

The Greylock Echo

January Edition

Mount Greylock - Williamstown, MA

January 5th, 2026

Free Breakfast and New Menu Item

BY JACK UHAS

There's a new routine for many Greylock students at the sound of the 9:12 bell: a rush to the cafeteria to line up for breakfast.

Several laws and funding changes over the past five years have led to the creation of universal, free breakfast served after the beginning of the academic day for K-12 students.

So far, the expansion has been popular—Tammy Jennings, the district's food service coordinator, said an average of 175 students get breakfast each day, a sharp increase from the previous era of paid breakfasts.

This change has been seen across the district. Students at WES now receive free breakfast, and LES had been serving free breakfast even before the latest legislation.

Jennings described the changes necessary to ensure breakfast is ready by the end of the second period: "We had to put more hours for the staff ... I have another staff member that comes in (two hours) earlier to get breakfast ready."

Despite the additional stress preparation creates, Jennings said the new breakfast program hasn't affected staff's ability to prepare for lunch.

"They'll prep (for breakfast) the day before," said Jennings, "just in case anything happens ... then we're always ready for at least that day."

The logistics of the meals are set forward by the state, under two different "serving" styles. Greylock uses the "Offer vs. Serve" style: students can choose three items from several options, but must be offered a protein, dairy, and grain item, with fruit required for students to take.

Jennings explained that Greylock opted for this style because it prevented waste by avoiding giving students a tray of items they might

not finish. The simpler "Serve" system of providing a pre-bagged breakfast was tested at WES, but was soon switched to an Offer vs. Serve design.

Jennings also stressed the importance of student feedback. She shared her hope to add and change menu items, noting that the cafeteria plans to add breakfast sandwiches to the menu rotation in the near future.

All this is a result of several mandates passed by the Massachusetts Legislature. The first major change to state law regarding break-

fasts was the 2020 "Breakfast After the Bell" mandate, signed into law by former Governor Charlie Baker, which required schools with a high concentration of low-income students to serve breakfast after the instructional day began. The COVID-19 pandemic complicated the roll-

out of this law, but in the meantime, federal waivers

enabled schools to provide free meals to all students, effectively testing future Massachusetts legislation. Massachusetts' 2024 fiscal year budget made these federal changes permanent in state law and made both lunch and breakfast free for all students, regardless of income level.

The law has not been without controversy; a bill was introduced by Republican state representative Marcus Vaughn in early 2025 to allow districts to "opt-out" of providing free lunches. Some wealthier districts argue that families in their district can cover the cost of meals and therefore should be free to use the funding they receive to subsidize other expenses, such as salaries or facility improvements. The bill also includes a provision that would allow parents to opt in to paying for their child's lunch if they feel state funding should go elsewhere.

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Photo Courtesy of Krishiv Malhotra

1 in 650: Interview with Evora Xü

BY INDIRA SEMON PIKE



Photo Courtesy of Evora Xü

The Greylock Echo sat down with senior Evora Xü who has been translating Chinese to English both in school and on social media.

Echo: How did you start translating?

Evora Xü: It was 2020, so I had nothing to do, and I was listening to my new favorite song, which had very poetic, hard-to-understand lyrics. I searched YouTube for an English translation because I was curious how people would translate the song. What I saw disappointed me. I could not find a single version that was satisfactory, or that I felt was accurate enough. Annoyed, I went, "guess I have to do this myself."

Echo: Was there anything else that inspired your interest in translating?

Xü: I'm fascinated by linguistics and its social and cultural implications. I'm very familiar with linguistic relativity, the idea that your language influences how you think and perceive the world. The most obvious cases are "untranslatable ideas" and lexical gaps, in which a language has no word for a certain concept or idea. [Another challenge is] two different words in one language being the same word in another. Basically, the bilingual experience is talking in one language and suddenly stopping mid-sentence because you realize you're thinking of a concept in one language that doesn't have an equivalent word in the other. It's like a memory blank, but with a lexical gap.

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New Skate Park

Cole Field will be seeing a new addition. McWeeny goes into the challenges and includes a sneak peek at the layout!

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Statewide Phone Regulation

How it's going, what has to be done, and Lopéz's take.

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So You Want a License

Gregg on how to get your driver's license.

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From Foreign Affairs to State Department to Greylock

Ms. Nava interview.

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NEWS

Sneak Peek: 'Into the Woods'

BY OLIVIA PEREZ

This year, the Mount Greylock Regional School theater department is proud to announce the production of the musical "Into the Woods." The storyline follows the Baker (Henry Wall) and the Baker's Wife (Mai Dekel), who journey into the woods to break a curse cast by the Witch (Frances Evans) on the couple. Along the journey, they encounter classic fairytale characters, like Cinderella (June Hozapfel), Little Red Riding Hood (Annie Brody), Jack (Morris Israel) who climbs the beanstalk, and Rapunzel (Penny Everett). Each character is pursuing their deepest wish, leading to a seemingly "happily ever after" ending in Act 1. Act 2, however, takes a dark turn disrupting the "happily ever after." The surviving characters must come together to face the world's challenges as a community. They must learn to live with each other

and not just their wishes.

The production is directed by Jeffrey Welch, with music direction by Jaqueline Vinette. Last year, Welch and Vinette decided to put on the 1950s show "Grease," but this year, they are looking for a change of pace.

"[We'd] like to offer something different, but also there are a number of kids who participate, like any other team, and they come back year after year, so it's good for them to kind of develop other musical groups by playing different kinds of characters," said Welch.

The choice of "Into the Woods" has resulted in a significant step up in complexity compared to "Grease." There are several logistical challenges: "It's a shorter rehearsal calendar this year. Our performances are all in February instead of March. I know it's only a few days

difference, but last year, we did a much shorter and easier show. This is a much harder one, and there's not a ton of time, so it is going to be a challenge," Vinette explained.

Despite the tight schedule, the team is confident in the show's success. "Into the Woods" is expected to be a pleasure to watch and a fun show. As Welch noted, "[A] lot of people are familiar with the soundtrack. It's very wistful, very fanciful. I think the audience will get carried away by it."

Performances are on February 26-28 at 7:00pm.

The demanding work of "Into the Woods" promises to be a rewarding experience for the audience. The cast hopes that the show in February will be successful and well loved by the Greylock community.

New Middle School Crew

BY SABINE GUERRA

Historically, Mount Greylock Regional School has opted for directed study blocks rather than the "advisory" or "homeroom" blocks that are typical in other schools. However, the middle school teachers have been switching it up by implementing their own version of advisory: "Crew."

Crew meets once a week on Fridays within the middle school directed studies, and according to seventh grade science teacher Amy Moore-Powers, the middle school students "do a lot of class building."

Moore-Powers explained that the teachers are "bringing them in from separate schools and letting them get to know all of the people in their class," and that a major goal is to "help them to find ways of working with everyone." Moore-Powers went on to discuss how they cover a wide range of topics in Crew, including "social-emotional skills." To do this, "(they) use different team-building games."

She also commented on the fact that, oftentimes, their goal is to "meet the students where they are and respond to a prompt." This means addressing current struggles that they observe within the grade. Moore-Powers added, "It's also about students learning and getting to know one adult and feeling like that adult has their back, and that's somebody that they can go to if they're unsure or uncomfortable with something."

Some middle schoolers, however, have expressed distaste for it over the years.

Moore-Powers explained, "The class that is now freshman hadn't had Crew introduced until about January of their seventh grade year. There was a lot of pushback at that point because it was something new, and [they believed it was] taking their directed study time."

Moore-powers claimed, "In middle school now, they don't know anything different. Friday is Crew; that's it."

She also filled in more details about how the middle school teachers have adapted their work load to allow for the replacement of the study period. Moore-Powers stated that the middle school teachers have "made some accommodations for homework. [Oftentimes, it] doesn't happen on Fridays because of Friday Crew." She even said that, with the adjustments, "Crew is something that (the current seventh graders) look forward to."

It is exciting to hear that the middle school teachers are putting a focus on building up the community at such a crucial point in their time at Mount Greylock, but for this writer, it leaves the question of whether a curriculum like this will be brought to the high school, or if it would be welcomed in the upper-level grades.

Crew is one example of how there is more to learn in a classroom than just what can be found in a textbook.

Quarter-zip Tuesday

BY ZAMIR ASHRAF

Quarter-zips have surged in popularity over the past couple of months, appearing in schools, workplaces, and, most notably, across social media.

Once viewed as primarily a business casual piece of clothing, the quarter-zip has been reintroduced as a fashionable and widely embraced trend. Social media platforms, especially TikTok and Instagram, have played a key role in accelerating the quarter-zip's popularity. Constant online exposure has shown how a niche clothing item can become extremely popular in a short period of time.

Trends can spread quickly, even at Mount Greylock Regional School. Seniors Max Easton and Reed Miles-Harris helped to bring the online quarter-zip trend to Mount Greylock by creating an Instagram account inspired by the greylock_studentsoftheweek page run by past Greylock seniors. Their account, mg_qztues-

day, was made to create a fun environment where students had the opportunity to participate in a new schoolwide tradition of wearing a quarter-zip on Tuesday.

"The trend online became dead, and people slowly stopped wearing them to school." — Max Easton

One of the most notable moments of the trend occurred on Tuesday, December 2, a snow day, when Easton and Miles-Harris went door to door over the span of four hours to photograph students wearing quarter-zips, making sure to continue their new tradition despite school

being canceled.

However, the same speed that fuels the rise of a trend commonly contributes to its decline. Oversaturation of something can often lead to trends losing their appeal as people move on to something new.

Like many other trends, mg_qztuesday eventually faded. "The trend online became dead, and people slowly stopped wearing them to school on Tuesdays," said Easton. As participation among students declined, posts became less frequent before stopping altogether.

Now, the question remains: Will mg_qztuesday make another post? Even if the answer is no, don't be surprised if you continue to see quarter-zips around school on Tuesdays as a reminder of the brief time when the trend was alive.

FEATURES

Meet Your Neighbor: Anne Skinner

BY MARGOT GORDON

Former Williams College chemistry professor, political rights activist, and Sweetwood resident Anne Skinner spoke with The Echo about her life and career.

Echo: How long have you lived here?

Anne Skinner: I've been in Williamstown [for] 60 years.

Echo: What brought you here?

Skinner: Jim Skinner, at that time my husband, came here to work at Williams College.

Echo: Why did you go into science?

Skinner: I had a terrific high school chemistry teacher. I think that that makes a huge difference. Now, having taught at Williams, ... we see if students had a lousy chemistry teacher, they don't want to take chemistry. If they've had a great chemistry teacher, they want to continue. We try to ... keep that momentum, keep them excited about the subject.

Echo: Did you have difficulties being a woman in a male-dominated field?

Skinner: Yep, I had difficulty. In my upper-level courses, I was often the only woman; I was the only woman in my graduate school class. I didn't get a lot of support from other women either. I think if I hadn't had the very serious interest, it would have been easy to discourage me from going on. When I was a freshman in college, the dean of freshmen suggested that I might like to major in philosophy, because in its higher levels, philosophy was rather like math. That was her idea of how close women should get to science. I also had trouble finding somebody to take me as a graduate student. So I

think on the whole, I must not have been a very suggestible person, because if I'd been listening to all these voices, I wouldn't have done this. It really took a certain amount of deafness to other people's voices.

Echo: You're also very involved with the League of Women Voters, which has become a large presence in our community. How did you first become involved?

Skinner: My mother took me to the Republican National Convention in 1952, and I found politics interesting. I don't remember how I got to the first [League of Women Voters] meeting, but I remember I was doing studies and activities with them very quickly thereafter. I considered it a great honor when I became president. I think it's very important, especially now. On the national level, they're fighting desperately to keep the right to vote. Things like that, the League is fighting against, as well as ... other issues such as immigration and climate change. If people can't vote, then that's the beginning of the end. So we're really working on that. One [thing we do] is that we write letters to our legislators asking them to support a bill or oppose a bill.

Echo: Other than the League of Women Voters, how else are you involved in our community? What else do you do?

Skinner: I was on the Board of Selectmen for 12 years, and on the Finance Committee before that. Charter Review Commission, I served on that. I'm active in the First Congregational Church, and I'm the treasurer of the local Rotary Club. I also have a dog, and I have to walk the dog.



Photo Courtesy of Janice Paquette

Echo: How can students get involved?

Skinner: Register and start voting as soon as you can. When there are community events, look for chances to get out. This is an aging community, and so a little bit of young energy doesn't do anybody any harm.

Echo: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Skinner: Yes, town meetings—I think people do not understand town meetings. They don't understand it's not an election. It's the equivalent of the Senate meeting; things get debated, amended, and changed. I would like to get more people to town meetings.

Fast-Paced Fun in 'F1'

BY EMILIE JONES

Formula One has become an increasingly popular topic in the entertainment industry, with Netflix shows, podcasts, and more being produced to give fans a variety of ways to enjoy the sport. This year, one of the most anticipated Formula One-themed films was released, and I am happy to report that I loved it. The film, simply titled "F1," faced criticism from some devoted Formula One fans for not being a completely accurate representation of the sport, but I found that a few unrealistic crashes and race strategies were acceptable for the overall plot.

The movie follows a struggling team that recruits a formerly retired driver, Sonny Hayes, to make them successful again. Sonny and his young teammate, Joshua Pearce, have a rivalry that is exciting to watch, and quite similar to the rivalries that often emerge between teammates fighting for a championship.

"F1" is came out on streaming services, but I think this is a movie you must see on the big screen. The racing scenes are unbelievably exciting as well as realistic because they were

filmed during actual Formula One practice sessions.

The creators of the film had help from Formula One driver Lewis Hamilton, and it really paid off, for the sounds and maneuvers make

"The racing scenes are unbelievably exciting as well as realistic because they were filmed during actual Formula One practice sessions."

the movie really seem like a true F1 Grand Prix.

While I loved the movie as a whole, I must admit there were some aspects of it that didn't

impress me. One of the subplots involved a female mechanic on the team who kept messing up. I expected an arc for this character where she overcomes the pressure of being a female in a team of males and becomes a great asset to the team, but nothing like that actually happens. There are many dramatic cuts to this woman making mistakes that led me to expect something notable to happen later on, but she turned out to just be really bad at her job. I have a feeling there was more to the film originally, but they cut out her storyline, leaving us with these random scenes of failure and no character development.

When I walked into the theater to watch "F1," I didn't know what to expect, but by the first race scene, I was hooked. Just watching this movie is an experience to remember, and I can not wait to see it again on streaming services.

NEWS & OPINIONS

State Regulation of Personal Devices

BY NORA LOPÉZ

On July 31, 2025, the Senate of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts passed legislation that, according to the state Senate press release, “aims to boost focus, improve mental health, and foster healthier learning environments” by banning student cell phone use during the school day.

This bill’s initiative has been reflected in the halls of Mount Greylock Regional School, which has its own prohibition of personal devices. The intention behind this limitation is to increase in-person social interaction and attention to learning skills in the classroom.

Although these ideals align with the state’s legislation, Mount Greylock’s ban occurred before the statewide bill. Therefore, the newly passed prohibition will not affect the Mount Greylock community, which preemptively embraced the policy.

In parallel with the United States of America, Massachusetts boasts its own state Senate and state House of Representatives. The Massachusetts Senate features 40 elected senators, who represent individual districts, as well as the House of Representatives, which has 160 elected officials. Each term is two years, just like the federal government.

The bill first passed through the state Senate, which prompted its progression to the state House of Representatives. The Senate passed the legislation with a 38-2 vote. The House of Representatives referred the bill to the Ways and Means Committee in August. To progress to the desk of Governor Maura Healey, the bill must be passed by the House. Assuming the bill passes through the House of Representatives, Healey would have to sign it for the legislation

to become law. Healey has publicly supported the bell-to-bell phone ban legislation.

One important caveat of the bill is that students who require personal devices for situational safety or medical conditions are permitted to carry their technology. Additionally, schools must provide an avenue for student and care-

“I distinctly remember lunch periods where the entire table would eat quickly in order to play the latest game, each person hunched over their phone.”

giver communication for emergency situations during the school day. These exceptions work to maintain a safe environment and address the needs of individual students.

As the state progresses through its official legislation process, Mount Greylock’s community has already seen the effects of a personal device ban. Although there has been a mixed reception among the student population, as a senior, I have seen positive results.

My first year at Mount Greylock arrived in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. My cohort consisted of myself and two other students, and we would wander mostly empty halls for half of the school week. The other half of the week meant sitting on Zoom calls in our respective houses. The intense feeling of isolation

and loneliness that many of our generation felt during this time continued as schools reopened and students reentered the halls, only to be consumed by their electronic devices. I distinctly remember lunch periods where the entire table would eat quickly in order to play the latest game, each person hunched over their phone.

I was a junior when Mount Greylock introduced the new phone policy. At first, I was outraged. What would I do without my phone? However, as free time transitioned from phone time to actual engagement or physical board games, my opinion quickly changed. It was amazing that we were forced to talk at lunch and in between classes, and surprisingly, my friends agreed.

With that said, I do believe that there are drawbacks in certain moments and that a policy surrounding technology is difficult in a time where the internet and our electronics are always evolving. I do occasionally wish I had my phone to send a text or watch a video. However, for the seven hours that I am in school, I appreciate that my peers and I have been forced to grow closer.

I encourage students to look for the ban’s benefits, and remember that there is always time for social media and games after school. Your time with your classmates is limited, and new connections can always be made, so try to embrace the policy, its intentions, and the school community.

“Rad” Skate Park Coming to Williamstown

BY NICO MCWEENY

Rad, gnarly, tubular. All words that could be used to describe the proposed skate park next to Cole Field in Williamstown. In a movement started by Bill MacEwan, a group of parents and skate enthusiasts are working to rehabilitate the existing skate park. The group is looking to promote a safe space for kids to be active. \$200,000 has been raised so far toward the project’s goal of \$750,000.

The current skate park at Cole Field is made of aluminum, which has worn down and become a safety concern. The skate park is the only one in Williamstown. Some consider the skate park to be underutilized and believe an opportunity exists to attract more users.

In an interview for the group’s website, Ben Sosney states, “The current one is pretty dangerous. I wouldn’t let (my children) play there.”

The new skate park is going to be built out of concrete, which is much safer than aluminum and lasts significantly longer.

The group is collaborating with Grindline Skateparks for the design. The design is complete, and they have obtained permits for the park. From the renderings, the park will occupy less space than the current one and will allow more room for greenery. The park will feature

ramps, rails, dips, and drops.

So far, the group is \$550,000 short on funding, but they are hoping to raise money within the community and obtain the remaining money from the town’s Community Preservation Act



Photo Courtesy of Bill MacEwan

fund. They are accepting donations through williamstownskatepark.org.

As of time of print, they are hoping to start building the park in April 2026. This will involve the demolition of the old skate park, which is already in disrepair.

In September, a town-funded fitness court was opened next to the skate park. It was built with the same intention of the skate park: to provide a place in nature for anyone to exercise.

The park aims to be a space for the youth and adults of Williamstown alike. MacEwan said, “We haven’t really got enough in town for kids once they outgrow the playground. That’s why our organization is building mountain bike trails and skate parks, and we want to build a pump track one day too.”

The park will be suitable for anything from skateboards to wheelchairs. The contours and curves of the park will allow for smooth transitions for users.

The park will be divided into two sections. One part will feature all of the essential pieces of a skate park. The rails and jumps will be more suitable for “street” tricks. The second part will be a smoother “pump track.” A pump track is a more curved area for faster “surfing-inspired” tricks.

Overall, community access is the most important aspect of the project. MacEwan summed it up, saying, “We want to make Williamstown more fun.”

OPINIONS

“Truth Is”: Advocacy, Abortion, and Adulthood

BY AMELIA MADRIGAL

When I first picked up Hannah V. Sawyerr’s “Truth Is,” I was skeptical. They tell you not to judge a book by its cover, but here I was, dissecting the cover’s bold colors and multiple fonts. I quickly judged the “Pop Quiz” on the back. Through my own presumption, I almost completely missed an exceptionally powerful book.

A bit about my own reading background, my “credentials” if you will: I’ve always loved to read. I’m drawn specifically to memoir, realistic and literary fiction, nature writing, and essays. I’m particularly enthusiastic about media written or produced by BIPOC individuals. Recently, I’ve been exploring poetry through my personal curiosity and through some thoughtful recommendations. I’m looking forward to my senior spring and the time it will afford me to read (and review) some epic books, starting with “Truth Is.”

Written in verse, this National Book Award finalist follows Truth Bangura, an aspiring poet who realizes she’s pregnant and chooses to get an abortion. She navigates her abortion after the 2022 fall of Roe v. Wade, grappling with judgment from those who can’t understand her choice. Truth comes from a fractured family and struggles with an overprotective mother. She finds meaning and belonging in slam poetry, a space where she can unpack her complicated feelings about her mother and her absent father, along with her feelings about pregnancy, abortion, autonomy, and

growing up.

Sawyerr uniquely blends verse, text messages, report cards, emails, phone calls, and poetry exercises, bringing Truth to life. Truth’s life is a mosaic, and through her collection of mediums, Sawyerr captures the nuance in young adult life. The poetry struck me because the base of the

“In such a partisan political climate, it’s refreshing to see a young adult novel take on current issues.”

novel is verse, but Truth also “writes” and “edits” her poetry, in real time, throughout the book. Through this, Sawyerr can show how much thought and revision goes into poetry.

The writing was easily digestible and engaging. I was impressed with how easy the story was to understand. Although I found it easy to “get,” there are many layers to unfold if analyzing is your cup of tea! It deals with complicated and sometimes painful themes. I liked how Truth’s voice evolves over the book. Through Sawyerr’s careful attention to detail, we readers are brought on Truth’s journey.

“Truth Is” rightfully deserves its spot in the Mount Greylock library. In such a

partisan political climate, where human rights are up for debate, it’s refreshing to see a young adult novel take on current issues. Sawyerr rightfully acknowledges the capacity of young readers as people who crave representation and have the ability to digest media regarding the world around them. Sawyerr’s writing is honest and offers a hand to the younger generation, guiding teens into themes of youth empowerment, advocacy, and the strength of young people.

I would comfortably recommend “Truth Is” to anyone remotely interested in social justice. I’d recommend it to anyone, regardless of age, but especially young people who have felt unseen, felt unheard, or have ever been faced with a decision others might try to make for you. On a lighter note, I’d also recommend the book to anyone who wants to explore poetry both as an art form and a craft.

The Mount Greylock High School Book Club chose “Truth Is” for their fall read. There are several crunchy new copies in the library, available to all students. Later this year, Book Club will also be meeting Sawyerr over Zoom, in case any students, regardless of club participation, are interested. More information will be available, and Mrs. Barrett is happy to answer questions.

To all my peers looking for ORBs (outside reading books) for English class: Choose “Truth Is”; you won’t regret it.

So You Want a License

BY ROBYN GREGG

What does it mean to be a “safe driver”? Driving is an inherently dangerous activity and is considered one of the riskiest activities that people perform daily. Driver education, something that many high schoolers at Mount Greylock have gone through or are currently enrolled in, is a sometimes inconvenient but necessary process. That being said, if you choose to get your license under the age of 18 in Massachusetts, you are in for an exciting and sometimes terrifying experience.

Step 1: Enroll in an online driver’s ed class.

Before getting your permit and hitting the road, you need to learn about what you will be encountering, not only on the northern Berkshire roads, but also when you happen to come across a specific type of intersection that only occurs at one place in central Boston. Driver’s ed online classes allow you to spend three hours of your prime homework-completing time tuned in to a Zoom call, along with around 30 other kids. You might encounter a number of spectacles at these meetings, and it’s always a thrill to spend your night listening to the instructors begging your peers to keep their faces in full view of the camera.

Step 2: Take your permit test.

Passing your permit test means you can finally get behind the wheel! The test consists of random trivia based loosely on your time in the Zoom calls. One of the memorable questions that I got wrong asked something along the lines of “What is the fine for failing to strap your child’s car seat to the car without any additional court fees?” To this day, I do not know the answer to this question. But if you are about to take the permit test, my advice is to look that one up.

Step 3: Learn how to drive.

There are two parts to this step. The first one is taking and observing the in-car driver’s ed classes, in which you will meet some instructors who discuss the drama surrounding every kid in the Berkshires. The other one is learning with your parents or another adult. This entails getting to spend some great quality time with your own petrified guardian, who is constantly grabbing for the wheel.

Step 4: Take the road test.

This is the big one. You’ve reviewed what you learned from the driver’s ed Zoom classes, rewatched their explanation of what the test will be like, prepared your maneuvers, and studied every type of intersection you could possibly encounter on your path. You arrive at the Registry of Motor Vehicles ready to display all that you have learned. Your tester points to a parking spot for your parallel park, and you know it’s time to showcase the skills you honed with your dad the night before. You pull in with the wheel cranked, trying to meet the 8-12-inch distance from the curb with uniform precision. Finally, after going back and forth enough times, you decide to call it. The instructor opens the door, and oh no... you’re 14 inches away. You’ve failed and it was all for nothing, and... he tells you to pull out and continue on. Then, he hands you your signed permit saying “passed,” and you’re in shock.

Now a licensed driver, you can legally do something at the age of 16 that might be the most dangerous activity that you do in your life. This poses the question: Are you road ready?

SPORTS

Sneak Peek: Winter Sports

BY CLAY CREIGHTON

After an action-packed fall, the Mount Greylock winter sports programs are excited to kick off the 2025-2026 season. With a few road games already under their belts, the teams are looking forward to their first home games at the Mountie Dome and hoping for a loud and energetic fan base.

This year's boys basketball team is still young, but far more experienced than last year. With the hard work the entire team put in this offseason, from playing pickup to watching film, everyone in the program has a great feeling about the season. Their goal is to win ten or more games and be eligible for the state tournament.

Four of last year's five starters return, not to mention several talented underclassmen. They will rely on reliable scorers, seniors Brady Auger and Thomas Warren, as well as returners junior Ward Bianchi and sophomore Cole Creighton. Head coach Tommy Verdell feels confident about the team dynamic: "Our two seniors, Brady Auger and Thomas Warren [have] set a really high standard with their energy, effort, and competitive spirit every day in practice and in games. We ... showed a lot of positive moments that point to our potential."

The girls basketball team brings back nearly all of their impact players from last year's 5-15 squad and looks to build on the previous season's success under new head coach Jabari Powell. The team has started out its 2025-2026 campaign

hot, with a record of 2-1 and a dominant run through the Franklin Tech Tournament. In addition to seniors Madi Drake, AJ Pelkey, and Maddie Powell, the Mounties will also rely on underclassmen Tanley Drake and Naelyn Rob-



Photo Courtesy of Jack Uhas

inson to support the offensive attack.

Following last year's state championship wins, the boys and girls Nordic ski teams are ready to defend their position at the top of the mountain. They return some of their top skiers in addition to some younger talent and are hopeful for another successful season.

According to last year's state runner-up, Patrick Holland, "Our main goal is to win the state championship meet. While we did lose

some key scorers, the younger guys have put in a lot of work over the past year, and hopefully due to their effort, we'll be in contention again."

Boys Nordic Ski Coach Ian Nesbitt is excited: "The team is looking strong again this season, and we have had a great first few weeks of training thanks to early season snow." He also commented, "I'm really happy with the work the team has put in so far, and I think they should all be confident in their ability to ski fast once the racing starts."

After a fourth-place finish in Western Mass a season ago, this year's wrestling team has a mixture of a lot of newcomers alongside an experienced group of returning athletes. The early part of the season has been marked by success with the Mountie grapplers posting a third-place finish out of 20 teams at the Knight-hawk Classic in Holyoke, followed by a win over Taconic in its dual meet season opener. Coach John Carvalho said the team will be focused on "staying healthy so they can compete at their highest level." He praised the team for "working hard at practice every day on different techniques."

With a mixture of experience and young talent across all the Mount Greylock programs, it should be an exciting winter season. Be sure to come out and support your fellow Mounties!

Coach Highlight: Brian Gill

BY REED OLNEY

The Echo sat down with Coach Brian Gill, who won the 2024-2025 MIAA Coach of the Year award for track and field.

Echo: How long have you worked and coached at Greylock?

Brian Gill: This is my 29th year. I started in the fall of 1997.

Echo: How did you get into coaching track and field?

Gill: When I started, I did not want to coach girls, but my wife, who was an athlete, said, "Nope, you're coaching girls. The girls always get hosed because their coaches aren't as good. You're coaching girls, and you're gonna coach them the same." And then, of course, I've done it since, and I absolutely love it.

Echo: What has brought the track and field team so much success in recent years?

Gill: I actually don't feel like we've had more success in recent years. I feel like we've been the same. I think the difference has been the recognition, because we've never had an opportunity to win a state title until 2022. Before that, there weren't divisional state titles. So for us, we could win our league and go undefeated, which we did a ton of times. We could win Western

Mass, which we've won 14 or 15 times. But after Western Mass, we'd go to states, and it was us versus St John's Prep on the boys' side and Stoughton on the girls' side because it was just one division. And so you had Mount Greylock with 530 kids total competing against schools with 2,000-plus students ... until 2022.



Photo Courtesy of Brian Gill

Echo: What's your favorite track memory as a coach here at Greylock?

Gill: I had so many great memories the last two years. Winning state titles is always super meaningful. Last year, the state title was really impactful for me because kids gave up some

individual glory and individual events to take points and relays at the end of the meet. That's super meaningful. I'm not an emotional person, but when we won the title two years ago, our first, I actually had tears in my eyes. It was this culminating moment that was super fun. I can remember, we had a kid named Abby Bishop, and she was a seventh grader. And this little kid makes a final in the 200-meter dash, and she takes a point. We won by a point. Those little things that no one knows or no one remembers but have a huge impact. Of course, we scored a ton of points, but when you win by one, you think about all the ways that you grab those points. So I think the things I remember are kids who are just emotionally and physically resilient who responded in the face of adversity and answered the bell.

Echo: What advice would you give to students thinking about joining track for the first time?

Gill: Don't not come out because you don't like running. Everyone thinks, "I don't like running so I'm not coming out." But what kids find is that the sport is so much more than running. ... It's jumping, it's hurtling, it's throwing, it's pole vaulting, but it's also competing, and it's seeing what you can do, what you can push yourself to, and the relationships you make, both with your teammates and with other kids.

SPORTS

Fall Sports Roundup

BY COLE CREIGHTON

From rivalry victories to raucous crowds and championship success, the fall sports season at Mount Greylock had everything a fan could ask for. While Mount Greylock is no stranger to athletic success, there was a palpable change this season in the student body's commitment to cheering on their fellow Mounties at games, matches, and races. Here's a look at three of the fall's best moments and the crowds who helped make them happen.

Varsity Volleyball's Win vs. Lee

On September 5, varsity volleyball took on Lee in its home opener. Fans packed the Mountie Dome in record numbers to watch the team knock off its cross-county rival in a thrilling four-set victory. The Mounties were led by strong performances from Anna Garnish, Tyanna Lepicer, and Olivia Perez to get the convincing win and set the tone for the rest of the season. While the victory was noteworthy in and of itself, the crowd made the game one to remember. According to Coach Greg Guyer, "The home opener in the Mountie Dome had a great fan base." The student section was filled with Hawaiian shirts, beach floaties, wide-brimmed hats, and cries of "I believe." After winning the first two sets, the Mounties let an epic third set get away from them, setting the stage for a pivotal fourth set. Though deflated after failing to close out the sweep, the cheers of the crowd kept the team motivated and helped turn momentum back in its favor. Sophomore Olivia Perez said the team "built off the crowd's energy and used it as momentum to finish off

the game."

Girls Soccer Tournament Championship

Just one day after the volleyball team's win



Photo Courtesy of Jack Uhas

over Lee, the girls soccer team provided another of the fall season's most memorable moments with its victory in the championship game of the Mount Anthony Tournament. Although the game was played at Spinelli Field in Bennington, VT, the Mountie's student section was overflowing, giving it the spirit of a home game. According to sophomore Tanley Drake, "The big crowd gave us energy for the game ... and it was important because it showed that we could handle and play well in front of good and loud crowds." Six different Mountie players scored. Senior Nora López and sophomore

Rowan Apotsos collected the tournament's two individual awards as most outstanding offensive player and most outstanding defensive player, respectively. Not only did the win set the stage for a subsequent Western Mass title and a run to the Final Eight for girls soccer, it paved the way for a fall season full of spirited crowds.

Boys Soccer Western Mass Championship

As October came to a close, the warm temperatures of the early fall quickly disappeared. However, the cold weather did little to lower the enthusiasm of the Mounties fan base. On October 29, the boys soccer team squared off against Smith Vocational for the Western Mass Class C Championship, and the fans who made the trek to Berkshire Community College were glad they did. Behind the goal scoring of juniors Everett Bayliss and Lukas Burrow and the stellar play of the team's five seniors, the Mounties were able to capture their third consecutive Western Mass title in front of the entire Greylock soccer community.

This fall sports season for the Mounties was more than just successful athletically; it also helped bond the Mounties in the stands. Senior Reed Miles-Harris helped lead playful and passionate chants, often belting them out on the sidelines at numerous schools and stadiums.

"I hope they made every fan have a more enjoyable time at the event," said Miles-Harris. He added, "I hope future classes will continue to carry the torch."

Reflections of a Senior Athlete

BY REED MILES-HARRIS

Over the four years I've been at Mount Greylock, the sports I participated in have had the biggest impact on me. Whether it's countless hours spent on the fields practicing soccer, or training with many amazing classmates and athletes on the track, I've found a great community.

My high school career and sports are so intertwined that my first Greylock memory involves sports. It was my freshman year, my first year at Greylock. I had just finished preseason for junior varsity soccer. On the first day of school, I took the bus. As I looked to see who was getting on, I saw an upperclassman I recognized from the soccer team. When he noticed the bus was full, he came up and asked to sit with me.

This one small gesture from a senior made me feel much more comfortable on my first day of high school. I will never forget that moment and what it meant to me. Because of this, I try my best to help give my teammates and peers the same feeling he gave me.

For me, Greylock sports have always been about the community. While I could write forever about how much I loved competing and winning games, it would all

mean nothing if it weren't for the people I did it with. I'm grateful for the friendships and connections I've made over the years through track and soccer.

"I've found community at other[s] athletic events. Going to a game and hanging out with all my friends is such a great experience and definitely something I'll miss next year."

Not only have I found community in my own sports, I've found community at other Mount Greylock athletic events. Going to a game and hanging out with all my friends is such a great experience and definitely something I'll miss next year.

My soccer coach always stressed the

idea of family. Now, in my senior year, I am realizing how much of a family a team really is. I've gone through so much with my teammates both on and off the field, and I wouldn't have as strong connections with them if I hadn't done Greylock sports. Athletics has given me such a great opportunity to surround myself with amazing people and make life-lasting bonds.

A piece of advice: I truly think it is worth it for everyone to do one sport during their time at Greylock. Such an amazing bond is created when you push yourself physically and work for hours with someone at a shared goal, and that can't be replicated anywhere else. Greylock athletics can offer everyone great ways to connect across grades and other interests, bringing many different people together.

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FEATURES

‘Sport’-light: Kofi Roberts

BY CHARLOTTE MCKENNA

Senior captain and prized forward of the soccer team Kofi Roberts helped lead us to a Western Mass title. He sat down with the Greylock Echo to talk about his soccer career.

Echo: How and why did you first get involved in soccer?

Kofi Roberts: My first involvement was as a toddler going out with my dad and kicking around. I found it to be a lot of fun playing with my dad, and then I decided I wanted to play with my friends at school. I played soccer through elementary and middle school before I left for Toronto, and in Canada I played competitive soccer and started to take it more seriously. Then, when I came back to Greylock, I joined the varsity team and found a lot of success in my junior and senior year. It went from something that I started playing because I enjoyed it to something that felt more like a job. Now, I don't put as much pressure on myself and try to have fun.

Echo: How do you feel you have grown as a player?

Roberts: I grew maturity-wise. It took a long time for me to realize that I needed to trust my teammates. I needed to have faith that when I pass them the ball, they're not going to turn it over. I put more focus into the team and not into my own success of scoring.

Echo: What was your favorite part about playing soccer?

Roberts: My favorite part about soccer was definitely dribbling and taking people one-on-one, no matter what team I was on.

Echo: What was your most memorable moment playing soccer at Mount Greylock?

Roberts: My most memorable moment was last year's Western Mass final in 2024. It went into double overtime, and I passed the ball to my teammate [senior] Everet Crowe, and he scored. It was a pretty exciting moment, because if we didn't score then, it would have gone into penalty kicks, so we could have easily lost. That definitely was a memorable moment because the year beforehand, I didn't personally play that much in the Western Mass final, so to be a key contributor was awesome.

Echo: Do you have any advice for how to become a better soccer player?

Roberts: My biggest advice would be to train. Work on your own, go to the field, work on dribbling, and take a few shots. Don't get distracted from why you're playing by being the best on your team or scholarships; keep yourself level-headed and play to have fun.

Echo: Do you have any future plans of playing soccer after high school?

I got accepted to Bowdoin, so I think I'm gonna try out for their soccer team. However, I was also recruited to run track, so I would also go in that direction.



Photo Courtesy of Kofi Roberts

Arts Spotlight: Murphy Sayers

BY FIONA WHALEY

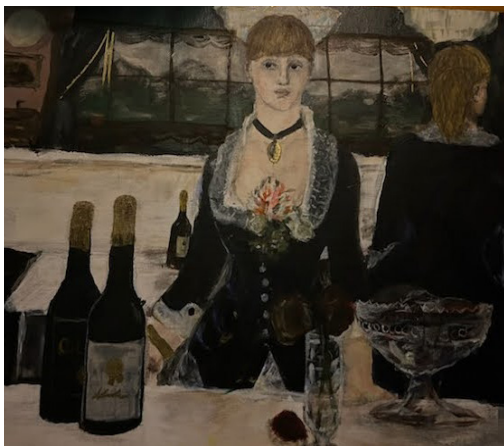


Photo Courtesy of Murphy Sayers

For senior Murphy Sayers, art is a way to understand and express emotions. Around sixth grade, Sayers started seriously thinking about art. His grandparents encouraged him to pursue this passion and made him recognize that art could be more than just a hobby.

Sayers began making art early in childhood. It was during his freshman year, though, that he started to feel that his sketches, drawings, and paintings truly became complete art pieces, rather than just practice. Since then, Sayers has

approached art with a more intentional focus on technique and personal meaning.

Whether it be ceramics, wire, paint, or graphite, Sayers does it all. He particularly enjoys creating with clay, working with it on both the pottery wheel and through hand-building.

In a project for ceramics class, Sayers made a self-portrait bust. Sayers explained how the project could be challenging for some because it required self-reflection. Creating a sculpture of one's own face forces them to look and consider how they truly view themselves. Sayers described how the view of oneself can be different from an outsider's perspective, and that this assignment made students display a version of themselves that no one else sees.

His favorite piece of artwork he has created so far does not have a name. This piece stood out to him because of how long it took to complete.

It was inspired by master paintings from the Renaissance era (c. 1600-1750) and the Realism period of art (c. 1840-1870).

Sayers struggled with this painting for some time before deciding to put the piece aside. He picked the piece up and finished it later in the spring after a few months had passed. This time away allowed him to come back to it with fresh eyes and finish it. The satisfaction of completing an art piece that took a large amount of time is one of the reasons he enjoys making art.

Sayers often draws inspiration from older Renaissance artists, particularly Vincent van Gogh. Van Gogh's emotional style of painting led Sayers to create pieces of art with more emotion behind them.

Looking ahead, Sayers plans to continue art after high school, hoping to attend college for a fine arts degree. After college, he hopes to continue his art career and pursue a tattoo apprenticeship.

Sayers' dream is a future where art continues to be not only a passion but also a profession.

Have an opinion you want to share?

Is there an issue you think needs more recognition?

Do you think our opinion writers are just plain wrong?

If so, get in contact with the Echo at greylockecho@student.mgrsd.org to submit a letter to the editor!

FEATURES

1 in 650 (*cont.*)

Continued from Page 1

Echo: How do you choose what songs you translate?

Xü: I think that projects ... choose me rather than me choosing them. When I listen to music for fun, I will sometimes have a running translation in my mind as I'm listening. When this happens, I start a more in-depth translation.

Echo: Do you share these translations in any way for others to use?

Xü: When I first started, I learned a few basic video editing skills and was able to post lyric videos on YouTube. Since then, I've posted [translated quotes] on Twitter. Also, I was in an online book club, and I noticed that the translated version had multiple errors that changed the entire meaning of the book. So, I went through the book [and chose] the parts where the translation was the worst and [wrote] my own translations for them. I then shared this with the other members of my book club so that they could read the book in the same way that

I did. I didn't want them to misunderstand the book or get a different meaning from it because of an incorrect translation.

Echo: Are you working on a translation now?

Xü: I am not working on anything outside of school, but I am doing an independent study on translations. I translate a couple of songs and then write about why I chose the words and phrases that I did. I could spend hours talking about why I made each decision in a translation, so I decided to just write it down.

Echo: What is the most interesting thing that has come from your translations?

Xü: One time, I [tweeted] my opinion on a professional's translation of a book I loved. The official translator got offended and claimed that "people love to bandwagon and hate on the official translator." I simply wanted to share that I thought the translation was incorrect because the Chinese version could mean more than one

thing in English. I wrote my own thoughts on [how it could be translated] and all of the textual evidence that I found. Although I really respect and like this translator, she thought I was attacking her when I just wanted to share my thoughts [because I loved the book].

Echo: How long does it take you to translate a song?

Xü: I am a perfectionist and focus so much on every meaning and part of each song and quote that it's normal for me to spend five days on just one word. A song will usually take about three months.

Echo: Any final thoughts?

Xü: It makes me so happy when I translate something because I'm helping an entire demographic learn about a song or quote that they would otherwise not have access to.

Cangelosi Returns to Greylock

BY RAFAELI THOMPSON

Many new teachers at Mount Greylock start to settle in and improve the school. A recent addition to the Math Department is Catherine Cangelosi, a Greylock alumna who now teaches Algebra I and eighth grade math. Like many Greylock teachers, Cangelosi has roots on Cold Spring Road. Cangelosi replaced longtime Greylock math teacher Karl Belouin after he retired in the spring of 2025.

Cangelosi believes that her alumna status helped her more keenly understand students: "The students that I have now definitely experience a lot of the same things that I experienced when I went here."

Although Cangelosi is an alum, there are

other ways that she has connected to her students and brought them a helpful learning environment.

Cangelosi always wanted to come back to Greylock, saying, "I think that the education here is great, so I wanted to be part of that. I wanted to make sure that my students are in a good school."

I've always believed that the reasons a teacher comes back are important. After my interview with her, I have full faith that Cangelosi is exactly what the Math Department and school need to be complete. I'm excited to see what the next year brings for math at Mount Greylock.



Photo Courtesy of Catherine Cangelosi

Welcome Dias: New Psychology Teacher

BY ELIZABETH SPELMAN

Jenifer Dias, new social studies teacher, teaches eighth grade enrichment along with multiple levels of psychology. She is from southeastern Massachusetts and has worked in education since 2002, teaching social studies to grades 7-12 before moving to Williamstown.

Beyond teaching, Dias loves to be involved in the school community. At her last school, she was a longtime coach in soccer and track, was an advisor to myriad clubs, and enjoyed chaperoning events. Other hobbies and passions include playing soccer and Zumba.

Regarding psychology, Dias thinks that it is interesting seeing changes in the field due to all of the advancements in medicine and technology. She says it is a continually growing field and is interested in "what's next or new" that she can bring to her students.

What inspired Dias to become a teacher was

her own high school teachers who made a very big impact on her. Dias hopes to make a difference as a teacher like they did for her.

Comparing Mount Greylock to other schools, she says it is a much smaller community than she is used to, but it feels more like a family and that people really care about each other. She also likes how involved in the community people are, as many students are involved in multiple activities simultaneously. Dias is ecstatic to be here at Greylock, saying everyone has been very welcoming and helpful. She says her transition has been crazy, but her time and effort have been going into school, and she is beginning to settle in.



Photo Courtesy of Jenifer Dias

FEATURES

New Faces in the English Department

BY BRENNA LOPEZ

The Greylock English Department welcomed many new faces during the 2025-2026 academic year. Although none of them are new to the area, they are new to our Greylock community and very excited to be a part of it. The Echo interviewed the three new English teachers: Sean Keogh, Shelby Gale, and Hope Poirot.

Keogh teaches lots of different grade levels, from the seventh and eighth grade creative writing enrichment to freshman, sophomore and senior classes. He moved to Williamstown about 15 years ago and has been teaching in different places around the county until he came here.

Keogh started teaching because he's "always known [he] wanted to be a teacher," but fell in love with it in his 20s at his first teaching posi-

tion in New York City. Keogh feels he's been adjusting to Greylock wonderfully.

*"Helping students reach their goals, gain confidence, and succeed makes it incredibly rewarding."
—Hope Poirot*

Gale, teaching seventh grade English, seconded that sentiment when interviewed: "I love

it here and really look forward to coming in and working with the students every day."

Gale took over for Mr. Davis after he replaced retired social studies teacher Mary MacDonald. She has wanted to be a teacher ever since fourth grade, when she had a really fabulous teacher that made learning fun.

Poirot, teaching grades seven, eight, and nine, started out teaching elementary school. She's wanted to be a teacher for as long as she can remember. When she was little, she loved school, especially reading, and as she got older, she found she loved babysitting and working with kids. In her opinion, "teaching really is the best job—helping students reach their goals, gain confidence, and succeed makes it incredibly rewarding."

Ms. Nava: Ambassador, State Instructor, Teacher

BY ADELE LOW



Photo Courtesy of Perla Liliana Nava Ramirez

The Echo sat down with this year's new addition to the Spanish department, Perla Liliana Nava Ramirez.

Echo: Where were you born, and where did you grow up?

Perla Liliana Nava Ramirez: I was born and raised in Mexico City.

Echo: How has your English learning progression differed in the different places you lived?

Ramirez: I attended schools in Mexico, where full immersion in English began in preschool. ... Later, while practicing law at the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, I continued to use English and other languages regularly as part of my professional responsibilities.

When I moved to the United States, I humbly realized that there was still so much of the language I did not know. I had been trained to negotiate international treaties, yet I had to learn how to communicate at a doctor's office; understand slang, idioms, and jokes; and navigate everyday conversations.

In every place I have lived, I have learned essential lessons about language: the richness of accents that almost sound like music,

the expressions that define each region, and the tones that communicate meaning beyond words. I also learned new vocabularies—the vocabulary of joy and mourning, of hope and bias, of celebration and disappointment; the vocabulary of solidarity, rejection, restoration, and encouragement.

Echo: What have your previous jobs been?

Ramirez: My first job was as a tutor during the summers, beginning when I was 14. I tutored subjects such as English, literature, statistics, and chemistry as a volunteer. I completed my internship at the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, where I later worked.

[In] North Carolina, I volunteered as an interpreter, translator, and taught Spanish. ... I also taught Spanish for legal studies at a university. While living in Vancouver, Canada, I worked as a translator and editor of legal documents. ... I later returned to Mexico, where I taught adults how to read and write and homeschooled my children. ... Both experiences were pivotal in shaping my love for teaching.

When I returned to the United States ... one of the most rewarding experiences was being part of an ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) program for immigrants. [There,] I had the opportunity to work closely with youth. My most recent position was as a language and culture instructor at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center of the U.S. State Department.

I am deeply grateful for all of my professional experiences, but the most meaningful aspect of my work has always been being part of young people's lives.

Echo: Do you have a piece of advice for students who want to become bilingual?

Ramirez: Yes! My first piece of advice is to read something you enjoy and that is slightly below your grade level. Through reading, you passively acquire vocabulary and grammar without even realizing it.

My second piece of advice is to expose yourself to the language as much as possible. Go where it is spoken—a restaurant, a fair, a lecture, any setting where you can listen, speak, breathe, and truly feel the language.

Third, speak the language. Don't worry about your accent or accuracy; both will improve with practice.

Finally, enjoy the journey. Every grammar exercise, every vocabulary list, and every song

"You stretch the walls of the classroom, reminding us that knowledge does not belong to a single voice."

brings you one step closer to fluency.

Echo: Do you have a message for students who are currently learning English as a second language at Mount Greylock?

Ramirez: To the students at Mount Greylock who are learning English as a second language, I want you to know how deeply I admire you. You are courageous, resilient, and full of beauty. ... You possess extraordinary strengths: adaptability, problem-solving skills, and perseverance. You are a treasure. ...

You carry worlds within you. You stretch the walls of the classroom, reminding us that knowledge does not belong to a single voice or story. You teach us that difference is an invitation to listen more closely, speak more thoughtfully, and see beyond what feels familiar.

In your presence, the world becomes less of an echo and more of a conversation—one where empathy grows and understanding takes root. You do not simply add diversity; you bring depth, perspective, and the quiet power of many histories learning side by side.

FEATURES

Free Breakfast (*cont.*)

Continued from Page 1

Anti-hunger advocates have opposed the legislation, saying it will return the stigma behind “free meals” if they are no longer universal. The bill, however, is unlikely to pass, and currently sits in the state’s Joint Committee on Education.

Jennings is pleased so far with the results of free breakfasts, saying, “I know as a par-

ent ..., my kids used to roll out of bed and just get to school ... so it’s nice to have a breakfast option.”

When asked if she would make any changes to the current system, Jennings said, “The only change that I would personally make is ... more time for you guys to actually have breakfast.”

She elaborated that getting the high volume of students through the line can be a challenge, and that a longer break could be ideal for students.

Overall, the program has had a successful start, and will continue to nourish the Mount Greylock community in 2026.

Official Superintendent: Joe Bergeron

BY ADELE LOW

In mid-September, Joe Bergeron made the shift from interim superintendent to full-time superintendent.

Bergeron previously held the position of assistant superintendent during Jason McCandless’ tenure. McCandless later stepped down at the end of the 2023-2024 school year.

Regarding the transition after McCandless’ departure, Bergeron stated, “It was hard to say goodbye to him. I had a wonderful partnership with him, and it was a huge challenge to learn how to not work side-by-side with him anymore.”

Beginning in the fall of 2024, Bergeron had been the district’s interim superintendent, receiving all of the same responsibilities that a “non-interim” would have. Bergeron said, “It all felt very natural. I have been here for the past year, and we know some of the things ahead of us, so we can get right to it.”

According to Bergeron, his transition was seamless and easy. However, there was one major difference: “I was now needing to pre-

pare for three to five years instead of just one.”

Bergeron has a vision for the district’s future, but he believes that it requires a “tremendous” amount of input from the local community.

“We are [starting to work] on taking a fresh look at our visions and our values in the district,” said Bergeron. “In the last eight years as a school district, we have not adapted to the changes in our community.”

Bergeron wants to recognize the changing world around us and be able to address issues inside of school that have major effects outside of school.

Bergeron has plans for the future and a few major initiatives.

“Artificial intelligence is somewhere where we need to increase focus,” Bergeron said. “We need to understand the implications of AI, how students are using it, and how to best prevent it from getting in the way of students’ learning and growing integrity.”



Photo Courtesy of Joe Bergeron

New Paraprofessionals: 1 of 3

BY RAFA MASON

At the beginning of the 2025-2026 academic year, many students may have noticed an increase of paraprofessionals in the halls, the lunchrooms, the classrooms, and the academic support center. The Greylock Echo sat down with one of these new hires: Suzanne Schryver.

Although Schryver is new to Mount Greylock Regional School, she is extremely experienced in education, explaining that she began “working in education right out of college.” She worked in many private schools, boarding schools, and day schools before moving to Rivier University in New Hampshire and working in their academic support and writing center.

She has worked with a variety of academic levels, including 6-year-olds at the John Hopkins Center for Talented Youth to continuing education students at Rivier University, some of which Schryver thinks were “probably 86.”

Although Schryver has worked in schools in New York, California, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts, she has always been connected to the Berkshires. She grew up in Williamstown, is a Mount Greylock graduate, and still has family here. When she left her position at River University after 18 years, it seemed like a

perfect time for her to move back to the area.

When asked about her experience at Mount Greylock, Schryver was enthusiastic: “[I’ve]



Photo Courtesy of Suzanne Schryver

enjoyed being here and working with the students,” adding that she “really likes the students and the staff here.” She also likes going to classes instead of being limited to “a center where students would come for appointments

and [she] would work with them on that.”

As a paraprofessional at Mount Greylock, Schryver’s role encompasses many activities, all of which are needed to support students. These include going “to classes and tak[ing] notes [and collecting] assignments” as well as knowing the reading if a student is in English. She helps students “with their assignments [by giving] them better [writing or reading] skills [and] making sure that they understand the assignments.”

Schryver mostly works one-on-one with students, “but if there is a group of students working on the same assignment, [she will] work with them.”

Finally, Schryver added that, for her, “Williamstown is very beautiful,” and she “really like[s] the atmosphere and the students and staff.” She also noted that “this is a really beautiful location and that students [often] don’t appreciate it when they’re here.”

ETC.

Year in Review

BY PAIGE TUDOR

The past year at Mount Greylock was exciting, filled with Mountie highlights, and the student body identified the top moments. Their list included a new track, a well-loved musical, the talent show, double Western Mass wins for the soccer teams, visits from Argentine students, a music program trip to Europe, and many more memories. Overall, 2025 was a year of adventures, laughs, and experiences from start to finish that the Mounties will never forget.

Theater Highlight

This year on the Mount Greylock stage, “Grease” was performed by a cast of talented actors and singers. The winter musical, run by Jeffrey Welch and Jacqueline Vinette, was outstanding this year and went down in the books as one of the best musicals performed by Mount Greylock, according to the student body. The musical was performed on February 27 and 28, and March 1. The musical was expertly staged and had an incredible turnout, especially from students.

New Track

The biggest highlight for a huge percentage of Mounties was the first season on the new track this past spring. The track team had to practice on the grass track around the soccer field for years, so the new track was highly anticipated. The ambitious project could not have been possible without MIAA Track and Field Coach of the Year Brian Gill.

When asked, Coach Gill talked about the impact the track has had on the team: “The new track and field facility is a game changer for the track program.”

The boys track team defended the Western Mass championship they’ve had since 2018, and the girls defended the title they’ve had since 2023. The girls also defended the Division 6 Champion title they’ve had since 2024.

During the Western Mass tournament this fall, both the girls and boys soccer teams came out victorious. The boys shut out their opponent, with goals from senior Kofi Roberts and juniors Lukas Burrow and Everett Bayliss. The boys won 3-0 against Smith Vocational and clinched their third straight Western Mass championship. The girls dominated against Monson for the second year in a row with a game-winning shot from junior Gabriella (GG) Nicastro. They won 2-1 against Monson and took home the championship trophy.

“The student body identified the top moments. ... Overall, 2025 was a year of adventures, laughs, and [unforgettable] experiences. ... 2026 has a lot to live up to; let’s hope it’s a good one.”

Talent Show

The talent show this year was an overwhelming success. The room was filled with talent from students of all ages and had supporters, including students, staff, parents, and families, who watched in awe as the Mounties owned the stage. It was a night of fun, laughter, and inclusivity. The confidence and bravery Mounties had to have to get up onstage and show off their talents that night made it go down as a big 2025 highlight for the school.

Argentina Relationship

A highlight for the Spanish department and many students was the visit from the Argentines. Argentine students and teachers stayed with families around Williamstown and were able to see a glimpse into American daily life by shadowing students. The students provided a different perspective as well as their stories, and created friendships that the Mounties will cherish for life. They were given the opportunity to train with the track team during workouts on the new track, showed off amazing hurdle skills, and outsprinted the majority of the team in the 100, 200, and 400-meter dashes. At the end of their visit here, the Mounties held a dance that was packed. The amount of student support from the Argentines was inspiring, and the effect they left on our community was immense.

Music Department Trip

For the first time, the current music department took a trip to Europe in April. The trip, led by band and choral director Jacqueline Vinette and orchestra director Patrick O’Connell was a weeklong adventure through Austria and Germany. The 38 students who went on the trip were given the opportunity to go and study the history of music in Europe. During the trip, the group went to Vienna and Salzburg to visit historical music sights, including Mozart’s birthplace and where they filmed the 1965 film “The Sound of Music.” The trip was both educational and exciting, and allowed for more relationships to be built throughout the music department. This is a tradition they hope to uphold every four years to give students in the music department an experience they’ll never forget.

2026 has a lot to live up to; let’s hope it’s a good one.

Mini Crossword

CREATED BY MALCOLM MCKEOUGH

1	2		3	
4				
5		6		7
8				
9				

ACROSS

- 1. 2024 Super Bowl halftime headliner
- 4. Acronym for New England
- 5. Piano key material
- 8. Iced ____ (Dunkin’ order)
- 9. School is closed when it ____ too much.

DOWN

- 1. Groups of lessons covering one theme
- 2. “SIX _____”
- 3. Appendage for hearing
- 6. “Over and out” acronym
- 7. MG Environment club

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