

The Greylock Echo

Graduation Edition

Mount Greylock - Williamstown, MA

June 7th, 2025

Music Students Go Abroad

BY COLE CREIGHTON

After two years of planning and preparation, the Mount Greylock Regional School Music Department departed on a seven-day trip to Austria and Germany during April Break. In Europe, students and faculty had the opportunity to go sightseeing and study the two countries' storied musical pasts. The 36 Mounties who participated in the trip went as a reward for "sticking it out through the remote music instruction, playing their trumpet... or singing to their computer," according to band and chorus teacher Jacqueline Vinette.

The group visited the Austrian cities of Vienna and Salzburg and also spent time in Munich, Germany.

According to Vinette, the department talked with EF Educational Tours representatives about "where it would make the most sense, as musicians, to visit that had a lot of music history." Ultimately, they settled on Vienna, Salzburg, and Munich because "they all have a lot of important ties to classical music, and they gave us a lot of opportunities for concerts and historical sites."

The itinerary included a visit to the House of Music in Vienna, a museum dedicated to both classical music and the music of the future. While in Salzburg, the Mountie contingent toured the site of the Sound of Music and also visited Fortress Hohensalzburg, a "favorite stop" according to junior Thomas Warren.

First-year Londyn Labendz enjoyed visiting "the cool museums and walking around in our free time," while fellow first-year Bridget Igoe most enjoyed "walking around the cities, going to museums, and learning about history from there."

According to Vinette, the itinerary was intentionally structured to give students lots of free time to walk around and explore, all while creating new friendships and bonds.

Lindsey von Holtz, Mount Greylock's Director of Athletic and Co-Curricular Activities said, "any student in the music department was eligible to attend and [students] and families paid [directly] through the tour company website."

Making the trip affordable for anyone who wanted to participate was a priority for everyone involved. The music department first began advertising the trip two years ago so that "people had the opportunity to save up for the trip and break down the payments into smaller, monthly payments," said Vinette, and according to von Holtz, "there were various fundraisers along the way to help."

As for future trips, Vinette hopes "to do something similar every four years so that every student gets an opportunity" to visit a place that will enrich their musical knowledge.

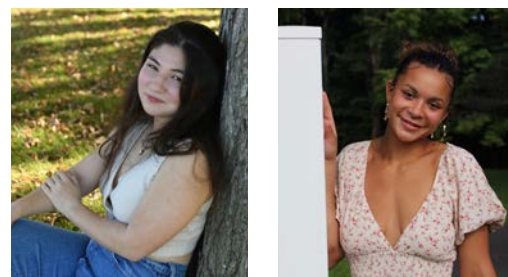
Students' recounts of the experience suggest it was a smashing success, but some participants had ideas about how to make the trips even better in the future. Freshman June Holzapfel said she "would want the trip to continue but with fewer people and in a new location." Labendz hoped "there would be fewer late nights followed by early mornings" so students could get more rest and enjoy the trip to a greater extent. Overall, however, all of the musical Mounties agreed the trip was a wonderful opportunity to learn more about music history while taking in interesting sights along the way. ♦



Photo Courtesy of Jacqueline Vinette

2 in 650: Graduation Speakers

BY SABINE GUERRA



Photos Courtesy of Rhie and Koffi

Echo: What was your initial reaction to being selected as the student chosen and faculty chosen speakers? Why do you think you were selected?

Polly Rhie: "I was really honored to be selected as one of the senior speakers. I've been to two great graduations before, and both times I felt like the speakers were very central people in the grade, and I don't really view myself as being a very central person in my grade, so it was a nice surprise to be selected. I know Mr. Dils always refers to the senior speeches as 'graduation speech auditions,' so maybe I made a good impression there. But otherwise, I'm just honored that people in my grade chose me to represent them."

Malia Koffi: "I agree, honored is the perfect word. When I got sent down to the principal's office Mr. Schutz told me that the decision to have me as a speaker was pretty much unanimous throughout the faculty, and that just meant so much to me. I found out it was Ms. Tucker-Smith who initially recommended me, and I went to her in tears because I was just so grateful."

Echo: You guys are graduating in a couple weeks. How does that feel?

Rhie: "It feels surreal. I don't think it's quite set in yet. I don't think it'll feel totally real until after graduation has ended..."

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Argentines' Visit Successful Despite Challenges

Read about this and Johnson's plans on Page 2

Senior Destinations

Who's going where? Read more to find out.
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Mountain Biking at Greylock

Read more about the Shire Shredders.
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Beloved Staff Retiring

Several members of the Greylock team are retiring.
See Pages 5 and 6 to see who

NEWS

Joe Johnson Sabbatical Delayed

BY ARTHUR MILLET

This upcoming school year, Spanish teacher Joe Johnson was planning to take a year's leave from teaching to pursue a Ph.D. in Spanish at UMass Amherst. However, Johnson now plans to hold off on working as a full-time student because of universities' lack of federal funding. The program would have consisted of multiple remote semester courses, two consecutive semesters of on-campus courses, working as a teaching assistant (TA) in various university Spanish courses, and writing a dissertation. With a scholarship that made the program free and the paid TA position providing a source of income while on sabbatical, Johnson was set to pursue his education unobstructed.

Unfortunately for Johnson and others interested in the program, the money that would have been used by the university to pay those two expenses has been in short supply. Because of this, the university was unable to guarantee that that money would be available.

Public universities such as UMass Amherst receive funding from the federal government in the form of grants, many of which have been pulled back by the Trump administration. Many

universities have been unable to fund all of their programs, radically altering their budgets and relocating money from smaller departments to higher-priority offices and labs.

“Many universities have been... altering their budgets and relocating money from smaller departments to higher priority offices and labs”

These reductions in university funding are ongoing and often unpredictable as the federal government often pulls money back with short notice and at unknown times. Even if UMass Amherst had enough funding to pay their teacher assistants one week, that could instantly

change the next week. This is a problem that has affected many graduate students, moving into an apartment near campus only to hear a few days later that their funding has been rescinded. Johnson's decision to continue teaching at Greylock was also affected by the process for taking a leave from Mount Greylock. The district allows faculty to take unpaid leaves for a couple years, but would require the district to hire a long-term substitute teacher to fill his spot while away, introducing additional complications.

The uncertainty surrounding university funding has negative effects on many individuals wishing to pursue their studies. Not only does this further limit education to those who have greater financial privilege, but unplanned budget changes also makes planning ahead difficult, which is often necessary for year-long commitments. It's uncertain whether university budgets show signs of increasing or at least stabilizing, but until then, incoming students face additional barriers to furthering their education. ♦

Argentines' Visit Successful Despite Challenges

BY NORA LOPEZ

On April 11th, 36 students from St. Paul's School in La Cumbre, Argentina arrived at Mount Greylock Regional School. Their arrival was highly anticipated after a year of planning and a successful 2024 trip where Mount Greylock students visited La Cumbre.

Amid the excitement, there was some uncertainty about their arrival due to a planned, nationwide protest in Argentina against President Javier Milei's government. Luckily, they arrived by the end of the extracurricular day at Mount Greylock, around 4:45 p.m. They were greeted by many Mount Greylock students and faculty, as well as a large Welcome Banner stretching across the entrance of the high school.

Last April, Mount Greylock students and their teachers stayed in a hotel during their visit to La Cumbre. This time, however, the Argentine students stayed with local families. Nineteen families hosted the St. Paul's students for nearly two weeks, and provided transportation, many meals, and most importantly, an immersion into American culture and life.

Mount Greylock junior Will Svrluga said that “hosting was super cool because it felt like we got a taste of their culture inside our house,” adding that the experience taught him “a lot about Argentina.”

Visitor Juana Aimasso agreed that sharing experiences was invaluable, saying that her favorite part of the trip was “meeting people, sharing culture, and eating.”

Cultural immersion was the goal of the exchange program between Mount Greylock and St. Paul's School. In 2023, Spanish teacher Joseph Johnson first contacted teachers at St. Paul's hoping to learn more about La Cumbre, the town where his wife grew up.

As conversation progressed, plans for a transcontinental trip took shape. After a year of planning, juniors and seniors from Mount Greylock made the trip to Argentina, having a wonderful experience that was documented by the Echo in 2024.

This April, it was St. Paul's turn. Among the trip itinerary were three school days at Mount Greylock, breakfast at Ioka farm, and a hike up Pine Cobble Mountain. Many of these activities were also attended by members of Spanish Club and intermediate to advanced Spanish students, even if they weren't hosting an Argentine.

Mount Greylock Spanish teacher Shannon Vigeant explained that the schedule took six months to plan: “We wanted to provide the kind of experience that we had down there, which was incredible, so we looked for a variety of different, fulfilling activities that would be fun, and also academic, as well as culturally related. We started reaching out to a lot of the community... and the community stepped up.”

Each Argentine student was assigned a Mount Greylock student to shadow during the three days they attended school. The host and their shadow attended regular classes, an experience designed to show the Argentine visitors what an American school day may look like. Shadowing students was junior Enrique Ciancaglini's favorite part of the trip as he “made lots of friends” which contributed to an “unforgettable” experience.

During their second week, April Break started, bringing more unstructured days and blocks of time. Although these free periods allowed for the Argentines and local teenagers to bond, Johnson said that the next visit from the Argentines will occur in the fall, when the

weather is nicer and school is in session for both weeks.

The two main reasons for the visit happening in April were due to visa timing and the graduation of the class of 2025. Changes to the time of year are likely in the future, “not based on anything negative this time around,” but



Photo Courtesy of Shannon Vigeant

simply because “we know it will be better to do it in the fall next time,” Johnson explained.

As the relationship between Mount Greylock and St. Paul's grows, both sides are eager to continue the program. Vigeant explained that the next trip is already in the planning stages, bolstered by “parent feedback, family feedback, and feedback from Argentina as well.” After a successful experience in each country, both schools are looking forward to continuing their goal of giving students a unique, immersive experience and long lasting memories. ♦

NEWS

Successful Play *Rewind* Increases Student Leadership

BY NORA STRICKER

This spring, Mount Greylock Regional School hosted the production of *Rewind*, a captivating and hilarious drama. Junior Frankie Evans was responsible for writing and producing the show, and her second production brought many members of the community together. Immense amounts of effort, time, and care went into *Rewind*. Evans, psychology teacher and advisor Tom Ostheimer, and each member of the cast and crew dedicated hours to bringing the play to life through collaboration, hard work, and creative vision.

Rewind follows the life of a highschool student named Ashley who is struggling with the loss of her grandmother. Through her grief and trials with her family, Ashley is transported into an alternate reality of her life: a sitcom. After experiencing this other world and navigating a tangled love triangle, Ashley has to make the decision between perfect and real. Although this story is fictional, Evans was inspired by aspects of her real life during the writing and creating process. She reveals that, similar to Ashley, she lost her beloved grandmother a few years prior. "I wanted to find a way to honor her and dedicate something to her," said Evans. While the play was largely a tribute to Evans' grandmother, it also included comedic moments, impassioned monologues, and entertaining characters which made for a humorous, yet touching production.

Evans revealed that the sitcom idea came to life during her first production last year which was called *Lights Off*. Evans realized that the "actors succeeded with big characters" and channeled that energy during the production process. The show may not have been such a

smashing success, however, without the help of Ostheimer. He was heavily involved and assisted Evans through her personal growth as a director. Additionally, Evans gives credit to her parents, who are also actors, for providing helpful insights.



Photo Courtesy of Myles Evans

Sabine Guerra, the leading actress who played Ashley, shared that while her role was fulfilling and enjoyable, she found that tapping into a character somewhat similar to herself proved challenging. Comfortable in comedic roles, Guerra was initially intimidated by the earnestness of her character, stating, "I'm kinda used to being a ridiculous character that is nothing like me."

Although Ashley's anxious qualities made her a challenging character to master, Guerra excelled with a stunning performance that cap-

tured the complexity of life as a teenage girl. A shining moment came at the end of the drama when Guerra performed her final monologue, giving the audience something to think about as they left the theater.

The bond between the actors was evident in the connection that Guerra and her co-star Braelyn Kelly developed throughout the production. Guerra revealed that her favorite moments from within the play were the scenes she shared with Kelly, who played her sister Tia. Additionally, Guerra said that acting in a show never seen by the public before was a thrilling experience. For any aspiring actors, Guerra shared valuable advice, explaining that being bold and eccentric onstage often leads to the best moments, and acting big should always be a priority. "Actually have fun with it," Guerra said, "and don't put too much judgment on every performance." Sophomore Tim Karampatsos, who attended *Rewind* all three nights, expressed that witnessing the actors evolve and perfect their roles was a special part of the experience. He stated that the play didn't feel "manufactured," and "the way that everyone interacted with each other made it real."

Regarding next year, Evans has big plans for the spring drama. She intends to focus on passing on the student-led legacy, possibly through assistant directing and co-writers. Although these ideas are still in the works, Evans would love more actors involved in the production process and is excited to see the program flourish past her graduation in 2026. ♦

Sweetwood Vintage Gallery Connects Generations

BY PAIGE TUDOR

Art isn't just about taking pictures and listening to music, it is what brings people together in a community. The Sweetwood Meet Your Neighbor Art Gallery, held at the Sweetwood Living retirement home, was an incredible opportunity for students to display their artwork and connect with the older members of the community. During the past few months, students have been working on art pieces to be displayed at the gallery.

Sophomore Cecelia Keogh who had a photo in the gallery said, "It was cool seeing the residents so amazed by our artwork. It was fun talking to them and eating their candy."

Cecilia's fellow sophomore Hayden Berryman's photo was entered into the exhibit. "It was very exciting and rewarding being able to see my photos up somewhere outside of the school," said Berryman.

Vintage, the theme of the gallery, was presented by sophomore Emery Rotter and gave the atmosphere a feel that residents of Sweetwood were able to easily connect with. The photos entered into the gallery were calm and showed everyday objects.

Bringing art to the residence of Sweetwood was not only an amazing experience for students but one that the residents will appreciate forever.

Gay Klaus Scarborough said: "Being able to see the hard work that these children put in was truly remarkable. They have true talent and are wonderful young individuals."

Senior Alec Sills, an assistant for art teacher Karin Stack, shared, "Many of the Sweetwood residents made reference to their pasts while observing the photos. One in particular recalled her father's use of a similar shaving brush, while another explained how one metal key-like object was actually used to tighten vintage roller skates onto your feet."

Ms. Stack along with Sweetwood's Director of Recreation Janice Paquette put this gallery together to try and bring the community closer together.

"It was really moving," said Stack, "to see the elderly residents talking to Mount Greylock teenagers -- next year Ms Paquette and I will be working on a new concept and continuation. Portfolio Photography students will talk with elders and take photos of them and their



Photo Courtesy of Timothy Karampatsos

memorabilia or objects that have meaning to them. We hope to include their stories and [memories] about those objects to add another layer to the exhibition and to the interaction between young and old." ♦

FEATURES

2 in 650 cont

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Going through all of the senior rituals and all these 12th grade landmark moments have felt crazy. But I'm really looking forward to my life after graduation. I also know it will definitely be hard to have to let go of these relationships that I've made, but I think that they've all played a part in the person that I'll bring to the outside world after I graduate."

Koffi: "These last few days have definitely been emotional: looking at the wall and seeing a smaller number posted up each day counting down the days. It's so sad, but I'm so excited to see what is next for me and start a new chapter."

Echo: What do you think is something that really makes Greylock, Greylock?

Rhie: "The faculty and staff here are really active in the community, and the amount of times that I've been at a musical, or a game, or an art show, and I've seen so many different teachers and people around the school showing up for students, I think is really special."

Koffi: "The school is super supportive in the sense of both academics and also well-being. They really do care about how you are, and they

want to ask you how you are. We have such a great group of towns and individuals that come from it. We just have such a healthy environment here that I think that kids are lucky to be able to grow into a person here."

Echo: What's one of your biggest takeaways from your experience at Greylock?

Koffi: "I think it's really important to be kind and genuine to everyone because you never know the different connections that you're going to make later. There's so many people that I had never really interacted with in my middle school years that I'm super close friends with now. I think that everyone also deserves a second first impression because everybody, all these kids here, are growing into different people every year, so I think everyone deserves a second chance."

Rhie: "It's hard to separate what I've just learned through growing up, and what I've learned from Greylock because those experiences have been so tangled together, but be outgoing, and try not to be embarrassed. I think that this place, because it is small, it's been a really good space to become comfortable in my own body and my

personality. In the last couple years here, I've come to the conclusion that no one's really trying to pick you apart, so, you know, do whatever you want, if it's embarrassing, cool. That's a fun memory."

Echo: What advice would you give a seventh grader who's about to start their six years at Greylock?

Rhie: "Do things in school. If you're able to, participate in clubs, join a sport you've never tried before, talk to your teachers outside of class. I gained so much from having a close community at Greylock, and feeling like people know me. Knowing other people has been so important."

Koffi: "Creating strong relationships with both faculty and your classmates around you is just so important. It has definitely helped me a lot. After Covid-19, being able to connect with girls that I had just met through my sports teams was amazing. Also, I would say try to present the best version of yourself that you want people to keep as their first impression of you." ♦

Directed Study: The Hidden Hero of the School Day

BY ROBYN GREGG

From the first day of seventh grade to the final day of senior year, the school day is packed with a never slowing workload. Students often feel like they're racing against deadlines and fighting to juggle their seven classes, sports, clubs, jobs, and lives outside of school. While many sophomore teachers battling the "Fruit Merge" epidemic may disagree, Directed Study, or DS, is far from wasted time. It's one of the most crucial parts of the day for successful students as it provides something that other classes may lack—the freedom to enjoy uninterrupted and unstructured time in the middle of the day, promoting intellectual success, mental well-being, and personal growth.

One of the biggest advantages of having a free period is that it helps you stay on top of your workload. When I have an English essay due at 7:40 a.m., the last thing I want to think about is my Euro test in tomorrow's Block 6. On days like these (Wednesdays), the arrival of Directed Study gives me a final opportunity to absorb the details of the chapter as well as to relax in a more subdued environment where I can mentally prepare for my final two periods. With the position of Directed Study in the middle of the day, it is at the peak of a student's attention span, and therefore the prime opportunity to get work done before the exhaustion of the final classes and often hectic evenings. A free work period can mean the difference between staying academically afloat and falling behind.

Something that makes Directed Study so unique and special is the opportunity for extra support in a class one may struggle in. Unlike in-class time—when teachers have tons of students asking questions—DS offers the perfect window to have one-on-one conversations with teachers and even ask for advice or tips from your peers. Ms. Igoe, my Directed Study and English teacher and a previous advocate for DS on the school council, has years of experience about the many benefits of a free block during the day.

"[T]he freedom to enjoy uninterrupted and unstructured time... promoting intellectual success, mental well-being, and personal growth"

Igoe recounts how "in a class of twenty-three students where everyone is working through writing assignments, it is impossible for [her] to assist everyone at once." In contrast, DS offers a peaceful environment for effective one-on-one discussion. Igoe also describes how "if somebody has missed work or needs to make up a test, Directed Study offers a great time to check in with a teacher."

In addition, something that only self-guided work periods can offer is a lesson in time management. With much of the school day being controlled by teachers and out-of-school time managed by coaches, bosses, parents, or others, Directed Study is 30 minutes led purely by you. For me, this freedom has built discipline and responsibility. Whether it is spent on a biology notecard to study with, a playing assessment in band, or helping fellow students with their tasks, the opportunity to plan my time helps me feel prepared for life beyond high school.

Aside from academics, Directed Study is a real opportunity to foster new friendships and provides an organic environment for students to connect. Often Directed Study classes are smaller and calmer than a typical class, and the lack of agenda gives students time to talk.

Just this year, I have been able to get to know three or four students in Directed Study alone by asking for help on assignments and working together to complete the daily New York Times crossword (which fosters my mental wellbeing). If a group of students are tasked with a challenging math problem, they'll be able to collaborate and help each other.

Rather than a break from learning, Directed Study serves a powerful purpose as a block where you can catch up, calm down, and take control of their school days. Among often standardized and rigid curriculums, allowing students to direct one block of their day creates an environment for the development of responsibility and creativity extending beyond the classroom. ♦

NEWS

Mary Macdonald To Retire

BY KNOWL STROUD



Photo Courtesy of Mary Macdonald

Mary Macdonald's journey to Mount Greylock—from undercover research on Margaret Thatcher's public spending cuts to time as a teacher and assistant principal at a New York City public magnet school—is anything but ordinary. It is no wonder then that her time at Greylock—as a teacher, director of curriculum, and principal—has been truly extraordinary.

MacDonald started her journey at Boston College, where she ended up working for a member of the British Parliament for a semester during her junior year, which led to both writing a full speech that was delivered to Parliament and “undercover research” during Margaret Thatcher's time as prime minister. “I went out and rode the buses in rural Western West England, trying to find out from the riders whether the public buses were better, or as good as the private buses,” said MacDonald.

After attending Columbia University Teachers College, MacDonald worked for a middle school on the Upper West Side that drew students from all five boroughs. There, she taught English, History, and a little bit of art. Still wanting to learn, MacDonald received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to study the development of nationalism in South Africa, which brought her to Williams College. While in Williamstown, she met the man who is now her husband and has lived there ever since.

Her first two years at Greylock were in the middle of a tight financial situation, and she ended up moving to Lenox, where she taught English and some history classes.

For MacDonald, the return to Greylock was swift and decisive. She was hired as Director of Curriculum and Instruction as part of the push to unite the tri-district. One year later in 2013, she was hired as principal for a term that would last until 2020.

Her time as principal was capped with the construction of the new school building, a project that took years of hard work, meetings, and planning, and one from which students benefit every day.

MacDonald improved the student experience in other ways too, building partnerships with Williams College, fostering a culture that celebrates the arts as well as athletics, and balancing different perspectives on school policy.

Like many before her, MacDonald returned to a teaching position after her time as principal, assuming the role of a seventh-grade social studies teacher. On the third floor, she has wanted “to cultivate students' curiosity, and get them thinking independently about what they learn and making connections.”

In addition to teaching, she advised several clubs including the Student Council and the new Debate Club.

While MacDonald's presence at Greylock will certainly be missed, it seems her positive impact on the community is far from over. But as this chapter closes, it is impossible to not be incredibly grateful for all MacDonald has done for this school community and the people within it. ♦

Tom Ostheimer To Retire

BY RAFA MASON

As you walk into Mount Greylock Regional School, towards the main academic wing, the first thing you notice is a life-size cutout of Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis. Freud marks the entrance of Thomas Ostheimer's room.

Ostheimer, who has been teaching at Greylock since 1999, has been known as Tom-O since the first day of school in 2006, when he passed by then senior Nate Demo (Dee-mo) and said “Demo!,” to which Demo replied “Tom-O” (Pronounced Tom-Oh). The rest is history. During his final year, Ostheimer taught AP and Honors Psychology, two wellness classes and a current events class for a middle school enrichment.

Over the course of his career, however, he has taught 20 different classes, including Introduction to Law, classes on the Vietnam war and the Holocaust, a drama class and many other social studies classes. He has also mentored the Spring Drama and coached lacrosse and girls soccer. His announcements for their “really BIG games” will never be forgotten.

With his retirement, Ostheimer plans to enjoy his hobbies such as photography, hiking and now that he has the time, traveling. He has always been fascinated with Vietnam's history and hopes to visit it. Fortunately, he will continue to live in the area and plans to occasionally be involved at Greylock, possibly helping with the Spring Drama or subbing.

Most of all, he will miss his students, saying “My motivation as a teacher is to build strong relationships with students, having that be the base for tapping into student interests, their curiosities about history. So I think it all starts with building relationships and developing their passion for history or psychology.” Ostheimer points out, “I've taught a number of students over the last 26 years here, probably a few 1000 students,” and that “one of the strengths of living in the same community that you teach in is that you constantly see former students and that keeps you plugged into the community.”

However, Ostheimer will be glad to get away from “bells and endless meetings,” two occurrences that will be joyfully absent in his retirement. Our school will not be the same without him or his posters of him as various celebrities: The Terminator (Tomonator), the fifth Beatle, “Tom Brady” and James Bond (Tomo Never Dies). As much as he and his bananas will be missed, most importantly we will miss his kindness, sense of humor, teaching skills and overall involvement in the school community. ♦



Photo Courtesy of Thomas Ostheimer

NEWS & SPORTS

Karl Belouin To Retire

BY KRISHIV MALHOTRA

Eighth-grade math teacher Karl Belouin will be retiring after 29 years of teaching at Mount Greylock at the end of the school year.

Belouin is a veteran, and served in the army in Alabama and Hawai'i, specializing in carpentry and masonry. After the military, he began his teaching career in Wilmington, Vermont. In 2000, Belouin came to Greylock where he took his father's position after he retired.

Taking inspiration from his father who "could stay home all summer long with [the] kids," Belouin decided that after his service, he wanted to become a teacher so he could have "the best opportunity to spend time with my family."

His favorite memory from Greylock was the Gettysburg trip that he co-founded with now Dean of Middle School Students, Mr. Blackman in 2008. For a decade, the entire 8th grade went and visited the Civil War battlefield.

Throughout all his time at Greylock, Belouin has stuck to teaching 7th and 8th grade math, a subject he loves. His goal for teaching has been to make learning enjoyable for students.



Photo Courtesy of Krishiv Malhotra

As someone who didn't enjoy school when he was younger, he loves having fun, and laughter in his classroom.

"The thing I'll miss most is the laughter, just having fun in class and telling jokes. That's what it's about."

Belouin is famous for his calendar, where he counts down until the end of the school year. While even 100 days felt far away for Belouin, with 22 days left in the school year he feels that "those number [of days] actually [take] on a bigger meaning."

After retirement, Belouin doesn't have any specific plans but he's excited to have more freedom, and do things for himself: "I don't plan on doing crazy things. When I wake up in the morning and I decide I want to go fishing, I have the ease of being able to do that, and just enjoy life for myself."

Belouin will be leaving a legacy of dedication, commitment, and humor at Greylock, and will be deeply missed by the community.

"Smile," he advises future teachers and students. "Don't take yourself too seriously. Mistakes will happen, but successes will happen every day." ♦

Ann Martin To Retire

RAFA MASON

There are many reasons Greylock students are sent to the front office. Maybe you're tardy, maybe you have a campaign poster for student council that needs approval, or maybe you just like pictures of corgis. Whatever brings you down, at the front desk you will be met by the dedicated and kind Ann Martin who is retiring at the end of the school year.

Martin has worked in education for a long time. Before moving to Greylock in 2005, she taught preschool for ten years and second grade for another three at Brighton Elementary School in North Adams. When she moved to Greylock, she started working one-on-one as a paraprofessional, then worked for 11 years in the Student Support Center before moving into the front office. She knows our school and its students inside and out.

Although Martin plans to stay in the area, she also wants to travel. Two top items on her

list are a cruise in Alaska and driving across the country. What Martin looks forward to most is not far from her home. In fact, it's the exact opposite: "I will be sleeping in, no longer getting up at 4:45 in the morning."

She's excited to enjoy a more flexible schedule, and plans to spend more time crocheting, walking, reading, and in the company of her granddaughter and her corgi. Many may recognize her corgi Milo, short for "my low-rider", from his teddy-bear like photo on her desk.

Martin does say that although she is looking forward to the peace and quiet, if it turns out that she has "too much free time" on her hands and begins to miss the Mount Greylock community too much, she may come back and sub. We all wish her a wonderful retirement and hope this big-hearted, lifelong educator with a warm smile will visit us frequently (and bring the dog). ♦



Photo Courtesy of Krishiv Malhotra

First Year of Mountain Biking at Greylock

BY NICO MCWEENEY

A new sport is sweeping over Mount Greylock Regional School and has been stirring up excitement: the exhilarating and adrenaline-pumping sport of mountain biking. Enter the Shire Shredders, a team originally founded by Pittsfield resident Kevin Delaney based out of Berkshire County.

The team is comprised of athletes from across different schools around Berkshire County. Three of the team members are from Mount Greylock: eighth graders Malcom McKeough and Benjamin Mandel, and sophomore Max States. Aidan Miller, a homeschooler also on the Mount Greylock Nordic Ski Team, competes alongside them.

Regarding his teammates, Mandel said, "The team is really supportive and friendly."

In the New England Youth Cycling League that Mount Greylock participates in, student athletes compete unaffiliated with their respective high schools. Races usually take place in states throughout the New England area. For athletes from Mount Greylock, this can mean two to three hours of traveling.

The Shire Shredders consists of 20 members and is coached by Jeremy Manzini and Art Sanders who are helped by parent volunteers. Anyone between fifth to twelfth grade can compete based on skill level in the league.

There are four levels of skill, Junior series, Junior/Senior series four, Junior/Senior series Jv races and Junior/Senior series Varsity races. According to Mandel, "The team has had some good results in the last 2 weeks with multiple people on podiums across many events."

Races usually last between forty-five minutes to an hour depending on the course and skill level. Recently, Mount Greylock bikers have been finding success with Mandel, making nationals in Macungie, PA.

Thanks to this group pioneering the program, athletes from Mount Greylock now have the tantalizing option to leave the fields and courts and become a Shredder. ♦

SPORTS

Return of Boys' Lacrosse

BY REED OLNEY

It has been an exciting year for the new Mount Greylock Boys' Varsity Lacrosse Team. After five years without a team, Mount Greylock Regional School has finally been able to restore this program. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the Mounties were a dominating force in Western Massachusetts, producing some of the top scorers in state history and winning a Central/Western Massachusetts championship. Unfortunately, the sport suffered a great deal due to the restrictive safety procedures during the pandemic, and after the school resumed in-person learning, the program was not brought back to Greylock.

Over the past few years, boys from Mount Greylock have needed to join the co-op team hosted by Hoosac Valley High School in order to play. The current ninth grade has always had an unusually large number of lacrosse players and so, for the last two years, parents, players, coaches, and Greylock administrators all came together and worked with extra-curricular coordinator Lindsey von Holtz to bring the sport back.

"Getting lacrosse back at Greylock has been a dream of the youth program for a long time and I'm really happy it's back," said starting defender and captain, freshman Tucker Art.

This spring, von Holtz hired two experienced coaches to lead the way, appointing head coach Daniel Collins and assistant coach Adrian Enchill to run the new program. The team is mostly first-years, as older players were allowed to stay on the Hoosac co-op team.



Photo Courtesy of Reed Olney

"It has been a great start to the program and our goal is to win Western Mass at some point in the future," said Collins.

The team has not let their young age stop them, however, as the all first-year starting lineup has had more success than anticipated. This year, the team faced a mixed schedule of

JV and varsity games, defeating all JV opponents, winning a few varsity games, and playing competitive games with Wahconah Regional High School, Lenox Memorial High School, and Granby Memorial High School, who all field varsity teams of nearly all upperclassmen. Greylock is currently at two wins and seven losses with two games left on the schedule. One is against Pittsfield High School and another is a rematch against McCann Technical School.

"We have a young group of kids but we've made a lot of progress and had a good amount of success. The season has been really fun so far," said starting midfielder and captain, freshman Finn Noyes.

The program has a bright future due to their strong youth program with many young players waiting for the opportunity to play in high school. The current team will remain intact for years to come, as most of their players still have three years left until they graduate.

All in all, the first year of the new Greylock Boys' Lacrosse team has been a success for the team and the school. ♦

Senior Athlete Spotlight: Malia Koffi

BY OLIVIA PEREZ

Senior captain and star of the softball team, Malia Koffi, has hit seven home runs this season, leading the Mount Greylock Softball team to the eighteenth seed in the MIAA state power rankings. She sat down for an interview with the Greylock Echo to talk about her softball career.

Echo: What first got you into softball?

Malia Koffi: I started, in T ball years, when I was really young. My grandpa was always a big baseball person, so he always wanted me in the sport but in a granddaughter form. So, he was just kind of who directed me into softball my whole life, and then I just stuck with it [since] that was what I really loved.

Echo: What has your softball journey been like throughout the years?

Koffi: It's definitely been a lot of learning from the girls [that were] older than me. I found a lot of role models in the sport, and I cling to a lot of the different characteristics that they had. I wanted to be the best player that I could be [using] their best aspects.

Echo: How do you feel you've grown as a player?

Koffi: I learned that I have to be a strong, independent version of myself for the younger girls that are going to take over... when I leave. So, I've just kind of learned how to show the best version and... personality that I can when I come to the field. So, it kind of brings a positive vibe to the whole sport, because I just know that it comes with it.

Echo: What has your experience playing at Greylock been like?

Koffi: It's been a great experience. I love our coach. He's such a great old man. Like, so sweet. So, I would say that the coach really has created the team. But also the girls really just create a great dynamic. Everyone's just so positive, and we are able to just have such a close bond. And we've never had any drama, which I think is great.

Echo: Do you plan on continuing to play after high school?

Koffi: I was going to. I committed to Westfield for softball, and then decided that I want to just be a student. I feel like I've kind of had my run with softball. I love the sport and will never stop loving it, but I have realized it's just not something that I want to incorporate for the rest of my college experience. ♦



Photo Courtesy of Malia Koffi

Record the news through pictures
and words.

Join the Echo Today.

greylockecho@student.mgrsd.org

FEATURES

Senior Destinations

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

ALVAREZ, EMILY-
FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY
BAYA, MARSHALL- VASSAR
COLLEGE
BAYLISS, JAMESON-
UMASS BOSTON
BERINGER, JAYNE-
EMMANUEL COLLEGE
BINGEMANN, OLIVER-
KENT STATE UNIVERSITY
BURROW, CLAIRE-
SMITH COLLEGE
CAMACHO, MIGUEL- GEOR-
GIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
COOK, OLIVIA-
SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE
DE JONG, VERA-
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
DURLEY, KAEYA-
MARYLAND INSTITUTE COL-
LEGE OF ART
FILIAULT, MIA-
MCCANN TECHNICAL SCHOOL
FISCHER, MAGGIE-
UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAVEN
FREDETTE, IAN- UNIVERSI-
TY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
GOSS, KATHERINE-
WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY
HETHERINGTON, GAVIN-
MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE
HOEY, CHASE-
MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE
HOLUBAR, CHARLOTTE-
CORNELL UNIVERSITY
IGOE, WILL-
MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE

KASTRINAKIS, JACLYNN-
UNIVERSITY OF RHODE IS-
LAND
KIERNAN, CALEIGH-
UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD
KLOMPUS, NOAH-
MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE
STROUD, KNOWL-
DARTMOUTH COLLEGE
KOFFI, MALIA-
BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY
COLLEGE
LASH-ST. JOHN, JADEN-
MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE
MACHAFFIE, KELSEY-
MERRIMACK COLLEGE
MARCISZ, MILA-
SMITH COLLEGE
MELLOW-BARTELS, RAFAEL-
VASSAR COLLEGE
MILLER, CAMERON-
FLORIDA INSTITUTE OF
TECHNOLOGY
MILLET, ARTHUR- DREXEL
UNIVERSITY
NEWBERRY, JAKE- WEST-
FIELD STATE UNIVERSITY
NOYES, LIAM- ST. LAWRENCE
UNIVERSITY
O'CONNOR, MAI- MCGILL
UNIVERSITY
PATRICK, MIA-
RICE UNIVERSITY
PESCE, NATALIE- JOHNSON &
WALES UNIVERSITY
POWELL-BECHTEL, ERIK-
NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY
RHIE, POLLY- HAVERFORD
COLLEGE

RUDIN, JULIAN-
UMASS LOWELL
SCANLON, MAIRE- RHODE
ISLAND COLLEGE
SHARMA, DEVIKA-
BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY
COLLEGE
SHELSY, KATHERINE-
SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE
SHIN, SIMON- HAMILTON
COLLEGE
SILLS, ALEC-
PARIS COLLEGE OF ART
SIMS, SILAS-
NORWICH UNIVERSITY
SINGER, EZEKIEL- BROWN
UNIVERSITY
SLICK, CHRISTINA-
ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY
STEWART, NIARA (ASH)-
THE NEW SCHOOL
SWEREN, KYLIE- BRYANT
UNIVERSITY
THOMAS, BRYANNA-
BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY
COLLEGE
TWING, ANDREW-
ENTERING THE WORKFORCE
WANG, ANNA-
TUFTS UNIVERSITY
WETHERELL, COLE-
UNITED STATES MILITARY
ACADEMY AT WEST POINT
WHALEY, CAEL-
UNIVERSITY OF MAINE
WILKINS, DAVYN- WEST-
FIELD STATE UNIVERSITY
ZAMMUTO, SEPP- COLUMBIA
UNIVERSITY

EXTRACURRICULARS

Art Features



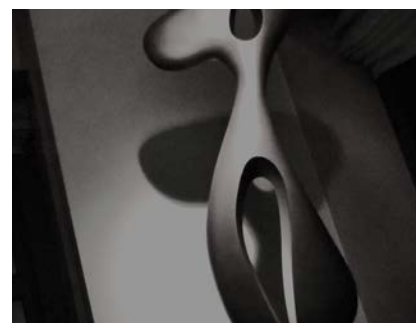
By Senior Alec Sills

My piece is ultimately indicative of my growth as an artist at Greylock... While I still [closely] hold a lot of traditional values (proper anatomy, form, dynamic color, etc.), I've learned to have a much more loose and emotive direction with my artistry- Sills ♦



By Senior Kaeya Durley

I wanted to take a version of me and freeze it... I am terrified of change and battle it with all that I am. And yet, I [now] know that it is a fact of life. Thus, I wanted to give myself one final win against the continuously changing world before I am forced to step out into it- Durley ♦



By Senior Niara (Ash) Steward

My photograph, "Snoopy," inspired me to reflect upon the contentment I feel every time I any animated character from when I was little... I hope to always carry the abstraction of my youth as a memory contained in many forms of media- Steward ♦

Senior Will Igoe Receives Superintendent Award

BY EMILIE JONES

Each year, high school seniors are awarded the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (M.A.S.S.) Certificate of Academic Excellence. This year, senior Will Igoe is the Mount Greylock recipient.

Igoe first learned of his win when "[Interim Superintendent Joe] Bergeron came up to [him] before soccer practice some time in the fall."

"I was happily surprised and very honored that Mr. Bergeron decided to give me that award," Igoe said.

Bergeron decided on the recipient of the award with "the guidance and leadership teams collaborate each fall to identify a senior who has exhibited excellence in academic achievements, extracurricular activities, and community involvement."

Even though "it's called the Superintendent Award of Academic Excellence," said Igoe, "I think there's other people in our grade that

are excellent academically, even more so than me... I think it also has something to do with how you impact the... the people around you."



Photo Courtesy of Will Igoe

In respect to his impact on the school community, Igoe said "it's not one thing that I've done, it's just kind of a way of living...In my

time at Greylock, I've made a lot more people laugh than I've made cry, and I'm proud of that. Hopefully, I've made people happier, and hopefully I've made the school a more positive place."

Igoe's advice for the underclassmen to help them make the best of their high school career and become contenders for this award in the future is to "be the best version of yourself. Don't try to be somebody you're not. Just work on improving yourself every day... Don't worry about getting recognition; focus on improving yourself."

Winning this award proves that Igoe represents the kind of students Greylock strives to produce, and according to Igoe his class is filled with many other excellent students. As our days with the class of 2025 come to an end, it's up to the younger students to fill their shoes. ♦

Student Government Election Results

RISEING SENIOR CLASS

Class President: Frances Evans

Class Vice President: Jack Uhas

Class Treasurer: Ruby Dufour

Class Secretary: Nina Wied

Student Council: William Apotsos, Nora Lopez, Amelia Madrigal, Krishiv Malhotra, Natasha Nugent

RISEING JUNIOR CLASS

Class President: Timothy Karampatasos

Class Vice President: Cecelia Keogh

Class Treasurer: Nate Gill

Class Secretary: Nora Stricker

Student Council: Zamir Ashraf, Sara Ehle, Robyn Gregg, Sabine Guerra, Nellie Swabey

RISEING SOPHOMORE CLASS

Class President: Morris Israel

Class Vice President: Oscar Heeringa

Class Treasurer: Reed Olney

Class Secretary: Olivia Perez

Student Council: Rowan Apotsos, Dominique Bernier, Cole Creighton, Luke Irwin, Finn Noyes

RISEING FRESHMAN CLASS

Class President: Sam Barry

Class Vice President: Boaz Slater-Lee

Class Treasurer: Malcolm McKeough

Class Secretary: Seamus Claffey

Student Council: Brielle Chang, Riley Dickinson, Brenna Lopez, Sydney Raymond, Liah Tatro

Internal Student Council Elections

President: Nora Lopez

Vice President: Sabine Guerra

Secretary: Amelia Madrigal

Treasurer: Robyn Gregg

Parliamentarian: Natasha Nugent
Press and Social Media Manager: Sara Ehle

SCHOOL COUNCIL (TWO YEAR TERM)

Adele Low

STUDENT GOVERNMENT DAY

Representative: Adele Low

Alternate: Sabine Guerra

OPINION

Think About It

BY JACK UHAS

Do you really think for yourself? Many of us, myself included, fall into the trap of believing we are the only ones left on this planet who can think critically. We say this, yet partisan networks like MSNBC and FOX News still see millions tune in each night.

In fairness, this is often with the harmless goal of catching up on the day's headlines. However, what you're not realizing, or perhaps even choosing to ignore, is that you're likely only getting part of the story, if you're getting the story at all. Every minute you spend listening only to those you agree with, your ability to think critically degrades further.

The fact is that partisan news outlets primarily cater to their audience, covering the stories their base wants to hear. After all, that's how they make their money.

Seriously, how often have you read the "other side's" media and considered its point of view? When you hear a story, do you ask yourself if there may be another perspective?

In an increasingly divided world, seeking the truth is more critical than ever. It isn't always easy, but strategies and tools are available to guide your research.

One thing I (try to) do whenever consuming news from a partisan source is to try to think of the best argument for the other side. Take the hotly debated topic of tariffs. For example, if my immediate reaction when looking at the stock market is to panic and assume Trump is

tanking the economy on purpose, I'll imagine a situation where short-term economic stagnation leads to a resurgence in manufacturing in the U.S. In that case, would I be okay with a temporary downturn?

Alternatively, if I were a Republican, I might suppose tariffs would result in lasting retaliatory tariffs from other nations that would hurt U.S. manufacturing and exporters. Would I still be okay with the tariffs?

These short exercises are a great way to "center" yourself and take the time to consider an alternate perspective. It can also strengthen your arguments, as you've now steelmanned your argument, or considered the strongest part of your "opponent's" argument, meaning you can more effectively defend your point of view.

One interesting experiment by Reuters/Ipsos found that people base policy on what they think of the party/politician supporting it. They ran a poll asking groups of Democrats and Republicans what they thought of a policy, for instance, "To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following statement: Health insurance should cover pre-existing medical conditions?"

91% of Democrats agreed.

However, support from Democrats fell by almost 10 % once Trump's name was added and the question asked, "To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following statements made by President Donald Trump: Health insurance should cover pre-existing medical

conditions?"

The same study found Republicans were more likely to support women being punished for receiving an abortion when told it was Trump's position.

This perfectly encapsulates the culture of following party lines no matter where they lead. Do we understand the issues we claim to care so much about, or do we just know we should support all tax cuts and defend bureaucracy to no end?

There's nothing wrong with holding these positions, but do you understand why you do? Perhaps more importantly, do you know why others don't?

The best strategy you can adopt from today on is to question everything. Question sources, biases, and rhetoric; always read beyond the headline. If a speech is described as "incredibly divisive," watch it and decide for yourself.

All these strategies are lifesavers that help prevent you from drowning in the ever-churning sea of spin and sensationalism.

With all this being said, sometimes it's okay to sit down and watch your favorite channel from time to time. Just remember that, as relaxing as it can be to hear your own point of view, it's just as important to engage with new and differing ideas.

Rule of thumb: if your ideas aren't being challenged, something needs to change. ♦

What Makes Greylock Special

BY AMELIA MADRIGAL

I have spent the last three months in Leadville, Colorado, attending a semester school called the High Mountain Institute. I can now comfortably say Leadville will share my heart, along with Williamstown.

Leadville boasts endless winters (there is still four inches of snow on the ground in May!), a high elevation (10,150'), a backdrop of the biggest mountains in CO (I'm still convinced they might be a green screen), and of course, the beautiful campus I have called home since January.

I moved from Boston to Williamstown in 2016 as an eight year-old and have attended Williamstown's public schools for over half my life.

Going into my last year at Mount Greylock, I am grateful for the distance so that I may reflect.

Here, everyone comes together from all over the country. I live with someone coming from a private school in NYC, another from a private school in Seattle, and another from a public school in North Carolina.

There are a bunch of differences between everyone's schools. For instance, I could tell you about whose schools have APs, whose schools have a 150 person track team (the answer is nobody but us!), whose schools get out in May, whose schools have a junior and a senior prom, and so on.

At HMI, reflection is omnipresent. Next week, I'll be out in the woods for eight hours

reflecting on my time during this semester.

I have had time to reflect on what my priorities are coming back to Greylock and what I want to cherish my last two semesters of high school.

First of all, I would like to appreciate the community of Greylock. I'd like to appreciate cheering in the student section during volleyball games. I'd like to appreciate the girls soccer Senior Night and the opportunity to hold a larger-than-life poster board of senior Mila Marcisz's face.

***"[W]hat I want to cherish
my last two semesters of
high school"***

I'd like to appreciate the fact that we, as a school, don't really have team try-outs. High school isn't about being the perfect athlete, but having the opportunity to try something.

One of my teachers, Emily Shannon, recently said to me "you have to embrace being a beginner," and I think Greylock's 'open-enrollment' sports policy, if you will, embraces both the DI-bound athlete and the nervous newcomer. I would like to appreciate the ability to take advantage of dual enrollment with BCC, MCLA, and Williams College. I think taking Spanish at Williams segued gracefully into HMI, especially as I'm figuring out my priori-

ties and what I value in education.

I'd like to appreciate Student Council and the new vending machine I'm excited to come back to.

I'd like to appreciate the clubs at Greylock, especially the Echo, the Book Club, and the Outing Club. Moreover, I'm grateful for the excellent student leadership displayed in Greylock clubs. Helming the clubs at Greylock are many passionate classmates whom I deeply admire and look up to.

I'm grateful for the library, and Mrs. Barrett's exceptional, thoughtfully curated selection of books. In a small school in rural Massachusetts, I've learned how incredibly lucky our library is, from the puzzles and wall art to the focus on banned books and diverse authors.

I'd like to appreciate the teachers at Greylock, who, day after day, pour themselves into their work and our education.

I appreciate the ability to sit outside during lunch enjoying the view of Mt. Greylock. It's bittersweet to trade Mt. Elbert for Mt. Greylock, but Mt. Greylock is ours.

It's pretty lucky there's no more snow up there. I couldn't say that about Mt. Elbert until about August, maybe.

I'm not sure what Greylock will feel like next year without the class of 2025. I'm grateful for their leadership and friendship. All that said, I have faith in our growing community and am excited to return in August. ♦

OPINION ETC.

A Letter From The Incumbent Editor-in-Chief

BY KNOWL STROUD

Dear Greylock Community,

Being the editor of *The Echo* is a job like no other, and I truly cannot express enough how grateful I am for the opportunity to have led this newspaper over the past year. This role comes with a sort of magical mythos that I haven't found anywhere else, and I must say it is well deserved.

On one hand, editing *The Echo* is special because of the sheer amount of dedication it requires. Deadlines don't wait for you, and you are responsible for nothing less than allowing other people's work to see the light of day, and shine brilliantly when it does. I now have countless memories of sitting on sports bleachers, the floors of airports, and in the living rooms of Vermont Airbnbs with my laptop, editing articles and sending emails.

More importantly though, being editor is unique because of the experiences that just can't quite be understood by anyone except the long line of past editors leaving supportive comments in the depths of the drive. Late night send-offs, InDesign headaches, and getting to school early with a new print edition are feelings that are amazingly indescribable unless you've experienced them. Add to that this year's new electronics policy, which made *The Echo* Mac a very rare school-issued MacBook, and running *The Echo* can feel very empowering or very isolating, depending on how you play your cards.

Still, the editor is only the conductor of this brilliant orchestra, and I would be remiss to leave out the 30+ other writers and editors who really make this thing run, or the five years I spent on *The Echo* prior to being EIC. Indeed, a lot of what I gained from my time on *The Echo* was the progress on the basics during those years. More than anything else, writing for *The Echo* gave me confidence. Somewhere along the

way between being terrified to interview Mrs. MacDonald and asking for interviews with professional skiers in the press box at a World Cup, I conquered my fear of talking to strangers and transformed interviewing into an exhilarating experience. To any new writers out there who are having anywhere near as rough a time with interviewing as I did—it gets better, trust me. So much better, and you'll be glad you worked on it.

Being on *The Echo* also taught me a lot about why journalism is important. With the knowledge I had gained on *The Echo*, I joined the newspaper at MA Boys State and wrote about the effects of male privilege on the choice to partake in dating-focused culture at a networking event, and how it was an early version of the exact kind of workplace harassment the #Metoo movement focused on. The article irked the adult newspaper supervisors too much to be published, but it still taught me two things. First, in a world of increased political supervision, journalism is one of the most powerful methods of dissent. Second, sometimes direct is not the best way to go. I get people coming to me all the time asking to write opinion pieces about the issue they are most upset about. I must give a considerable amount of credit to Mr. Niemeyer here, but my response is always that it is far easier to change people's minds by showing than by telling. If you truly believe your conclusion is correct given the facts of your issue, don't write a scathing opinion, write a news story, and let people form their own opinion from the unbiased facts you report. With that in mind, it is often most important to make a difference with journalism in quiet ways. Choose diverse groups for your interviews and amplify the voices of people creating change, and you will often create something that is impactful, empowering and journalistically beautiful.

With the allusion to Mr. Niemeyer there, I'd like to take time to say some thank-yous to just a few of the people who have helped me along the way. First, a thank you to Mr. Niemeyer for talking me through difficult situations, being willing to give me printing advice at track meets and always being a message away. To Lucy McWeeny, for seeing my potential as an editor, teaching me everything I know about being EIC and being the source of all my email templates. To Matthew Voisin, for providing me with the incredible experience of reporting on the Minneapolis World Cup, and to Coach Rogers and especially Coach Hil for driving me there and encouraging me along the way. Thank you to my parents, who were eternally helpful in fixing broken sentences, looking up obscure elements of AP style and picking up print editions. Finally, I'd like to thank all *The Echo* staff this year for a brilliant time and extend a special thank you to the editors, who pulled more than their fair share on many occasions and left me smiling time and time again with their kindness towards younger writers and deft editing.

I'd like to wrap this all up by saying that, while I'm proud of what I did as editor, I was far from perfect—I left stories unreported, sent emails that were too long and forgot to indent the first paragraph on the second page of the January edition. More than anything else, I think I spent this year learning, whether that was about the school, about journalism, or about how to manage time. I sincerely hope that within this print edition and all the others before it, I've been able to pass on as much of that knowledge as possible—to Frankie and all the rest of the writers I worked with—so that next year can be an even better year than this one. Good luck guys, you got this.

-Knowl ♦

Girls' Track Team Wins State

BY NICO MCWEENEY

We don't want to jump the gun with this prediction, but the Mount Greylock Girls' Track Team is on pace to run away with another county title. The team is undefeated this year and has been completely dominant, even winning a meet 149-0, an unprecedented feat for the team.

At this time last year, the team won the State Championship but head coach Brian Gill believes that this year will be a closer meet. "It's a toss up," he said.

However, competition might be stiff going into the Western Mass and State meets.

Senior Chase Hoey said that the team is "really focusing on Western Mass" at the moment.

If the Mounties want to win Western Mass, Hoey will be key. She is currently leading the team in high jump while placing third in the state. Eighth grader Brenna Lopez is also helping the teams, coming second in the state at the two mile run.



Photo Courtesy of Brian Gill

As the season winds down, the team prepares for the Western Mass and State competitions. However, with the girls being so dominant, most of the focus during practice has been on the boys team.

"The girls are just going to win," said Gill.

The expectation of winning States is not as high as last year because of the competition throughout Massachusetts, but the team still has a shot. They are very likely to win the County Championship, but not as favored to win Western Mass.

Gill hopes that the girls' team can "overcome the lack of competition" they have faced this year that has failed to challenge the team.

For now, the Girls' track team will try to keep a positive mindset and stay prepared for when competition ramps up during post-season meets. ♦

ETC.

How School Threats Are Addressed

BY FRANCES EVANS

On April 17, the middle school was called into the auditorium and assured that a rumor about a “threat of violence” was “no real threat, and that sharing information via texts and social media, rather than sharing with an adult, can cause real pain,” a message echoed in a subsequent StudentSquare update by vice principal Samantha Rutz.

In the past decade, there has been an increased awareness of school violence, more difficulty determining threat validity with increased online communication, and more heated debates about how threats can be prevented before they become a danger. Although Mount Greylock is lucky to have not received any serious threats, many students are unaware of how the administration addresses threats and the different action plans we have in place.

The administration follows standardized guidelines on how to address every threat, determine its validity, and take action from there.

When the administration catches word of a threat, they immediately start investigating. According to Principal Jacob Schutz, “It’s a lot of detective work.”

They talk to students, teachers, and other witnesses to try to figure out what really happened. If all of the stories corroborate, then the administration assumes that the story is the truth. So far, most threats have been deemed to be exclusively rumors or harmless. In the scenario that a threat is deemed to be dangerous, the administration would take action from there including calling the police if necessary.

“If there’s ever any concern, you err on the side of caution and take action... we don’t share publicly what’s being done legally,” said Schutz.

Actions include a stay-in-place, lockdown, or an evacuation. If for some reason students are unable to return to the building, there are different, detailed processes of reunification in which students are dismissed from a secure location. Since there is little traffic compared to other

areas, police officers can arrive shortly after being dispatched.

All of these actions are outlined by the variety of safety metrics the school follows. Some are statewide while others are for our district and are reviewed annually by the school board. The Crisis Management Team (CMT), composed of teachers, administration, and other staff, meet monthly to revisit the guidelines on how threats are taken care of as well as what information to send out to students.

We are also advised by local and state level law enforcement officials who work with the administration to keep protocol up to date with different trainings just in case.

Did you know we have a crisis management team? Or that we have different reunification plans depending on different factors? What about “Good Grief?” Read for more info.

According to Interim Superintendent Joseph Bergeron, thanks to our more isolated location, “there is probably more concern reading national news... and trying to figure out, like, what do I need to be concerned about? What is going to happen to me here?”

So, most of what the administration does is take preventative measures, inform, and support students.

One of the preventative measures is the current building layout, which has fewer entrances than the last school as well as two buzzers to get in through the front door. Another measure is the cameras located around the school.

Not only could the office see a potential threat, but they also help to identify “things after the fact,” said Schutz. “I think we have a pretty good system down.”

When a major event such as a widely publicized school shooting occurs, Schutz will usually send out an email describing what happened and will offer school services. For these PSAs, Schutz is advised both by the CMT and the template provided by the Good Grief program which the school participates in.

“We err on the side of sharing as much as we can as soon as we can,” said Schutz, “[but] that’s often delicate because there’s privacy rights... that you don’t want to interfere with.”

More so than informing students, the administration does their best to provide services using the aforementioned Good Grief program’s structure. The program, based on Maria Trozzi’s *Good Grief*, acknowledges that grief is normal but gives tools, and structure to address that grief. A key component of the program is self selection in which students reach out to a trusted adult.

According to school psychologist Dr. Geri O’Brien, “There’s a lot of adults in the building, from the teachers to the counseling office, who can discuss [students’] fears with them.”

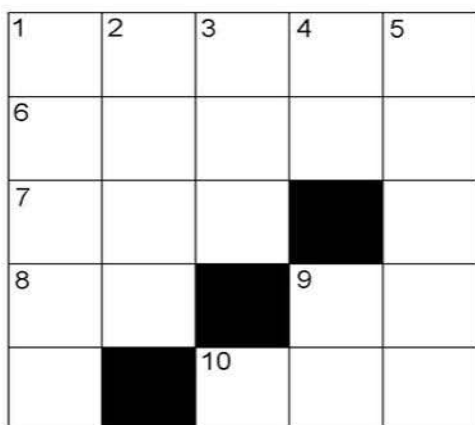
If you would like to reach out to Dr. O’Brien or anybody else in the guidance counseling office, you can ask for a pass and go anytime to schedule a meeting.

Many students seem unconcerned about Mount Greylock, though, especially since we live in a more rural district. According to eighth grader Maria Welch, she is unconcerned about her safety coming to school “especially because of the area we live. I don’t think it’s as big a deal [for us].”

For the most part, it seems that Mount Greylock is unlikely to be put in any real danger any time soon and if something were to occur, the administration has a plan to cover it. ♦

Mini Crossword

CREATED BY MALCOLM MCKEOUGH



ACROSS

1. Acronym for our upper school
6. To rise up
7. Press something on a touch screen
8. Compact Disc
9. A tiger, a pig, ___ elephant.
10. Two truths and a ___ (name of an icebreaker game)

DOWN

1. Used to light a fire
2. What our seniors will be soon
3. “Rest in peace”
4. Abbreviation for grades 9 through 12
5. River that runs through Paris
9. Chat GPT, for example

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