

The Greylock Echo

Graduation Edition

Mount Greylock - Williamstown, MA

June 8th, 2024

Argentina Trip

BY JACLYNN KASTRINAKIS

Over April break, Mount Greylock Spanish Four classes and higher had the option to take an international trip to La Cumbre, Cordoba, Argentina, to learn about different cultures and become involved with other communities.

The trip was just over a week long, and Mount Greylock students had a chance to go to an Argentinian private school and integrate themselves with their education system. Along with fun activities, Greylock students had to give a presentation in English about the town they're from.

In the process of creating the trip, Mount Greylock Spanish teachers had some difficulties getting the visit exactly how they wanted it to be.

Spanish teacher Joe Johnson said, "Greylock hadn't done an international trip in a long time, and I was advised -wisley- not to do a homestay... we weren't able to make the trip exactly what we'd imagined...but it turned into a blessing to have some space between us and our host by staying in the hotel."

During Greylock student's time in Argentina, the trip planned itself. Students, although supervised, got to plan their own stay and not be completely restricted by faculty.

Johnson said, "I think it's very satisfying as a teacher to just set the conditions in which you hope there is going to be a lot of exchange...and just stand back and watch it happen."

While spending time at the Argentinian school, Greylock students had many opportunities to gain knowledge about being a student in a different country.

Junior Alec Sills said, "Getting to spend time observing, participating and comparing with different cultures is absolutely irreplaceable."

Senior Anabel Gonzales said, "I think everyone should have an opportunity to do it... we really did connect and bond with the students...we made meaningful connections and friendships...it was just so amazing to have that opportunity... Something that I really valued was the fact that, because we were with the specific people, we felt like regular people in another... small town. It didn't feel touristy or forced. We were experiencing domestic life the way it actually is in another country."

The time on the trip was not just spent in school. The Argentinian students also planned a hike they do three times a year a fourth time just for Mount Greylock students. One hike was eight hours long through hilly terrain, and another was a three hour hike called "Los Terrones," or mini wonders, that included horseback riding, zip lining, card games and a hotel horror experience.

Sophomore Yeshe Rai said that his most memorable part of the trip was "horseback riding...but overall one of my favorite things was just walking around town with Argentinian students."

Similarly, junior Polly Rhie said, "I think my favorite part was being able to meet all of the students that we'd been talking to months beforehand...it was fun being able to pull out some Spanish to order food...by the end of the trip it felt more natural to begin speaking it and I felt more confident."

For the teachers, it was a great experience to see how their students act outside of a classroom environment.

"Every single kid's stock went up on this trip," said Johnson. "You learned so much about them and their personalities that you don't see in the classroom." ♦



Photo Courtesy of Shannon Vigeant

2 in 650: Interviews with Graduation Speakers

BY AMELIA MADRIGAL



Photos Courtesy of Martin and Welch

Every year, the student body and staff each choose one speaker for Graduation. Judge Martin, captain of the football, basketball and track teams and class vice president, was chosen by the students. Vincent Welch, cross country and track captain, frequent star of the musical and class president, was chosen by the staff. The Greylock Echo sat down with both speakers to discuss their time here at Mount Greylock.

Echo: Who (teachers/students/others) has had the biggest influence on you while at Greylock?

Martin: There have been many teachers but Mr. Thistle and Coach Gill have had the greatest impact. Coach Gill has been one of my favorite teachers and most impactful coaches I've ever had. Mr. Thistle was my math teacher and basketball coach. He helped me find a lot of confidence in myself in class and on the court as an athlete.

Welch: I've had such positive interactions over my time here. The immediate two that come to mind are Anne and Nancy in the front office. They brighten my day every morning when I go in for the announcements.

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GMSU Hosts Multicultural Food Fair

Amelia Madrigal recaps the new Greylock tradition. See Page 3

Cell Phone Policy

Shubham Devre investigates the new phone policy. See Page 5

Senior Destinations

Where are the seniors headed after Graduation? See Page 7

Perspective on Privilege

Krishiv Malhotra looks at privilege in the context of a trip to India. See Page 6

NEWS

“Adorkable” Features at Berkshire Youth Film Festival

BY ADELE LOW

Images Cinema hosted the annual Berkshire Youth Film Festival for the community on May 4. This event is a compilation of films that are made by high school and college students throughout the Berkshires.

This year, sophomore Frankie Evans created a film with a few other Mount Greylock students that was featured in the show. She wrote the script, directed the production and handled all of the filming and editing. Filming and writing started in December of last year. The film was finished in late February.

Evans called the film “Adorkable,” and described it as “a cheesy rom-com.” She originally decided to make the film for a pre-college program, but unfortunately the program was canceled. When asked about the film, Evans said, “It’s a cute little romance thing, except it’s kind of a farce of a 2000s rom-com...it’s very awkward, but I love it.”

The buildup to the festival itself is a lengthy process, and the films have to go through judges before they can be shown. In total, there were nineteen films accepted and shown at the event. Most were made by college students, and there were a variety of productions.

First year Mai Dekel, who attended the production, said, “While a lot of the films were dramatic and surreal, there were several comedies represented throughout which gave the whole experience a nice balance.” When talking about the actual experience of the production, she

said, “it was fun to be able to recognize different parts of town and to see new material on the big screen.”

Evans’ film was about eight minutes long,



Photo Courtesy of Frankie Evans

and all of the filming happened at the school. “We filmed in the auditorium, we got permission to use the hallway as well. We used Mr. Welch’s room, we used Ms. Houle’s room... [and] the cafeteria,” said Evans. The romantic protagonists were played by junior Alec Sills and senior Luka Lash-St. John. Junior Kaeya Durley, sophomore Jack Uhas, sophomore

Yeshe Rai and sophomore Tess Moresi also participated as extras.

“It was my first time acting in something that was filmed as opposed to doing live theater...it was a really useful experience,” said Lash-St. John.

The awkwardness of the story made for a couple funny moments on set, but the cast bonded over working on something so silly.

“There was a lot of awkward laughter and we were just kind of joking off sometimes... but it was really fun to get to know people, from every part of the cast,” said Lash-St. John. “What I found interesting about it is that it was a lot more spread out, so we were doing it for hours at a time at school, over a couple of months, and that was a little funky when you’re creating a story.”

Although many of the students in the film were not very familiar with each other before the process began, many agree that the fun and spunky vibe on set brought them closer.

When asked about his experience throughout the past chunk of months, Uhas said, “I had a lot of fun. It was a very creative environment and we got to work with a lot of people who had important insights about the industry. I just loved it.” ♦

Future of REV

BY FRANKIE EVANS

Register Educate Vote (REV), a club organized by a group of students in 2018, is currently deciding their future.

REV tries to increase awareness about current events in the world as well as increase voter registration. They hand out flyers and stickers, and, in years past, published a “media weekly” discussing current events. REV is committed to educating people and strives to be non-partisan when discussing political matters.

“Educating students and more importantly, distributing resources that are varied that will help them become educated as citizens is the main goal of REV,” said REV advisor Mary MacDonald.

Unfortunately for REV, they have been having trouble with regular attendance and drumming up support among younger students. “Probably twenty three people signed up, but our meetings sometimes have just three,” MacDonald said. She credited student’s “busy schedules” for lack of attendance.

To try to address this problem, MacDonald said that they have tried meeting at alternate times -- to no avail. “We’ve tried afternoon meetings, we’ve tried evening zoom meetings, we’ve tried a combination of both, and [participants] just can’t accommodate it because they’re in three plays, or in three sports, or they’re working.”

This lack of attendance created doubt about the future of the club. “It was mostly seniors, and there weren’t that many underclassmen

involved,” said senior REV and student council member Mira Boyer. “We were worried that once we graduated, no one would take over REV.”

According to Boyer, negotiations were mainly about “whether or not [REV] will be meeting during Directed Study or become a [student council] sub-committee... or coexist with student council.”

“I’m excited that the sentiment is still strong and the desire to learn is still strong, which is the whole point of REV.”

- REV Advisor Mary MacDonald

However, when disbandment or becoming a subcommittee for the student council was brought up, younger students spoke up. “The sentiment and purpose of REV is something that students really want to continue,” MacDonald explained.

“There’s some other ideas that students would like to address,” said MacDonald. Some examples she listed were “opportunities to discuss current events...current event tables,

maybe bi-weekly, the same way there’s a Spanish lunch table – but of course that will require students communicating that and getting materials for students to read beforehand, so they can discuss cogently.”

If REV does become a subcommittee, the student council will “be responsible for some of the bigger issues of REV... [such as] bringing in speakers that can expand student’s understanding of civil and political issues, and that segues nicely because we already do Greylock talks,” said MacDonald.

REV and the student council invited Professor Nicole E. Mellow, Williams College political science professor, to give a Greylock Talk. They also invited Judge John Agostini of the Berkshire Superior Court bench to give a talk at the end of May. “I enjoyed the Greylock Talks,” said Boyer, “I can definitely see that coming back.”

“So lots of ideas,” said MacDonald, “so I’m excited by that. I’m excited that the sentiment is still strong and the desire to learn is still strong, which is the whole point of REV.”

REV has an important mission, so whatever they decide, the members of REV will stay true to their mission of educating people about current political events and encouraging them to take part.

“So keep an eye out for next year and whatever happens,” said Boyer. ♦

NEWS

GMSU Hosts Multicultural Food Fair

BY AMELIA MADRIGAL

The Greylock Multicultural Student Union (GMSU) hosted a Multicultural Food Fair on Friday, May 24. The fair was a potluck-style cultural celebration. It took place in the Mount Greylock cafeteria and was free of cost for the community.

In order to have dishes for the event, the GMSU asked members of the Mount Greylock community to make and bring a culturally significant dish. The families and individuals that brought dishes were prompted to write a small paragraph about their dish's importance. These paragraphs were added to a card with the name of the dish and the ingredients, an idea that the club hoped would let people learn about some of the different cultures at Greylock.

Altogether, the fair boasted 24 different foods and three drinks. Club president and sophomore Krishiv Malhotra said, "I never imagined [the event] would be this big." Because of the large turnout relative to the amount of food that was donated, most of the food was gone less than an hour into the event.

The inspiration for the event dates back years. "One of my old elementary schools had a multicultural fair that was formatted as kind of a fashion show. [Sara, Krishiv and I] started talking about it, and the idea turned into a potluck," said first year and co-vice president Sabine Guerra.

Especially since Mount Greylock is a predominantly white school, the club wanted to have the event to celebrate the diversity of the student body and staff. The GMSU has been

looking for ways to reach out to the community and help foster an inclusive space for diversity. Guerra said, "it's important [to the club's mission] to celebrate what is different about all of us."

During the event, Malhotra gave a speech that was sensitive to the tumultuous year the



Photo Courtesy of Krishiv Malhotra

Mount Greylock community has had with instances of racism and discrimination. In it, he described how he thought food was a great way to recognize the diversity in the community and the inclusive message of the GMSU.

Seventh grader Maya Filson helped to diversify the types of food available at the food fair by bringing a popular Puerto Rican drink called

Coquito. Filson said, "I liked how not everyone brought the same [type of food]. You could eat an actual dinner."

Most of the student club members participated by bringing their own dishes and the club's advisor, Ramita Jain, was no exception. Jain contributed an Indian chickpea dish called Chole. This year marks her first year as co-advisor for the GMSU. Jain said how she was very happy to watch the students come up with ideas and work together to put them in motion.

Health and biology teacher Carolyn Starz showed an admirable level of commitment when she not only brought a dish but did a live cooking demonstration at the event. Stationed at Table 1, Starz demonstrated how to make a traditional Swedish dessert called Lefse. "[Lefse] is a potato flatbread from Scandinavia... [that] me, my two sisters, my mom and my grandma would make it at Christmastime," said Starz.

The club worked hard to spread the word about the event, and it seemed to have paid off. Many Mount Greylock students came to enjoy the fair. "It's very great to see such an inviting place," said eighth grader Morris Israel. "I did not bring anything, but I was excited to try all these dishes."

Following the success of their inaugural food fair, the GMSU hopes to have kickstarted a new Greylock tradition. Moreover, the current leaders of the group are hopeful that this event has inspired students to join in for the 2024-25 academic year. ♦

Electric Car Chargers Return to Mount Greylock

BY ARTHUR MILLET

When the new school building at Mount Greylock was built back in 2018, electric car chargers in the parking lot were part of the building plans. The chargers that are currently in place meant that the school received a Silver Certification for Energy Efficiency from LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) and the state funding that comes along with that certification. Although the current chargers have been powered off for several years, there is a plan underway to install new ones in the near future.

While some chargers have been already installed, they were not suitable for the amount of use they would encounter. The original chargers were not very fast and did not have the ability to connect to the internet in order to process credit card payments. This often led to people who were not related to the school leaving their cars plugged in overnight or on the weekends. The district determined that taxpayer money should not be used to charge people's cars, many of whom did not live in Williamstown or Lanesborough.

The district applied for a grant to install five new chargers at Mount Greylock and a few at the elementary schools in the district. They will be level three, which means they can charge cars faster than the old ones and will be able to process credit card payments. New chargers have already been installed at Lanesborough

Elementary.

However, the process is taking longer for Mount Greylock and Williamstown Elementary because the district is working with a different power company in Williamstown and they still need to complete other work before the char-

"We are really committed to helping the earth be a better place, a greener place and a safer place for your generation."

- Superintendent Jason McCandless

gers can be installed. Although it is unknown when this work will be complete, this is the only obstacle that is preventing them from being installed at this point, since the funding has already been obtained through the grant.

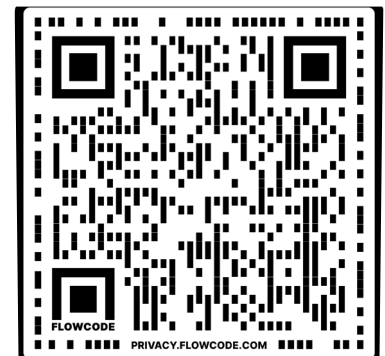
The district has also said that the chargers will be open to anyone who needs to charge their car on weekends or during the summer, which will complement the chargers at Williams College in Williamstown.

"We are really committed to helping the earth be a better place, a greener place and a

safer place for your generation and the generations to come," said Superintendent Jason McCandless. "I could see about half a dozen people using them once they are installed."

Many students feel positively about the change. "I would definitely use it, as I have an electric car myself," said first year Aero Higdon-Topaz.

While the timeline for the new installation remains up in the air, the true fulfillment of the promises used to acquire the building's environmental certification is at least on the horizon. ♦



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NEWS

AP Exams Go Digital

BY MACKENZIE ALACRO

The AP exam testing season came with a change in the presentation of some of the tests. Traditionally, the AP exams and other College Board exams have been administered exclusively as paper exams. As of this year, a number of AP exams have been administered digitally. These exams included: Computer Science Principles, English Language, English Literature, European History, U.S. History, Seminar, World History: Modern and African American Studies.

These exams were administered over the Bluebook app instead of the traditional paper and pencil test. The Bluebook app is automatically installed into all school-issued Chromebooks. All schools have the choice of either digital or paper and pencil for the exams provided. The College Board stated, "Digital exams include the same number of sections, number and type of questions, question choice (if applicable), and timing as the paper exams." In other words, the material of the exams will not be altered in any way, just the format they are provided in.

The switch to digital was mediated by sev-

eral issues with paper testing as well as the general trend of education moving to a digital field. In a statement released after the decision, College Board said, "Digital exams are the future of AP testing. They remove the need to manage paper exam booklets on exam day and reduce the risk of exam security issues and lost exam responses."

The *Echo* sat down with AP English teacher Rebecca Tucker-Smith to get an AP teacher's view on this new change from paper to digital.

Echo: Do you think typing instead of handwritten will affect scores and how well students are able to perform?

Tucker-Smith: That's a great question. I just think that it's better because I think it's physically unpleasant to write. Like for English, it's three essays in two hours. I just think that writing by hand is unpleasant and also you cannot edit like you can online — we are used to writing on the screen where you can move things around. I just think you have access to more of the resources that we use.

Echo: Do you have a preference as an English Teacher on whether it should be digital or not?

Tucker-Smith: We had the choice this year to choose. In my ideal world, honestly, the test has an hour multiple choice that would be nice to do on paper. But I think the benefits of doing the essay digitally outweighs that.

Student opinions on the change were largely neutral. Many juniors took European History last year and United States History this year, two exams that were very similar in terms of format except for the change in medium. "It was pretty much the same in terms of difficulty," said junior Simon Shin. "Some parts were harder and some parts were easier."

Looking forward, it remains to be seen if all AP exams will eventually be migrated to online versions. In the meantime, it is important to consider the environmental, equity and physical effects of the choice between paper and digital exams. ♦

Laughs in "Lights Off"

BY KNOWL STROUD

Written and directed by senior Quin Repetto and sophomore Frankie Evans, the murder mystery and comedy "Lights Off" was a massive hit. All three shows received rave reviews from nearly everyone who attended, and the laughter in the auditorium was near constant.

Having a play be written and directed by students had a number of upsides. "We really wanted to customize it to be both a really good play and the best possible experience for our cast," said Repetto. "There is a large ensemble and a lot of big character roles."

In terms of the content, the choice for it to be a murder mystery was obvious. "Frankie and I were both really big fans of mysteries, and that



Photo Courtesy of Jack Uhas

was one of the first things that we connected over," said Repetto.

The result was a play that was enjoyable both for students and for those involved in it. "I thought it was rad...it was really funny," said junior Simon Shin. He identified the highly expressive French chef, played by junior Alec Sills, as his favorite part.

For Repetto, a favorite scene was hard to choose, but the "will reading, cat fight...and the last big chase scene" were some of the highlights.

"I'm really proud of everybody," said Repetto. "It was my last show and I was glad to go out with a bang." ♦

Senior Art Features

BY DASHIELL GONZALEZ

ARTIST'S STATEMENT:

For this painting I wanted to move away from the detail work that I'd come to feel comfortable with and attempt something more impressionistic/abstract. Instead of brushes I used a singular palette knife to smear paint across the canvas and experiment with making indentations/markings on the undried paint. ♦



By Finn Carothers

ARTIST'S STATEMENT:

This piece is oil on canvas. It is just a moonlit forest. I love the forest and also the moon. I wanted to create a piece that felt like home to me. ♦



By Marlee Alpi

NEWS & FEATURES

Mount Greylock Looks to Revise Cell Phone Policy

BY SHUBHAM DEVRE

At the start of the 2024-2025 school year, with the introduction of the new phone policy, all mobile devices and personal electronics will be banned at Mount Greylock. The School Committee came together on May 9 to discuss the electronic usage in the school and how it should be dealt with in the future.

During the meeting, Superintendent Jason McCandless discussed how Mount Greylock has handled mobile device usage over the years. In previous years, Mount Greylock's approach was to allow devices but minimize distractions by educating students on phone usage during the school day. At first, the school didn't support banning and locking away devices and chose to teach the students how electronics affect them, but the administration thought that approach did not work and are concerned with student phone usage.

"There is a part of me that really bristles at having rules that imply we don't trust you and that you can't make good decisions on your own, because the vast majority of our students make great decisions the vast majority of the time," said McCandless. "What we are doing right now works, but it doesn't work fully."

To further explain his reasoning, McCandless then described a transformative experience he had with Max Stossel, the speaker who came in during the fall to talk about phone use: "I had a chat with Max after one of his presentations and said to him, 'If you are a district leader or principal, what's your best advice for how we can best show that we love and care about stu-

dents in the context of mobile devices?'" Stossel's response was two words: "Ban them." He then gave McCandless many hundreds of pages of studies to read to back up his conclusion, and that interaction was really what kickstarted the process.

McCandless also believes that just having an electronic device around you can impact your ability to be present at any given time, neg-

"After doing research and looking at data, McCandless now supports limiting personal electronic usage in the school through the phone policy." - Shubham Devre

atively impacting your performance in school. "If my phone buzzes, I am immediately not 100 percent engaged," McCandless said. "I am, in my case, 80 percent engaged with this conversation and 20 percent engaged with thinking about what might be happening on my phone."

After doing research and looking at data, McCandless now supports limiting personal electronic usage in the school through the phone policy. While other schools have started

using Yondr bags to lock away phones during the day, he does not want Mount Greylock to take that route.

The phone policy would prohibit any type of student-owned technology that is not provided by the school district. That would include phones, tablets, personal computers, smart watches and gaming devices. Students will still be able to have their phones in their lockers, but will not be able to have them out during the day. They would still be able to use school-issued chromebooks for daily school use and school land-lines for contacting families.

The student body at Mount Greylock has had mixed opinions on the upcoming phone policy. Some students support the ban, arguing that it will help students academically and allow for more genuine social interactions. However, the majority of students are opposed to the policy.

A draft for the phone policy has been made, and will go to the Policy and Governance Subcommittee to run through their internal process. McCandless hopes to develop the policy language over the next few weeks in time for the full committee meeting on June 13.

"I think it gives the students the opportunity to do a favor for themselves and a favor for all of us that want [them] to be fully engaged in academic pursuits and socializing face to face during the school day," said McCandless. How exactly this opportunity will present is still to be determined. ♦

Graduation Speakers cont.

Echo: What was your favorite year/grade?

Martin: My favorite year was 10th grade, oddly enough, because it was our first full year back from COVID, and my older brother and I had a bunch of friends that were all seniors that year (2021). I started football that year, but mainly volleyball picked up. The volleyball fan section was my favorite thing about Mount Greylock because everyone would come together.

Welch: Senior year was my favorite year. I really enjoyed junior year, but it was very academically stressful. I think I've been able to enjoy my time more as a student of Mount Greylock as a senior. This year, I really just found the group of people that really just support me the most and want the best for me. All of us savoring these last few moments together has been a really special memory.

Echo: What are your plans for after graduation?

Martin: I'm going to Springfield College, and I'm going to major in physical education. I am also playing football there.

Welch: I am going to Providence College for a four year nursing degree, and hopefully after

that, I'm planning to become a nurse practitioner.

Echo: How are you feeling about graduating high school?

Martin: I'm scared, not going to lie. I've been with everyone here since we were in preschool. Leaving is a scary feeling. I know that graduation is probably going to be the last time we're all in the same room together. I'm lucky enough to speak in front of everyone at graduation and say how I'm truly feeling, but right now I'm more nervous than excited.

Welch: Definitely a big mix of nervousness and excitement. It's going to feel amazing to finally graduate and see all that everyone has accomplished over their time at Greylock. With my father working here, I've been a Mountie for my entire life. Transitioning from a current Mountie and only being an alum Mountie is definitely going to be a feeling I'm not used to. Despite this, I cannot wait to fully embrace the school spirit of Providence and transition from a Mountie to a Friar.

Echo: Is there any parting advice you'd like to leave fellow students?

Martin: Become closer with the ones around

you before you feel like you have to. This spring, I felt as if I'd realized that it's all coming to an end and now I'm starting to hang out with everyone in my grade more and more. Regardless of your grade, you only have a certain amount of years with these kids so why not become closer before you have to depart? By having older friends, I feel like I really missed out on the whole opportunity to just be with the kids in my grade. I regret that fully.

Welch: I'd say don't leave anything up to chance. If there is something that you really want to see happen, or something you really want to do or something you really want to be a part of, go for it immediately. There's no point in waiting around to see if someone else will do that instead of or for you. Being able to be a part of so much is what has made my time at Greylock so amazing. You will remember the feeling of being a part of something so much more than the feeling of not making a certain team or not succeeding in one thing. Knowing that you tried and you were a part of something is much more gratifying and memorable. ♦

NEWS & FEATURES

Perspective on Privilege

BY KRISHIV MALHOTRA

I recently went on a trip to India during February break, and going there opened my eyes in many ways.

Living in Williamstown and the United States, we often overlook our privileges, such as clean water, electricity, unpolluted skies and overcrowding.

People in India and many other developing nations don't have these privileges, and many people don't have basic access to clean water.

Growing up, my parents would always tell me to be grateful for what I had and they always tried to teach me that they couldn't access things I had in the U.S., like high-tech devices and enough food on my plate, when they were my age.

When I was younger, I ignored this, but as I grew up, I started to understand what they meant. Going through middle school and early high school, I quickly realized the privileges that white people had, especially in a predominantly white school.

This was in no way comparable to the struggles that my parents, grandparents and many people in India went through in any way shape, or form, but it showed me that not everything is equal and people have inherent privileges compared to others.

Many of your parents may have said things such as, "Be grateful for what you have since I never had that," or "Don't complain about your food."

This is a common thing parents do because no matter where they are from, they try to provide a better life for their kids than they had and want to keep them humble. First or second generation immigrant families often share these values because they leave their own country in

search of a better life.

India is much less structured and developed than the U.S. There is a major issue of overcrowding and a need for civil engineering. Pollution is also a major issue, and the majority of people I saw on the road were covering their faces due to the dust and pollutants in the air.

India is developing in many major cities,



Photo Courtesy of Krishiv Malhotra

such as New Delhi. When I went to New Delhi, it seemed like New York City. It was a structured city, with apartment buildings and new roads. Despite the growth in cities, many villages and small towns are left underdeveloped.

Another thing I noticed in India was that having a car is a luxury, and many people drive cheap scooters and motorcycles. Even the cars people drive are smaller, compact cars that are less expensive than cars in the U.S.

In India, I avoided street food, and so did my family, because if you don't live in India,

it is not safe to eat street food. We only drank bottled water because tap water was not safe and could get us sick. Only if you have been living in India for a few months or years is it safe to have street food and tap water.

A majority of people at Greylock have phones, like Apple iPhones, which aren't very common in India due to their extremely high price. Having high-tech computers is a major commodity.

It feels normal for us to have iPhones and computers, but many students don't have access to the technology we do. Even though Chromebooks may not be the best, we are fortunate that every student at Greylock can even have a computer.

India's culture is much more family-oriented, which gives a greater sense of community. Everyone in India treats each other like family. People who live on the same street become family. In contrast, Williamstown lacks this feeling of "togetherness" and "community."

The dominant religion in India is Hinduism, and one of the key concepts is gratitude, which is also common in Buddhism and Sikhism. In India, people are very grateful for the things they have and live fulfilling lives, even if they don't have that much.

Williamstown is truly a bubble from the real world, and most people don't face major struggles. Coming back from India made me appreciate what I have in Williamstown due to the harsh realities I saw.

I think if people are more grateful for what they have in life, they may be able to live a little happier. ♦

Student Government Election Results

THE MOUNT GREYLOCK STUDENT COUNCIL RUNS STUDENT GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS EVERY YEAR IN MAY. ELECTED STUDENTS WILL SERVE DURING THE 2024-25 SCHOOL YEAR. INTERNAL STUDENT COUNCIL ELECTIONS ARE NOT INCLUDED AS THEY HAD NOT OCCURRED AT THE TIME OF PUBLISHING.

RISING SENIOR CLASS

PRESIDENT: ERIK POWELL-BECHTEL
VICE PRESIDENT: GAVIN HETHERINGTON
SECRETARY: VERA DE JONG
TREASURER: KYLIE SWEREN
STUDENT COUNCIL: ALEKSEI CHANG, CHARLOTTE HOLUBAR, MAI O'CONNOR, POLLY RHIE, KNOWL STROUD

RISING JUNIOR CLASS

PRESIDENT: FRANCES EVANS
VICE PRESIDENT: JACK UHAS
SECRETARY: NINA WEID
TREASURER: RUBY DUFOUR
STUDENT COUNCIL: WILLIAM APOTOSOS, EVERETT CROWE, NORA LOPEZ, AMELIA MADRIGAL, NATASHA NUGENT

RISING SOPHOMORE CLASS

PRESIDENT: TIMOTHY KARAMPATSOS
VICE PRESIDENT: CECELIA KEOGH
SECRETARY: LEO SLATER LEE
TREASURER: NATHAN GILL
STUDENT COUNCIL: SARA EHLE, ROBYN GREGG, SABINE GUERRA, ADELE LOW, ROCKY PESCE

RISING FRESHMAN CLASS

PRESIDENT: MORRIS ISRAEL
VICE PRESIDENT: OSCAR HERRINGA
SECRETARY: OLIVIA PEREZ
TREASURER: REED OLNEY
STUDENT COUNCIL: ROWAN APOTOSOS, COLE CREIGHTON, LUKE IRWIN, FINNEGAN NOYES, FIONA WHALEY

SCHOOL COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

(TWO YEAR TERMS)
SABINE GUERRA
WILL IGOE
KNOWL STROUD

STUDENT GOVERNMENT DAY

KRISHIV MALHOTRA

FEATURES

Senior Destinations

NOTE: THIS LIST OF STUDENTS INCLUDES ONLY THOSE WHO GRANTED THE ECHO PERMISSION TO PUBLISH THEIR PLANS.

MARLEE ALPI - SAVANNAH COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

AVA ANAGNOS - SMITH COLLEGE

LEX ANAGNOS - TRINITY COLLEGE

TOMMY ART - DAVIDSON COLLEGE

RILEY BABCOCK - BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

PHOEBE BARNES - LEHIGH UNIVERSITY

MIRABEL BOYER - WELLESLEY COLLEGE

JACQUELINE BRANNAN - SMITH COLLEGE

JOSE BRITO - UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

KAYLIE BRYAN - MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

DOMINIC CARNEVALE - WESTFIELD STATE UNIVERSITY

LILY CATELOTTI - UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

SYLVIE CLOWES - WELLESLEY COLLEGE

LEVI COHEN-MCFALL - PRATT INSTITUTE

STORM COLANDRIA - BARRINGTON STAGE COMPANY PEER MENTOR

MATTHEW DALEY - UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

JULIA DECHAINED - UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHARLOTTE

BENJAMIN DINGMAN - RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

KARLIE DOWLING - WESTFIELD STATE UNIVERSITY

EMILY DUPUIS - ITHACA COLLEGE

BELEN GALVEZ - UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

ANABEL GONZALEZ - SARAH LAWRENCE COLLEGE

LOUIS GOTLIEB - HAMILTON COLLEGE

CHÉ GUERRA - YALE UNIVERSITY

EMMA KATE HANE - UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

MATILDE HENDERSON - SIMMONS UNIVERSITY

TALIA KAPILOFF - WHEATON COLLEGE

ECE KARAKAYA - MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

ERIN KEATING - SMITH COLLEGE

CALEB LOW - KENYON COLLEGE

ELLYONA MAKI - BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

CECILIA MALONE - AMHERST COLLEGE

JUDGE MARTIN - SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE

LILY MCDERMOTT - MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE

QUINN MCDERMOTT - WILLIAMS COLLEGE

BEN MCDONOUGH - UNION COLLEGE

AIDEN MCKEON - SUSQUEHANNA UNIVERSITY

LUCY MCWEENY - PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

ANNIE MILLER - UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

EMILY MOLE - EMERSON COLLEGE

JOHN MORALES - KENYON COLLEGE

DYLAN NEVAREZ - COLORADO COLLEGE

MAGGIE NICHOLS - WILLIAMS COLLEGE

EMILY OUELLETTE - JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

GIANNA PESCE - MILITARY / NORWICH UNIVERSITY

ANDREW PETROPULOS - SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAM

OWEN PETROPULOS - TRINITY COLLEGE

QUIN REPETTO - WILLIAMS COLLEGE

DECLAN ROGERS - ST. LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY

CELINA SAVAGE - TUFTS UNIVERSITY

MASON SAYERS - COLBY-SAWYER COLLEGE

JASMINE SKORUPSKI - BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

PARKER SMITH - DAVIDSON COLLEGE

OLLIE SWABEY - BOWDOIN COLLEGE

JAMIE SWEREN - ITHACA COLLEGE

CELIA SZCZEPANIAK - MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

JOHNNY TRYBUS - BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SYLAS VELAZQUEZ - WHEATON COLLEGE

VINCENT WELCH - PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

SPORTS

Spring Sports Update

BY COLE CREIGHTON

After a strong winter season for Mount Greylock sports, spring teams hoped they could replicate the success of their peers, and they have largely risen to that expectation.

Both the boy's and girl's track teams are undefeated thus far and are poised for postseason success. "We lost a good amount of leaders and scorers because of graduation, but this year we have a lot of kids who have stepped up and have done a great job for the team. The atmosphere has been amazing," said senior captain Judge Martin. On the boy's side, one of those emerging stars is sophomore Will Apotsos, who has been an elite triple jumper at 40 feet 9 inches. Another key contributor is Mason Sayers, a force in the 100m dash. Also, the 4x800m team is looking to do big things in the postseason after running a blistering 8:08 in their last meet. In the field, Jenner Kittle has moved up in the top six all time performances for javelin and Martin has been dominant in the shot put. His recent P.R. places him in the top six all time at Greylock and helped propel the team to the top spot in Berkshire County.

On the girl's side, Maggie Nichols has been a leading force for Greylock, winning every sprint this year. Along with Nichols, juniors Katherine Goss and Chase Hoey have been key to the team's success. Goss is top three all time in Greylock history for four events, and Hoey recently broke the school and county record for high jump, clearing an incredible 5 feet 6 inches. Looking to the future, the team is looking to win back-to-back Western Mass titles and cement themselves as a dynasty in the county.

The girl's tennis team started the season undefeated through five matches before losing to Lenox. Led by junior Mia Patrick, one of the

best singles players in the county, they hope to make a deep run in the state tournament after recently shooting to the top of the MIAA power rankings.

At the beginning of the year, the boy's tennis team was concerned about their ability to produce a team after the loss of two of their singles players from last year. But, ultimately,



Photo Courtesy of Krishiv Malhotra

a roster full of all middle schoolers has found success with a record of 5-5 to date. The boys are led by eighth grader Oscar Heeringa who has won all but three of his matches this year. Unfortunately, recent injuries have led the Mounties to forfeit third singles, but they will continue fighting into the playoffs and having fun as a group of friends.

The baseball team is also looking for postseason success. After winning the state championship two years ago, last year was a rebuilding year as the team sought to replace seven starters. This year, the Mounties started out

winning three straight games, but then went on a seven-game skid fueled by absences due to the Argentina trip. "We have a solid pitching staff that is able to limit the hard contact, but we need to be more aggressive at the plate and make less errors in the infield," said senior captain Tommy Art. With just a handful of regular season games remaining, the team hopes to tighten up its play and make a run in the state tournament.

The softball team started the season needing to replace several key contributors lost to graduation. With middle schoolers heavily represented on the varsity roster, the season started slow, but they have turned things around, winning six of seven games. Captain Vayda Larabee felt the slow start resulted from the Mounties not being "the most confident team, but after getting into the groove and seeing that we have full potential, we came back."

After a final four appearance last year, led in part by three seniors who are now playing college lacrosse, the girl's lacrosse team has a new look this year with some key juniors and seniors seeing significant playing time alongside several middle schoolers. The team is currently 7-5 overall and undefeated in Berkshire County. Eager to play the best competition possible, the team has traveled great distances to play teams from around the state and Vermont, which should prepare them well for the playoffs. "At every practice you can see and feel the chemistry of the team," said senior Phoebe Barnes. "I'm so grateful to be passing the team on to all of these amazing younger girls and outstanding athletes." ♦

Athlete Spotlight: Judge Martin

BY NORA LOPEZ

Judge Martin is a three year member of the Mount Greylock track team as well as a three sport captain on the football, basketball and track teams. An accomplished thrower, Martin holds the 4th best shot put throw and the 7th best javelin throw in Mount Greylock track history. He also throws the discus, high jumps and has been known to run a 4x400m relay every once in a while. The *Echo* sat down with Martin and discussed his individual season and the team as a whole.

Echo: How did you first become involved in track?

Martin: I started my sophomore year. I was questioning whether I'd do baseball with my brother or if I'd join the track team because Coach Gill told me they lifted a bunch. That's when I started getting really into football, so I decided to do track and field because I'd heard a bunch of good things about it and I wanted to lift. I wanted to try something new instead of just the same sport I'd played since preschool.

Echo: With the change of scenery, what made you love track and stay with it?

Martin: It got me a very good friend group. It was different from what I've had, like I'd always

had the friend group within basketball, but track and field brought me a new environment. I got close with Lainey Gill who was my first really good friend on the team. So it was nice having



Photo Courtesy of Knowl Stroud

that connection with Coach Gill as well. And then I was also good at it so I decided to stay.

Echo: How has the season for you individu-

ally been going?

Martin: I got new PRs (personal records) in the shot put (48 feet) and the javelin (163 feet) this year but besides that, this has been my worst season so far. I've had a couple of good meets where I PR but other than that it's kind of been a slump of a season, but hopefully I'm getting out of it just in time for the postseason.

Echo: Speaking of postseason, how has the team been doing this year?

Martin: The team has been doing well. We're undefeated but the team has been trying to find its footing too. Last year's team was probably one of the best to come through since the '80s for the boys team, so we lost a lot of points this year. But, we're still holding our own and we still have a really good chance of winning Western Mass, which I find really important for this team.

Echo: Beyond postseason, do you have any future plans in track and field?

Martin: Not as of right now. I could hop on the team at the college I'm going to if I tried but spring football might get in the way. So, as of right now, no plans of joining track and field. ♦

SPORTS AND OPINION

Looking Forward to the Paris Olympics

BY MILA MARCISZ

The Summer Olympics are taking place in Paris this year during July and August. After the 2020-2021 Tokyo Olympics were modified due to the pandemic, this year's event should be a return to normalcy. The Games will have 10,500 athletes representing 206 nations and will consist of 329 events in 32 different sports, including some recent additions like breakdancing, skateboarding, climbing and surfing.

Almost all the events will be in Paris or at the very least in France. A notable exception to that is the surfing events, which will take place in Tahiti in French Polynesia, almost 10,000 miles away from Paris. Many historic and iconic landmarks will be backdrops of the Games: the beach volleyball events will take place in a temporary outdoor stadium right by the Eiffel Tower, while the lawn by the Eiffel Tower will host judo and wrestling. The parks at the Palace of Versailles will host equestrian events, and the marathon course will pass right by the palace.

The triathlon swimming portion was set to be held in the Seine River but the future of that plan is in question after the pollution levels of the river were still too high. France spent one and a half billion dollars fixing the city's sewage systems in an attempt to stop or lower its discharge into the river, but the bacteria levels in the river are still higher than permitted. The cleaning up of pollution in the river is part of

a larger French plan to make the Seine swimmable in the future. But, if the problem is not resolved, the event may have to cut out the swimming section and become a duathlon (just running and biking) or even be canceled completely.

“France spent one and a half billion dollars fixing the city’s sewage systems in an attempt to stop or lower its discharge into the river, but the bacteria levels are still higher than permitted.”

Because of Russia's state-sponsored doping scandal coming to light, their athletes have been under partial bans for all the summer and winter games since the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro in 2016. This means the athletes were not allowed to compete under the Russian flag and anthem, and instead competed as the Olympic Athletes from Russia (OAR) in 2018, and more recently as the Russian Olympic Committee (ROC) in 2020 and 2022. Because of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Russian and Belarusian ath-

letes are being introduced as Individual Neutral Athletes (AIN) in Paris, since they can not be associated with any Russian organizations like the ROC.

For the third time at the Summer Olympic Games there will be a Refugee Team. Thirty-six athletes from 11 different countries, with 15 host National Olympic Committees, will be competing across 12 sports. The team competing in Paris will be the largest it has been, compared to 10 in Rio 2016 and 29 in Tokyo 2020. The team consists of 14 athletes from Iran, five from Afghanistan, five from Syria and others from a range of other countries. For the first time, the team will compete under its own flag instead of the Olympic flag.

Some notable American athletes that will be at the Games include gymnast Simone Biles, swimmer Katie Ledecky and runners Noah Lyles and Sha'Carri Richardson. The American men's and women's basketball teams and women's soccer team will also be teams to watch, as they are up there as favorites in their respective events.

With a wealth of outstanding athletes and scenic locations, this year's Olympics – combined with the Euros – are bound to contribute to a spectacular summer of sports! ♦

Flaws and Future of F1

BY BEN DINGMAN

Ever since the premiere of The Netflix series “Drive to Survive,” Formula (F1) has seen a massive uptick in fans. F1, owned by Liberty Media, has made a huge push to increase its popularity globally, for better or for worse. The Netflix documentary series “Drive to Survive” followed the teams and drivers around race by race, documenting incidents and storylines that came up across a season. To the seasoned F1 fan, however, the show is more reality TV than actual insight. A slew of false radio clips and narratives were used to draw people in and left many longtime fans upset at the new way F1 was being pushed. The series has seen a steady decline in ratings over the following 5 seasons since its debut in 2019 due to the lack of authenticity and its production value going down. But where does this fit into F1?

For anyone who doesn't know, F1 is the premiere form of motorsport. Twenty drivers make up 10 teams who all compete for a driver's and a constructors championship each year, and points are given out in each race to the top 10 drivers. But “Drive to Survive” has made unrealistic expectations for viewers by cutting a two-hour race into 4 minutes and only showing the most exciting and fun parts of each race. This can be misleading, since not all races are as exciting as the show wants them to seem. The race comes down to strategy and planning by the teams and drivers. These equally important aspects are totally left out of the shows.

F1's massive push for growth has sadly seemed to become heavily focused on a U.S.

push, with various tracks like the Miami GP being debuted in 2022 only to be so underwhelming and so overhyped on stereotyping American culture that it became a laughing stock. The worst of all the U.S. pushes was the Las Vegas GP in October. This race saw horrible infrastructure changes and poor fan treatment that led to a miserable experience for those in attendance. The race even ended up being pushed to 11 in the evening and lost an absurd amount of viewers due to poor planning and not focusing on what fans actually wanted.

Despite all the issues F1 faces already, they have some other serious issues they need to fix. The first and most important is to get the rules straight. Countless times drivers get pointless and arbitrary penalties. For instance, Fernando Alonso was penalized for starting outside his grid box. This penalty was not only false, but also pointed out the numerous flaws within the sport's governing body, FIA. Ever since the glaring issues of the 2021 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, the integrity of F1 has only stagnated. One contestant, Lewis Hamilton, was robbed of a championship, and F1 hasn't been the same ever since this event.

Another contestant, Max Verstappen, has proceeded to win nearly everything in sight for two years in a row, but he hardly has done any real racing yet. While this is mostly to the credit of the great car design of Adrian Envy, it does not mean that F1 is exciting anymore. The most exciting races have been when Verstappen retired in Australia and we saw a great

race with Carlos Sainz winning again and when Verstappen ran into a cone in Miami and Norris and McLaren utilized a brilliant strategy reminiscent of classic racing to give Norris his first-ever win in F1.

But out of races over the last two seasons, only thr have been entertaining. Drivers like Stroll, Sergeant and Perez have hardly proved they have consistent race craft. They are in the sport because of who they know, not how they drive. The sport is overrun with political and money issues, and far too many drivers are in the sport for the money rather than any actual talent, making it impossible for any talented individuals to take part in F1.

In recent years F1 has lost viewers, lost respect and lost its fun and instead has brought in people who care more about money. It's sad to see people who are truly involved in this sport in a meaningful way not take part and let this sport that is beloved fall below its once-famed acclaim. I can only hope that new fans realize just how horrible F1 is right now and advocate towards making a push for more real racing and less parading around. ♦

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OPINION

The Morality of the Met Gala

BY RAFA MELLOW-BARTELS

Every year the first Monday in May is reserved for the Met Gala. The Met Gala is a highly anticipated event that is held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (the Met), in New York City. The Gala was started in 1948 to raise money for the Met's costume institute. Yet now, in 2024, it has turned into a spectacle of wealth that is shameful given the current political conflicts and the wealth inequality in the world.

In the beginning, the Met Gala was a small gathering of people from New York's elite who bought tickets to the Gala at a price of \$50 per ticket. It was a largely unremarkable event. However, in the mid 1990s, the Editor-in-Chief of Vogue Magazine, Anna Wintour, began chairing the event. Wintour helped turn the event into the self-proclaimed "fashion's biggest night." The Met Gala is now mainly a fashion event where celebrities walk the carpet to show off their outfits, all of which were specifically designed to represent the chosen theme of the night – Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination, AngloMania: Tradition and Transgression in British Fashion and Sleeping Beauties: Reawakening Fashion, for examples. The celebrities will stop on the red carpet to pose for pictures while they explain why their outfits – costumes really – are so special and how they relate to the year's theme.

But has the event, with its individual ticket price now at \$75,000, eclipsed its original purpose? From its humble beginnings, the event has turned into what is mostly a spectacle of wealth. Tickets are highly sought after and attendance is seen as a marker of their cultural status. Over the years, the outfits have become increasingly outlandish and excessive. For example, this

"Atop all this, global wealth inequality continues to grow. While the world is in crisis, the Met Gala persists with hardly an acknowledgement of the misfortune of others."

year, singer Lana Del Rey went as a "wistful tree." In 2019, actor Jared Leto showed up with a Gucci designed replica of his head. Celebrities wear outfits with price tags ranging into the millions. In 2018, actress Blake Lively wore two million dollars worth of jewelry and had an

outfit that took 600 hours to make.

This night of excess is on display for a world in which poverty, hunger, war and climate disaster are everyday realities for all too many. Right now, conflict is raging in Israel and Gaza, Russia and Ukraine, and in several other areas deemed not worthy of media attention. Countries like Sudan are on the brink of widespread famine. Climate disasters around the world – from flooding in Brazil to heat waves in the Philippines to severe storms in the American South – are displacing millions and threatening lives. Atop all of this, global wealth inequality continues to grow.

While the world is in crisis, the Met Gala persists with hardly an acknowledgement of the misfortune of others. This reminds me of another well known, fictional spectacle, specifically the portrayal of Capital in "The Hunger Games" by Suzanne Collins. In this series, citizens in the Capital lived lavishly relishing in their wealth while turning a blind eye to the citizens in other districts who faced poverty and hardship. Similar to the citizens of the Capital, the attendees of the Met Gala display grotesque wealth without shame. Is this right? ♦

Why Current Events Need a Place in School

BY JACK UHAS

In an age when current events seem more relevant than ever, about 78 percent of teens in the U.S. report feeling it is important to keep up with the news. However, over half of teens use social media as their primary news source, which can be extremely unreliable. Now more than ever, it is essential that we create spaces in school to teach and discuss current events.

Covering world affairs is no small task; teachers are already asked to do so much; history classes, where most conversations regarding current events occur, are often on a timeline to finish the courses' content in time for testing season, making it challenging to find time for both teaching and leading discussion about the news.

Teenagers are already experiencing the results of needing more media literacy training. In 2018 and 2019, 96 percent of high school students could not accurately determine the credibility of online information. Many, including myself, have fallen victim to algorithms that create echo chambers, making discussions, especially ones facilitated correctly and in a safe space, even more critical.

Of course, issues can arise with these discussions. The increasing divisiveness of politics means passions in conversation and debate can boil over, especially among students. But this makes it even more critical that students learn how to formulate their thoughts into logical and factual arguments so they can express themselves not just in essays but in their daily conversations and exchanges.

Too often, current events are only glossed

over in reference to historical events, which limits a more developed stance on issues. So, while the hope may be that students continue education on these issues outside of school, they may enter society without fundamental skills for navigating such topics.

The danger of this is difficult to understate, as the world has seen the consequences of populations falling victim to misinformation and disinformation, which have only become

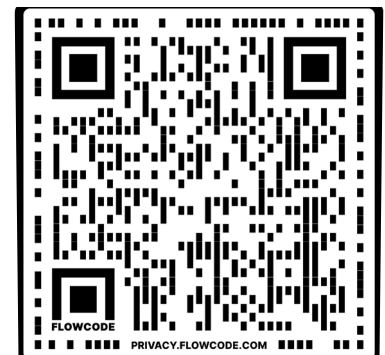
"Many, including myself, have fallen victim to algorithms that create echo chambers, making discussions, especially those facilitated correctly and in a safe space, even more critical."

more relevant with more recent developments in Artificial Intelligence (AI). In fact, experts estimate that in the next two years, 90 percent of content available on the Internet will have been produced using AI. This underscores the critical need to teach our students how to discern fact from fiction in the digital age.

Despite all this, teachers, administrations and students can all find creative ways to overcome these challenges. Even at Greylock, we

have had guest speakers who have offered new perspectives and started meaningful conversations. Some schools have launched media literacy campaigns, hanging posters with easy-to-follow tips to help guide students. Some students have even founded clubs dedicated to addressing and providing a space to learn about current events.

In short, due to the ever-increasing complication and misinformation in mass media, students need access to relevant education about the world around them. Such education will help ensure a more informed and politically aware generation ready to tackle the issues of tomorrow. ♦



Scan here to check out the Greylock Echo website!

FEATURES

High School Favorites

BY SYLVIE CLOWES

High school is tough for everybody, but having favorite books, music, etc., can help. I have been reviewing some of my old favorites recently and have been struck by their impact on my high school experience. Although I have changed and some of these have become outdated, they are still hallmarks of my teen years. I thought that I would break away from my usual book reviews to provide shorter reviews of some of my favorite media.

“Folklore” by Taylor Swift

The first time I listened to this absolute masterpiece of an album, I was sitting next to my great grandmother’s grave with Lucy McWeeny, who was explaining all the fan theories for the album. It was the absolutely hellish time of early Covid and this album became, in many ways, my memories of that time. This album made me a Taylor Swift fan and has been a constant in my life. It has been by my side through homework nights (“peace”), academic anxiety (“this is me trying”), remembering old friends (“seven” and “my tears ricochet”), screaming in the car (“mad woman”) and more.

“Red, White, and Royal Blue” by Casey McQuiston

I first read *Red, White, and Royal Blue* huddled under a pile of blankets and didn’t finish it until one in the morning. It became my comfort book, a peek at a more joyful universe, free of a bit of the terror that I felt during 2020 and the Trump administration. Since then, I have quite literally memorized full passages from it. On exhausting, rainy days when I need joy, comfort and a good laugh, it is there for me. More than anything, this book gave me faith that everything would be alright. Also, it’s just a really good romance. My favorite scene is the night that they spend partying and the morning after (the Prince Buttercup kimono! Also go read/watch the *Princess Bride*).

Emmylou Harris (specifically “All the Road-running”)

When I was very little, my mom would play Emmylou Harris often, but as I got older I stopped listening to her. It wasn’t until the second semester of tenth grade that she came back into my life. That was an absolutely awful, stressful spring for me, and I stopped being able

to sleep. So my mom made me a sleep playlist that had this entire album on it. Nothing, and I mean nothing, can match the absolute comfort and love that Harris’ “Belle Starr” brings. To me this album is like a warm hug, keeping me safe even through the roughest of times. I am almost positive that everyone has, or needs to have, an album like this: one that makes you feel instantly at peace. It may be the only way to survive the seventh circle of hell (college applications / senior fall).

“As You Like It” by William Shakespeare

Oh boy. Shakespeare as a whole has got its claws in me and just refuses to let go, but this play particularly has ingrained itself in me. The comedy, the gender onions, the “Seven Ages of Man” speech, the song “Under the Greenwood Tree” – I love it all. I do not go a month without thinking back to the fight scenes that the Greylock production of “As You Like It” included in the play and to that one iconic photo of Anabel on a mushroom. I fondly remember that production as full of laughs and joy. I would encourage everyone to try Shakespeare and acting in general if they have any free time at all. ♦

Goodbye Letter from the Editor

BY LUCY MCWEENY

Just like many editor in chiefs of the *Greylock Echo* before me, I joined the *Echo* in seventh grade, in desperate need of a sanctuary in the madness known as middle school and eager to impress my older siblings, sophomore editors on the paper.

I would like to say I was a natural reporter, interviewing people with ease and grace. But if there’s one thing I’ve learned as a journalist, it’s the importance of the truth: I was painfully shy, terrified of the older students I would have to interview, and embarrassed by the writing I produced, knowing it would be torn apart by the editors.

Instead of persevering through the awkward stages of learning how to be a journalist, I sent in my resignation, my biggest mistake from my time on the *Echo*. But fortunately, I rejoined mere weeks later after my siblings unleashed their twin wrath, saving myself from experiencing the biggest regret of my time at Mount Greylock.

The stress I experienced interviewing and writing articles, I learned, was worth the exhilaration of being a part of something bigger than myself. I realized that the *Echo* could be a place where I learned – not from teachers or books – but from the experience and wisdom of my peers. I could be bad at something, and get better.

Over the next six years, as I conquered my fears of social interaction, writing an article with no figurative language and not going over the 500-word count, I learned that being a journalist was not only about interviewing and writing articles: it is a way of interacting with

the community. I was no longer just a student at Mount Greylock – I was a documentor, an investigator, a conduit for information.

Through the *Echo*, I have found people within our community – school, town, and beyond – that I never would have otherwise met. In my interviews of residents of Sweetwood for my Meet Your Neighbor column, each person emphasized a similar benefit of community involvement: the ability to form life-long bonds that have shaped their lives.

From Spring Street business owners to my peers here at Mount Greylock, I feel fortunate to have learned from so many generous people, all of whom have shaped not only my thinking, but I hope the ideas of our readership.

The *Echo*, hard to believe, is not always glamorous. I have spent countless late-nights poring over articles and checking how to spell “Schutz” for the thousandth time. Still, I have loved every second of being a member of the *Echo*. From meetings brainstorming spoof *Eggplant* ideas to news simulations about stolen rubber ducks, I have adored being a part of this community of hard-working, humorous, and dedicated people. The work of an *Echo* writer is laborious and often little-recognized, and I want to thank each and every one of you for your countless hours interviewing, writing and editing to create a newspaper I have been proud to lead.

Being on the *Echo* is exhilarating. It is the nervousness of interviewing someone you don’t know, the stress of print edition editing, and the anxiety of sending off the document (hopefully free of typos) to the printer. But this all

combines with the excitement of distributing the *Echo* around the school, the satisfaction of completing a quality interview, and the pride of seeing your name in the byline of your article to create an intoxicating feeling and organization.

I am proud of the way the *Echo* has grown this past year. That being said, I hope it is a short-lived record. I hope that, even five years from now, the *Echo* staff will be twice as big, with even more print editions. I know this is possible because, during my tenure, I have been most excited by the talent, eagerness, and dedication of our middle school writers, a signal of the bright future ahead for the *Echo*. All of you on the *Echo* have and will continue to inspire future generations with the same values of hard work, community, and excitement.

I’ve always found the *Echo* to be a particularly clever name for a newspaper, evocative of the way in which news echoes around the halls of Mount Greylock, at risk of being distorted in the process. The *Echo* serves as a way to take hold of those bits of news, to investigate and interview until we can produce a solid story, and to send that truth echoing around the school instead. I look forward to this news continuing to resonate down the New England corridor to New Jersey, so I can read one last article (please let it be the last) about the turf field.

Keep up the good work team.

Lucy McWeeny ♦

ETC.

Understanding Divestment

BY CHARLOTTE HOLUBAR

The ongoing protests over the war in Gaza, which have been quickly spreading across college campuses in the U.S. and globally, have a core demand: that universities divest from Israel. This involves withdrawing endowment funds from companies linked to Israel.

This demand has reignited a long-standing debate about whether universities should consider ethics in their investment decisions or focus solely on maximizing returns. Critics argue that these divestment demands, seen by some as overly broad, may be impractical or ineffective.

The urgency of these demands is driven by the increasing Palestinian death toll and the famine in northern Gaza. On April 21, the U.S. Student Movement for Palestinian Liberation issued a statement calling for universities to “completely divest our tuition dollars from – and to cut all institutional ties to – the Zionist entity as well as all companies complicit in the colonization of Palestine.” Some students have more specific goals, such as divesting from weapons manufacturers, rejecting research funding from the Israeli military and ending academic partnerships with Israeli institutions.

University responses have varied. Columbia University has rejected these calls and involved the police in managing protesters, leading to further escalation. In contrast, institutions like Brown University, Northwestern University and the University of Minnesota have agreed to consider these demands. In fact, ongoing discussions with Brown have gone so far as to agree upon a course of action.

Divestment means reversing an investment. The goal of divestment movements is to generate social and political pressure on target companies by stigmatizing their behavior. Assessing the feasibility of divesting from Israel requires understanding how university endowments work.

Endowments are large investment funds whose returns support universities’ daily

operations. For instance, Harvard University’s endowment was \$49.5 billion in 2023. The average endowment for U.S. universities is about \$1.6 billion. Universities typically avoid using endowments as political tools because they have a legal duty to prioritize financial health and maximize returns.

Universities often invest in private equity funds, hedge funds, or public companies via index funds. These portfolios are not tailored to individual preferences, making it difficult to divest from specific causes. Transparency can also be an issue, as hedge funds or private

ing a divestment policy in 1986. This international pressure contributed to ending apartheid.

Several factors contributed to the success of the anti-apartheid divestment movement. Protesters faced little opposition, and the less interconnected global economy made it easier to isolate companies with significant interests in South Africa. Investments in commingled funds, now common, were less prevalent.

Similarly, the fossil fuel divestment movement aimed to stigmatize the industry, creating significant pressure. While not all universities fully divested, the movement raised awareness about climate change and influenced some institutions to adopt more sustainable practices.

Divestment calls at universities aim at broader goals, such as ending the fighting in Gaza, which has killed over 34,000 Palestinians according to Al Jazeera, and addressing perceived injustices by Israel. Whether universities divest and whether this impacts Israel financially may be secondary to making the political status quo untenable.

The political impact of the protests is still unfolding. Both U.S. President Joe Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have addressed the campus protests, indicating some level of pressure. However, Biden has stated that the protests have not caused him to reconsider his Middle East strategy, and his aides are confident the protests will not overshadow his reelection campaign in 2024. Nonetheless, the young protesters represent an important constituency for Biden.

The success of the current divestment movement will depend on various factors, including the ability of student activists to sustain pressure, the response of university administrations, and the broader political and economic context. The precedent set by past divestment movements offers both inspiration and caution, highlighting the potential for significant impact as well as the challenges inherent in such campaigns. ♦

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equity funds might not disclose their investments. Universities with larger endowments tend to allocate more investments to these private funds, complicating divestment efforts.

Historically, divestment has been a tactic used in student movements, such as those opposing South African apartheid and fossil fuel companies. These efforts have had mixed success, depending on how success is defined in terms of financial and political impact. The movement to divest from Israel draws on these precedents, but it remains to be seen if it will achieve similar results.

In the 1980s, student activists successfully pushed for divestment from firms supporting South African apartheid, leading to 155 universities divesting and the U.S. government enact-

Mini Crossword

CREATED BY CALEB LOW

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ACROSS

- The LA Clippers basketball team were known as _____ City from 2012 to 2017
- The Barrett family harvests this first step in a sweet New England topping
- Top artists from this genre include Steve Lacy and Noah Kahan
- An item of jewelry made of fragrant flora
- George Seurat’s art style uses countless of this mark to form his paintings
- Second largest Mountie feeder institution
- They really are life savers

DOWN

- Williams, MCLA, and BCC are all _____
- Shakespeare and Aneirn were both _____
- A Mounties girl’s team recently conquered this _____
- John Keats and Shel Silverstein were both _____
- A premier symphonic ensemble found in England’s capital

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