit more members and try to get on the level of other schools. We are not a tech school, and many schools that compete are tech schools, with lots of mentors and resources... but we have been able to perform well in the past and rank higher than other tech schools, so we just need to up our game." ♦

The Legacy of Robert Thistle

By QUINLAN REPETTO

As the school year draws to a close, a wave of teachers are leaving Mount Greylock, either to retire or to seek new opportunities. One of these teachers is math teacher Robert Thistle, who will move to Cape Cod after the completion of this school year. For much of the Mount Greylock community, his engaging teaching style and welcoming personality will leave a powerful legacy here.

In the course of his career, Thistle has worked in a range of schools in Berkshire County and beyond. Fellow math teacher Lucas Polidoro explained that this is part of what "made [Thistle] the person he is today." Thistle began working at Mount Greylock in 1998, and since then has spent 18 years (not counting his seven-year stint at Pittsfield High School) teaching Mount Greylock students. Now, he plans to relocate to Cape Cod to teach at Cape Cod Tech in Harwich.

In his time at Mount Greylock, Thistle has become a well-loved teacher, popular with students and fellow teachers alike. "He's one of the funniest teachers I've ever met," said junior Jacqueline Brannon. "He makes math seem fun

even if you don't like math."

Thistle, with his engaging math-teaching strategies, works across skill levels to teach any student, no matter what level of math they are at. Polidoro said that Thistle has "the ability to teach AP Calculus to the kids who love math but can also help kids who may struggle at math." He added, "He's been a really good mentor to kids both here and at PHS [Pittsfield High School] who may not be in the best situation."

Many students cite his welcoming nature as the reason why so many are inclined to ask him for help. "He's super approachable," said junior Annie Miller. "If we need an extra day for homework or if we need help with something, he's very happy to help."

In his time at Mount Greylock, Thistle has been instrumental in what he calls "reloading" the math department, helping to hire many new teachers. This has built up the department into something he's exceptionally proud of, calling it "second to none."

Math isn't the only area of Mount Greylock that Thistle has left his mark on. He is also the head boys Varsity Basketball coach. He and his

fellow basketball coaches have worked to build up basketball culture at Mount Greylock, and the team has had successful seasons over the past 11 years.

Thistle has also gained the reputation of being an overall great guy. Polidoro said, "He's not just a good teacher but a good person. He coaches, he's superintelligent, he's very good at making relationships with kids and he's well-spoken."

Polidoro added that Thistle is "the epitome of what you want to be as a teacher at the end of your career. He's not on his way out, he's not counting the days. He's still got it 35 years into the business, which is something we all aspire to be."

One of the most famous parts of his legacy is the iconic Wall of Fame -- several bulletin boards around his room where he hangs posters, photos and newspaper clippings depicting his students and their accomplishments. Spanning several walls and going back over 15 years, the Wall holds much significance for Thistle.

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NEWS & FEATURES

Finals cont.

By CHARLOTTE HOLUBAR

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removed. This policy was never implemented directly by the administration, but only at the senior teacher's discretion. Principal Jacob Shutz said removing this rule was "to make it more uniform, and that this was something teachers would do on their own." By removing this teacher-based policy, the administration hoped to remove any variability in test taking.

Senior Annie Art believes the 93% policy to be beneficial despite it not being universal. "I appreciate the intent to make it more uniform but I would have been more motivated earlier in the year to keep a 93% average if there had been the opportunity to not take finals," said Art.

Similarly, Welch said, "I like the old system where the seniors who showed a certain level of academic achievement could opt out of final exams as a perk."

For the 2023 school year and likely going forward, the testing policy at Mount Greylock is to require all high school students, regardless of their class, to take a final, which could be a project or a sit down test. ♦

Thistle Legacy cont.

By QUINLAN REPETTO

Continued from Page 5

"It has the word 'believe' up there," Thistle said. "I love that word. If you hope you do well, that's good. But if you believe you're going to do well that means you've prepared. This Wall of Fame is about preparation. It's about the different things that kids have put so many hours into; from the theater to music to dancers and artists and athletes. They don't just show up, they prepare. And they believe in themselves."

Thistle added, "So when I look up there... and I hope I'm not just living in the past, but... it carries on all these great memories as we push on through to today. And that's hopefully what this job is about: celebrating the young people that are in the classroom."

Many students and teachers alike will miss the joy and energy that Thistle brought to the classroom. He will miss Mount Greylock in turn, describing his departure as "bittersweet."

"Most of all, I'll miss the kids," said Thistle. "I've worked in this job where you get to come in and be around people who are wildly optimistic about their lives and their future and about what they can do and will do. Just seeing kids grow and excel here... I'm going to miss them. It's been awesome." ♦



*This Year's AP Calc T-shirt Design
- Photo Courtesy of Quinlan Repetto*

Student Government Results

The Mount Greylock Student Council runs student government elections every year in May. Elected students will serve during the 2023-24 school year. All School Council representatives were not elected this year as they are serving their second year of the term.

Rising Senior Class

President: Vincent Welch
Vice President: Judge Martin
Secretary: Ava Anagnos
Treasurer: Grace Winters
Student Council: Mirabel Boyer,
Matthew Daley, Caleb Low, Lucy McWeeny,
Celina Savage

Rising Sophomore Class

President: Frances Evans
Vice President: Jack Uhas
Secretary: Antonia Wied
Treasurer: Ruby Dufour
Student Council: Everett Crowe, Nora Lopez,
Krishiv Malhotra, Natasha Nugent, Mateo
Whalen-Loux

Internal Student Council Elections

President: Lucy McWeeny
Vice President: Caleb Low
Secretary: Mira Boyer
Treasurer: Celina Savage
Parliamentarian: Knowl Stroud
Press and Social Media Manager: Charlotte
Holubar

Rising Junior Class

President: Erik Powell-Bechtel
Vice President: Gavin Hetherington
Secretary: Vera de Jong
Treasurer: Kylie Sweren
Student Council: Aleksei Chang, Charlotte
Holubar, Polly Rhie, Knowl Stroud

Rising Freshman Class

President: Nolan Barnes
Vice President: Timothy Karampatsos
Secretary: Leo Slater-Lee
Treasurer: Bryce Mullally
Student Council: Haydn Derby, Sarah Ehlew,
Robyn Gregg, Sabine Guerra, Adele Low

School Council Representatives

(two year terms)
Amelia Madrigal
Ceci Malone
Celina Savage

*The Greylock Way: Integrity, Responsibility,
Perseverance*

FEATURES

Senior Destinations

Note: This list of students includes only those who were in school to grant the Echo permission to publish their plans.

Ainsley Abel - Williams College

Arsil Ahmad - Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences

Bryn Angelini - University of Massachusetts Amherst

Annabelle Art - Middlebury College

Moby Asch - Suffolk University

Seamus Barnes - Lafayette College

Elizabeth Bertolino - Berkshire Community College

Matthew Bertolino - United States Space Force

Maggie Brody - Trinity College

Elena Caplinger - Cornell University

Matteo Chang - George Washington University

Hannah Chase - Mount Holyoke College

Chase Doyle - University of Memphis

Cailean Fippinger - Brandeis University

Taylor Getzlaff - Berkshire Community College

Lainey Gill - Gap Year: International Service Work

Emma Gilooly - Providence College

Emma Gray - Stonehill College

Arthur Greenfield - Hamilton College

Claire Grupe - Berkshire Community College

Starr Hassan - McCann Postsecondary Program for Cosmetology

Eamon Hetherington - Colorado State University

Aiden Hoggs - Middlebury College

Ezra Holzapfel - Tufts University

Lucy Igoe - Middlebury College

Bella Jannini - Salem State University

Lily Jayko - Drexel University

Lyla Kocsis - Berkshire Community College

Juliet Kornell - Occidental College

Anthony Kruger - Westfield State University

Trey Lepicier - Clarkson University

Grace Lillie - Berkshire Community College

Clarissa Louis - Williams College

Elliot Louis - Trinity College

Wren Mangano - University of Minnesota, Duluth

Will Marsh - George Washington University

Max McAlister - Springfield College

Patrick McConnell - Westfield State University

Altan McIntosh - Northeastern University

Olivia McKeon - Boston University

Elliott Moore - Montserrat College of Art

Jayshawn Moore - Castleton University

Emma Newberry - Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Nelson Nnodim - University of Nebraska at Omaha

Liam O'Keefe - Springfield College

Nathan Overbaugh - Berkshire Community College

Zenalyssa Packer - Chapman School of Seamanship

Beatrice Pedroni - Williams College or Rice University

Sarah Polumbo - Wesleyan University

Christy Rech - Massachusetts Maritime Academy

Juliet Robinson - Westfield State University

Brodi Rosier - Westfield State University

Andres Sanchez - Champlain College

Foster Savitsky - St. Lawrence University

Drew Scanlon - Western Connecticut State University

Krish Sharma - Union College

Jackson Shelsy - Westfield State University

Noah Shin - Rochester Institute of Technology

Jennah Simpson - Trinity College

Kiersten Simpson - Skidmore College

Jane Skavlem - Northeastern University

Effie Skinner - Case Western Reserve University

Molly Sullivan - Tufts University

Rose Sutter - University of Massachusetts Amherst

Kamryn Sweet - Coastal Carolina University

Jacob Thompson - City College of New York

Sam Tucker-Smith - Yale University

Daniel Warren - Northeastern University

Quin Whaley - Massachusetts College of Art and Design

Abigail Whitley - Franklin Pierce University

Tyler Woodbury - Springfield College

SPORTS

Lacrosse Team Shooting for States

By LUCY MCWEENY

The Mount Greylock girls lacrosse team has had much individual and collective success on the field this year. With only two losses in the regular season, the team has accumulated an impressive record. A number of players have reached individual milestones in goals, saves and points this season.

Having recently won the Western Massachusetts Tournament and now headed into the MIAA State Tournament, the team has a chance to reflect on what has led to their success this season and how that translates into their play in the tournament.

This season's team is a particularly young one, with more middle school and first year players than usual. For many, this has been a large factor in the team's success. Senior goalie and captain Christy Rech said, "This year's team is full of young players who are very motivated to build their skill, and the older girls we have are amazing role models for those younger players. The mix of skill definitely contributes to our success."

Senior midfielder and captain Ainsley Abel also emphasized the importance of these young players. "Our wide variety of age and ability is also a huge part of who we are as a team. One of our goals this year was to just develop the young players so our program could continue, but I don't think we knew how much they would positively affect us this season," she said.

For Head Coach Jeff Stripp, it is the combination of the younger players' enthusiasm and the older players' leadership that has been the

"secret sauce" for this season. He said, "The thing that stands out is the leadership from our captains." The captains this season are Sarah Polumbo, Abel, and Rech.

The team's collective success has been furthered by the individual achievements of these three captains. Polumbo, a Wesleyan commit, recently scored her 100th goal this season, and earlier this year reached 200 career goals.

Abel, a Williams commit, recently reached her 100th point (goals and assists) this season. Rech, a Massachusetts Maritime Academy commit, made her 300th career save this season.

Along with the seniors, Stripp also noted the hard work and dedication of the juniors, such as Lexi Politis. This season Politis hit her first big milestone, reaching her 100th overall career point.

But going into the state tournament, it is the entirety of the team rather than these individual achievements that has helped the players work so well together. Polumbo said, "This team is like a family. We always have a ton of fun together and our unity is definitely what helps bring success for us on the field." Rech added that the team atmosphere has encouraged collective emotional calmness on the field. "Maintaining our composure on the field and staying humble during wins has kept us on a great path for states."

The team is ranked eighth in the state tournament. Because it is the final tournament of the season, each game has the potential to be their last, raising the stakes on an impres-

sive season. Abel said, "Going into the state tournament I feel confident but of course a little nervous. We won't know what game will be our last until it's over and that can be a stressful feeling."

Despite this stress, the team is excited and well on their path to success. Stripp said, "My job is to prepare teams to compete - and that is the main feeling right now. Compete in every game that we play from here on out. And, have a little fun along the way."

As the team adds a Western Massachusetts Tournament title to the Mount Greylock championship banner for the second year in a row, they remain set on the next game in the state tournament. ♦



Photo Courtesy of Dan Warren

Athlete Spotlight: Mai O'Connor

By KRISHIV MALHOTRA

The Echo sat down with sophomore Mai O'Connor, who recently completed a 14-1-0 regular season with the Mount Greylock girls tennis team. The team was a finalist in the Western Massachusetts Class C final against Lee.

Echo: What was the record for the team this season, and how was the season overall?

Mai O'Connor: So far we are 14-2 so we are kind of dominating, but the season is not over yet so we'll see what happens. Overall the team atmosphere has been great. It's a small group, and really close-knit.

E: How was the season for you personally?

MO: I've had a lot of fun. My opponents have all been significantly different in terms of playing style being much different this year compared to other years. Some hit really hard and like short points while others try to draw it out. No matter what though, they've all been super friendly, and those mid-game convos have been some of my favorite parts of the season.

E: What was your best match this season?

MO: I played someone from Minnechuag a couple of weeks ago in a tournament and they were just so much better than me. Once I got into it I knew that there wouldn't be a good chance of me winning, so that gave me permission to kind of let go and mess around. Yes, I was thoroughly crushed, but I walked away feeling really good and thankful that I got to play that day.

E: What was the best memory from the season?

MO: Probably watching the boy's team win their first match. They're a super young team, and it was a great moment to see them get a team victory.

E: When did you start to play tennis, and what inspired it?

MO: I had played for fun a bit before, but my 8th grade year at Greylock was my first time playing organized tennis. I wanted another way to be active in the year since soccer is only in the fall so I joined the racket sport.

E: Is there anything else you would like to add?

MO: I think another shout-out to the boy's team. They're the ones always working hard at practice and also seem to be having the most fun. It can definitely be a lot at times, but they and also obviously the rest of the girls team are the reason this season has been so enjoyable. ♦



Photo Courtesy of Stephanie Zollshan, the Berkshire Eagle

SPORTS

Little Kid Track: History and Impact

By KNOWL STROUD

Every year during the spring track season, over 100 Mount Greylock and elementary school students gather for eight sessions of Little Kid Track. These Monday and Wednesday night events display the joy of athletics and the power of community service.

The Little Kid Track program began originally with two town families and the Williamstown Youth Center. 15 years ago Brian and Julie Gill took the program over and created a collaboration with Mount Greylock Regional School. The program serves as a way to give younger kids experience with the sport of Track and Field with high school students as their coaches.

Local kids in grades Pre-K through 6th get a chance to partake in a variety of track events, from hurdles to high jump. The program is led by Mount Greylock Physical Education teacher and track coach Brian Gill, and his wife, Julie Gill.

A typical night starts out with dinner at the Gills' house graciously prepared by Julie Gill, who feeds up to 60 hungry athletes twice a week. "[The dinners] are a lot of work, but I love them," said Julie, who added that "having the athletes not only practice and compete together, but

also be able to come together to play and to eat together just makes for a really neat team culture." After dinner, the athlete-coaches gather for a quick meeting before heading off to the Williams College track.

Once there, the high-schoolers lead the kids in quick games to warm up before taking the elementary schoolers through eight stations where they run, jump, hurdle and throw, constantly trying to set new personal records and engaging in friendly competition.

This hasn't always been the system of Little Kid Track. Before the Gills took over, parent volunteers served as coaches, many of whom had minimal track and field experience. Gill realized that having high schoolers teach the skills that they had been learning could be a great way to solidify these skills. "From my perspective, it's great training and reinforcement -- it helps our athletes appreciate the coaching they're receiving," said Gill.

However, the eventual benefits go well beyond training. "I kind of underestimated the real value of that service by our high school kids," Gill said. "Parents are blown away that our kids would invest in their kids."

Many Mount Greylock students also appreciate the fun times and opportunities for reflection that Little Kid Track brings. "It allows the highschoolers to experience what it's like to be a coach," said Sophomore Noah Klompus. Besides the ability to step into their coaches' shoes, Klompus said, "since many of us did the program as kids, it's a great way to look back at where we came from and help the next generation get the experience we did."

Other students, like Junior Declan Rogers, simply enjoy traditions like the special chant that ends each night. Sophomore Katherine Goss remembers fondly the post-Little Kid Track races in the dark with teammates.

It's hard to say who benefits more from the program -- the high school coaches or the young participants. The young athletes can sometimes get discouraged, but their relentless pursuit of new personal records and their infectious smiles show just how much the program means to them. "It's a win-win," said Julie Gill. "The high schoolers love it and the little kids love it." ♦

Spring Sports Season Draws to a Close

By ANDREW PETROPULOS

As Mount Greylock sports teams approach the end of the 2023 spring season, the school's athletic success has been on display throughout Berkshire County. Here is a summary of how each team has performed and what their upcoming competitions look like (as of Monday, June 5):

The girls track and field team has gone undefeated this year, and they recently competed in the Western Massachusetts Division Two Championships. The meet was a blowout victory; Greylock racked up 107 points to second place Frontier's 78. Junior and leading figure on the team Maggie Nichols has dominated sprints. She recently set the school's record for the 200m dash, and won in the Western Massachusetts 100m and 200m dash.

Sophomore Katherine Goss has helped the Mounties score in the 100m and 400m hurdles, and Lily Catelotti has been consistently competitive in discus. The team placed second at the Massachusetts Division Six Championships, which took place on May 25 and 27.

In a similar fashion, the boys track and field team has gone undefeated this season. The team won in the Western Massachusetts Division Two Championships and scored 131 points to Frontier's 63.5. Junior Quinn McDermott has led the team, an 800m specialist who also competes in the 400m dash and the mile. Senior Matteo Chang has been the top performer in the 100m and 200m dash, and Senior Chase Doyle has had a successful debut year specializing in high jump and the 110m hurdles. Like the girls, the boys team placed second at the Division Six



Photo Courtesy of Dan Warren

MIAA State Championship. In its second season, the Unified Track team has also had a successful year.

This year has been a rebuilding one for the baseball team, having lost seven seniors who helped lead the team to win the MIAA State Championship last season. The team's record this season is 4-15. Jackson Shelsy led the offense with 22 hits, 23 runs and a .361 batting average. Dylan Harrison led in home runs. The team did not qualify for the Western Massachusetts Tournament or the MIAA State Tournament.

The softball team has found more success, earning a 12-6 record. After a loss to Greenfield last week, they bounced back to win their Western Massachusetts quarter final against

Westfield Tech, 16-3. They went on to beat Taconic High School in the tournament's semifinals, though they lost again to Greenfield in the championship game. The team now moves on to the MIAA State Tournament, and will next play Carver High School in the round of 32.

The girls lacrosse team has done well this season with a record of 16-0-2. Their only losses have been to Burr and Burton and Minnechaug. Senior Sarah Pulumbo has led the team in scoring, with over 100 goals this season. Senior Ainsly Abel has 78 goals, and Junior Lexi Politis has 35. The team won the Western Massachusetts Championship, beating Pope Francis 19-2. At the time of publication, the team most recently won their round of 32 game in the MIAA State Tournament, and will next play at home in the round of 16 on Tuesday, June 6.

The girls tennis team has had huge success in their regular season, remaining undefeated with a record of 14-1-0. The team lost to Lee in the Western Massachusetts Tournament semifinal. They will next play Ipswich High School at home on June 6 for the MIAA State Tournament round of 16. The boys tennis team has an even regular season record of 4-0-4. The team lost to Cohasset High School in the Division IV State Tournament round of 32.

Though the spring season is over for some Mount Greylock teams, many are still competing in the MIAA State Tournament, which will continue throughout the week. ♦

OPINIONS

Red, White, and Royal Blue: Your Next Comfort Book

By SYLVIE CLOWES

Red, White & Royal Blue by Casey McQuiston is one of my absolute favorite books. Published in 2019, I first read it in the early days of quarantine. The book revolves around Alex, the son of the first female president of the United States, and Henry, the prince of England.

Their relationship is one of the very few instances where I have enjoyed the enemies-to-lovers trope. McQuiston manages to actually include character development for both of them while still keeping the story fast-paced enough that they end up dating fairly quickly (even if they do have to keep it secret from pretty much everyone, which they are rather bad at).

At the same time as these two are getting together, Alex's mom is running for re-election, making it absolutely imperative that Alex not cause any problems. I love that realistic-ish politics are featured, especially because comparing the royal family to the president's family is great.

You get betrayal and scandal to go along with it, and there are lots of random historical facts tossed in, especially about past presidents. It is a far less anxiety-inducing presidency than past ones have been for me, giving it more points in the comfort book section.

Another part of this book that I absolutely love is the found family aspect. McQuinson creates a little group of relatives and close friends that actually get personalities, something that I

often find missing in other romances.

For example, we have Nora, Alex's best friend and ex. She is my favorite character, although Pez, Henry's best friend, comes in as a close second. She is smart, doesn't sugarcoat her words, and loves Chipotle and statistics. What more could anyone ask for? Also, she is likely either dating June, Alex's sister, or Pez. I con-

“You get betrayal and scandal to go along with it, and there are lots of random historical facts tossed in.”

tinue to believe that they are all dating (there is definitely enough in-text proof, especially when one considers that this is from Alex's point of view and he has no idea how almost anything, other than politics, works).

This book is happy, with just enough angst to keep it interesting, and is definitely my comfort book. It is long, sweet, and really just the best thing to read on a rainy day (figuratively or literally).

Also, about halfway through the book, it begins including little quotations that Henry

and Alex send to one another that apply to each individual and their relationship. For example, Alex sends to Henry, “The truth is I am an unlucky honest man, that speak my sentiments to all and with emphasis” (Alexander Hamilton to his son).

The entire book is rather funny (in my opinion, feel free to contradict, I love a good argument). I end up laughing while reading it, which is another reason why it is a great comfort book.

Anyway, please go read it if you haven't, or reread it if you have. Just don't be surprised if you find yourself up until 4 a.m. doing so. ♦

Are you interested in being a

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Join the Echo Today.

mountgreylockecho@gmail.com

My Soundtrack of High School

By KIERSTEN SIMPSON

When I look back on the last four years at Mount Greylock, something that always sticks out is the music I was listening to at the time. As I've become more and more of a person, my music taste has obviously shifted. And yet, I look back on the music that I listened to with a certain level of fondness. So, without further ado: the songs and albums that have defined my high school experience.

“Danglin” - Maury Yeston (The Johnny Rogers version, specifically)

This song was absolutely integral to my ninth and tenth grade years. First introduced to me by none other than fellow senior Sam Tucker-Smith, this silly, little, melancholic tune feels like the best parts of the early days of the pandemic: getting to truly connect with my peers. Even with such bummer lyrics as “seems that I never know/when it's time to let go,” this song never fails to make me smile when it comes up on my Spotify liked songs.

“Hot & Heavy” - Lucy Dacus

I am somewhat on the record as a Lucy Dacus stan. I think that she's one of the best lyricists alive today. To me, “Hot & Heavy” is the best example of this lyricism. I will forever associate this song with sitting in the grass on a warm spring day and imagining being the kind of human that Dacus laments in this song: the “biggest brightest flame....a fire that can't be

tamed.” I've had my fair share of Hot & Heavy-coded friendships, and they've always felt a little bittersweet, but I can't help but love this song.

“Mr. Perfectly Fine” - Taylor Swift

This song perfectly sums up my experience with Taylor Swift in high school. I'll never forget where I was when this song dropped. AP Euro, Block 2. I had just finished taking a test. I remember frantically texting my peers about how excited we were. This is a moment that has been replicated many times; whether that is *Midnights* music videos or surprise releases of 1989 (*Taylor's Version*) songs. But something about “Mr. Perfectly Fine” is deeply sentimental to me.

“Good Old Fashioned Lover Boy” - Queen

This song is less about myself and more about who I've played. Two of my favorite roles ever have been Orlando in *As You Like It* and Lysander in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Both of these characters are borderline defined by their good old fashioned lover boy tendencies, so I harbor a lot of love for those characters and this song.

“Hotel Room Service” - Pitbull

I realize this is something of a tonal shift. Indie Rock and oldies generally don't associate with party music. But this song is perhaps

the one on this list that I look back on with the greatest level of fondness. I associate this song with going absolutely hog wild in dressing rooms while dressed as a 17th century prince or being in peak stage manager blacks. Singing along to some of the most vulgar euphemisms Mr. 305 could muster, fueled exclusively by adrenaline, caffeine and tech week tears will go down in history as one of the many peaks of my high school career.

HONORABLE MENTIONS: Songs I did not have the room for, but have still defined my high school experience:

“American Pie” - Don McClean: Many bright spring days were fueled by this song.

“Expert in a Dying Field” - The Beths: Classics/English double major. Need I say more?

“Believe” - Cher: My first ever concert, ninth grade, roughly three months before the world shut down.

“Graceland Too” - Phoebe Bridgers: A beautiful song that I have fallen asleep to on repeat many times after many essays. ♦

ETC.

Run to Bigg Daddy's Philly Steak House

By RAFAEL MELLOW-BARTELS

Eating and grilling outdoors is a popular choice for a hot summer night. If you are a fellow meat lover like myself, then I have good news for you. A new restaurant has opened that is famous for its Philly cheesesteaks. Called Bigg Daddy's Philly Steak House, it is located within the MASS MoCA complex in North Adams.

Since we live in New England, some of you may be wondering what a Philly cheesesteak is. A Philly cheesesteak consists of very thinly sliced pieces of grilled steak with melted cheese (typically American) on a hoagie roll. It often has toppings like grilled onions, peppers, etc.

Why Philly, you might ask? I did a little research, and it turns out that the cheesesteak was invented in the 1930s by Pat Olivieri, who ran a hot dog cart in Philadelphia. Olivieri's version didn't include the cheese, which came a decade later. Since then, it has grown in popularity and has become a big attraction for visitors to the city. But you don't have to go to Philly to try one. Now you can just head on over to North Adams.

On my quest to learn more about Bigg Daddy's, I tried both their classic Cheesesteak and their Cheesesteak Hoagie. The Cheesesteak Hoagie is like the classic Cheesesteak but has additional toppings, like tomatoes, lettuce, and peppers. Both of them were astonishingly delicious. The steak is tender and the cheese melts

in your mouth.

My personal preference was the Cheesesteak Hoagie because of the additional toppings and the perfect ratio of peppers, onions, cheese, and meat. But if you are not a fan of spicy peppers, then I recommend you try the classic Cheesesteak. I suggest you get a side of onion rings to go with your cheesesteak. I love onion rings, and I believe that Bigg Daddy's has some of the best. They are both crunchy and light, the perfect side to go with a Philly Cheesesteak.

Now, if you are not a fan of Philly cheesesteak, don't worry, because Bigg Daddy's offers a wide range of foods. From chicken wings and chicken caesar wraps to burgers and BBQ pulled pork, Bigg Daddy's has it all.

Also on the menu are salads, sweet potato fries, cole slaw, and collard greens for those who don't eat meat or as a way to add some vegetables to the meal for those who do. Although everything on their menu that I tried (and I tried a lot!) is exceptional, their Cheesesteak and Cheesesteak Hoagie is their specialty and by far my favorite.

Bigg Daddy's Philly Steak House definitely lives up to its name, as they serve big portions. The pricing is affordable and quite reasonable for the amount of food that they give you. Depending on how many people are there, the wait for food can sometimes take a while but it is definitely worth it.

Bigg Daddy's is a perfect place to go on a warm summer night, as their outside atmosphere is lively and inviting, a nice place to have a chill dinner. The restaurant has plenty of outdoor seating, though it has no indoor seating. If you are in a rush or would rather eat at home, they also do takeout.

Since Bigg Daddy's is located in North Adams, it is only a quick drive from Williamstown. If you are in Lanesborough or Hancock, it may be a little less convenient. However, I definitely suggest giving Bigg Daddy's Philly Steak House a visit no matter how far the drive. Their food is worth it, and I guarantee that you will want to come back for more. ♦



Read more up-to-date news on the
Greyllock Echo website

Goodbye Letter from the Editor

By MOLLY SULLIVAN

Dear Mount Greyllock community,

When I was in eighth grade, my dream was to be a sports reporter. I wanted to commentate on games, cover stats and recaps, and interview players and coaches.

In order to prepare for my future job at ESPN, I decided to check out the *Greyllock Echo*. I figured that I could write a few news articles for them to prove I'm a good writer and then write exclusively for the sports section. It couldn't have gone more differently.

Upon joining the *Echo*, I was assigned an abundance of articles, most having nothing to do with sports. Every time a print issue would be published and distributed around the entire school, I would cringe and hope that no one hated my writing or made fun of me for being in a nerd club.

Because of these fears and my wish to write sports articles instead of what I was being assigned, I considered quitting the *Echo*. Honestly, I can't stress enough how thankful I am that I stuck with it. I don't recall why I decided to stick with it. I'm just so thankful that I did.

Throughout my time with the *Echo*, I became interested in the intricacies of our society. I used my pen to dive into the issues that faced our school population and our more diverse world. I discovered that my true passion

was exploring and finding solutions to the systematic problems in our world, and this realization completely changed the colleges I looked at, the classes I took, and the extracurriculars I participated in.

The *Echo* additionally brought me relationships that I am so grateful for. Whether it was a late night text to a Simpson for an extra article, a layout editing session with Elena, or emails to the Lucys (McWeeny and Igoe) for extra editing help, I looked around during my year as EIC and saw supportive coworkers, and more importantly, supportive friends.

I want to thank the past editors and Mr. Niemeyer for giving me the opportunity to serve as your EIC and teaching me how to run this amazing newspaper. Thank you to Lucy Igoe, Quin, Sylvie, Elena, and all my writers for the hard work and the amazing support.

Another thanks to Kitt Urdang, an awesome helper from the Williams Record. Thank you to our printing company, the school, the students, and everyone who reads this paper. It's been an honor.

And finally, thank you to the one and only Lucy McWeeny. If you're reading this right now, you are holding Lucy's first print edition, and I know she's done an amazing job. Lucy, you are an incredible writer and editor and, of course, an amazing friend. I'm overjoyed to

hand this paper over to you.

My final advice is this: stay informed, read and write about issues that are important to you, and try your best to make our world a better place. Be thankful for the people and things you are a part of. Someday, you'll have to say goodbye.

My hope is that at some point in the future, our news headlines no longer have to cover war, death, and destruction, but instead are able to spend more time highlighting the beautiful things happening all over this sensational Earth.

And one last important piece of advice: Join the *Echo*!

With love,
Molly Sullivan ♦

Record the news through pictures
and words.

Join the Echo Today.

mountgreyllockecho@gmail.com

ETC.

Judy Blume on Screen

By ANABEL GONZALES

On Mother’s Day weekend, I went to see *Are You There God? It’s Me, Margaret* with my mom. We both grew up with the book that this movie is an adaptation of and were nothing short of ecstatic. We went to a showing at noon and ended up teary eyed and very moved by the end of it.

It’s hard to find a book that is so timeless it can seamlessly carry from generation to generation, and just as hard to adapt that book into a movie that is just as timeless. However, *Are You There God? It’s Me, Margaret*, directed by Kelly Fremon Craig under the supervision of Judy Blume herself, does so in a way that is incredibly captivating.

I won’t spoil it for anyone who hasn’t had the pleasure of reading or watching it for themselves, but the general idea is that an 11-year-old girl, Margaret, moves from New York City to the New Jersey suburbs while having to deal

with family dynamics, growing up, hormones, and most importantly, religion.

I will be blunt. I consider myself an atheist. Of course, I believe that religion is a beautiful thing and I love the concept of people finding community in their belief system, but none of it resonates with me and I feel little to no connection to any kind of church. The book perfectly explains the feelings and worries that coincide with this discovery of faith, and the movie rendition only amplifies it through wonderful acting. We can see Margaret’s own crisis of faith come into play throughout the movie, and it is so beautiful, heartbreaking and relatable.

Along with religion, the themes of girlhood are beautifully portrayed. Getting ready for your first fancy party, blistering your feet to get an invite, or even just the awkward silence as you pay for tampons was extremely real and raw.

One other thing I absolutely loved about this movie was how perfectly timeless it felt. The overall vibe was current and not at all dated, yet due to the color scheme, soundtrack, costumes and set, you could still remember and see that it takes place in the 1970s, which I greatly appreciated from a cinematography standpoint.

I have no bad notes. I think that it was true to the book, as timeless as can be, and the small things that were added, such as Margaret’s mother’s storyline, felt completely natural and added even more depth.

So if you want to cry a little in a movie theater over being a teenage girl at 1:15 in the afternoon like I did, I 100% recommend this movie. And even if you don’t especially like crying in matinees, or teenage girls, or crying, or even matinees, I recommend this movie because it may just change your mind. ♦

EphVotes Visits Mount Greylock

By MOLLY SULLIVAN

On May 5, EphVotes, a Williams College club similar to Mount Greylock’s Register, Educate, Vote (REV), came to give a Greylock Talk to outgoing seniors about the process of voting away from home. Rachel Schmidt, the Williams student who presented, explained the two main ways that students can vote once they leave their hometown: by absentee ballot or by changing their address.

“Back in the fall, after the election, [REV] was looking for new initiatives,” REV president Annie Art said. Vice president Jennah Simpson and Art met with EphVotes in December to discuss their clubs and possible future collaborations. They came up with the idea of having an event to help outgoing seniors learn how to vote if they are away from home next year.

Despite low turnout to the event, Art said she thought the presentation went well. “I think the people who did go appreciated it and are now prepared to vote next year,” she said.

Jannah Simpson also found the event informative, but pointed out that “unfortunately most of the people there were going to school in New England and could just travel home to vote.”

The first way students can vote away from home is to keep their registration at the same address and vote using an absentee ballot. To do this, they need to request a ballot in advance of the election by filling out an application and sending it to their town office. Instructions for this process can easily be found on the town or the Massachusetts state website.

“It’s a simple process, but you do have to be on top of it before election day,” Art said.

The other option is for students to change their home address in order to vote at the place they are living. If they are away from home for college or living in a new state or town, they can change their legal address to that place and vote there.

In terms of which one might be more advantageous, Art said it really depends on the situation. “In some states, voting on an issue in a certain way has a lot of influence. Changing your registration to be in that state might be more beneficial,” Art said.

Art left outgoing seniors with one final piece of advice: to make sure you are registered to vote, and then to exercise that right. ♦

Mini Crossword

Created by EZRA HOLZAPFEL

1	2	3	4		
					6
5					
				7	
	8		9		
10					

ACROSS

- 1. Mortar ____ (Graduation Accessory)
- 5. Swear an ____
- 7. Prefix meaning two
- 8. Relating to the pope
- 10. Moved from one side of cap to the other at graduation

DOWN

- 1. Thistle Nickname
- 2. On Air (acronym)
- 3. ____ Shrugged (Ayn Rand title)
- 4. Opposite of LH
- 6. Greylock triple jump record holder
- 7. Term of affection
- 8. Where the pledge comes from
- 9. Letter writer’s additional thought

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