



THE BEACON

MT. GREYLOCK MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSLETTER—JANUARY 26, 2006

“If there is no struggle, there is no progress”.

-Frederick Douglass

PTO MINUTES

MOUNT GREYLOCK PTO MEETING, MONDAY
JANUARY 9, 2006

PRESENT: Lisa Hiley, Beth Goodman, Sally White, Kathleen Flynn-Kasuba, Beth Phelps, Debora Cole-Duffy, Deryle Capozzi, Deb Burns, Bill Travis, Nancy Travis, Ellen Kaiser, Tim Payne, Nancy Nylen, Anne Hogeland, Sarah Gardner, Deb Dane, Kaatje White, Stephen Tift, Carole Castanguay, Doug Paisley, David Langston, Thelma Margulies-Major and Alison Kolesar.
The MINUTES of the December meeting were approved.

CO-PRESIDENTS' REPORT

- The quilt will be displayed at Wild Oats and at the cross country ski meet before being raffled at the Food of Love event February 10. If anyone would like to sell tickets at a location that would not be safe for the quilt itself there is a poster of the quilt that can be displayed.
- Building Committee presentations are continuing – Jan 10 and 24 at Mt Greylock and at the Lanesboro elementary school in February.
- Ed Sederbaum, who is coordinating safe homes pledges, will come to talk briefly about the program at the February meeting,
- The After Prom auction and dinner will take place at the Williams Inn on Saturday March 25.

COMMUNICATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

Work continues on the website and the design of the Forum. A suggestion was made that a notice should be added to the website acknowledging that some items are out of date but that a new website is in the works. Bill Travis agreed and will work with the appropriate person(s) to make that happen.

SERVICES AUCTION

The auction will take place Sunday, January 29 from 3 – 5 at Goodrich Hall near the Williams College museum. The goal is to raise \$5,000 to pay for new software and technical support for the school website. January 16 is the deadline for donations. Overland has given a sponsorship donation and we would love others if anyone wants to

take on the job of contacting business or individual sponsors. Beth Goodman volunteered to organize refreshments, intending to ask Betsy Johnson to help her. Lisa Hiley will talk to Loni Stack about an article in the Advocate. Kaatje White will look into the possibility of early online bidding. It was reported that Wendy Martin has agreed to help with decorating the hall. We have permission to hang a banner. Beth Phelps volunteered to research the cost. The suggestion was made that church bulletins are another way to get the word out.

PROMOTING RESPECT AND TOLERANCE AT MOUNT GREYLOCK

- Superintendent Bill Travis outlined the many things that the school is doing to try to educate students on the issues surrounding bullying.
- That morning (January 9) Judge Locke, who works with juveniles and is a parent at the school, had talked to middle school students. Her talk was taped and will be on Willinet and a copy placed in the Lanesboro library. Dr. Travis emphasized that this was not a “scare kids straight” effort but one that made them aware of the potential consequences of behaviors. Harassment among kids (as adults have learned with sexual harassment) is defined by the victim’s experience rather than the perpetrator’s intention. The school also tries to distinguish between one-time incidents and chronic behaviors.
 - The middle school teams, which will be de-briefing the kids on the talk, also try to give kids the experience of working with those who are not necessarily their close friends.
 - Teachers have increased supervision of the hallways.
 - The principals of the feeder elementary schools and Mt Greylock are meeting to talk about the transition to middle school and sharing information about interactions among kids that it would be helpful for Mt Greylock to know about. They also want students to have more contact with Mt Greylock before ‘move up’ day.
 - The Second Step program, a behavior intervention program used at the Williamstown elementary, may be used by Lanesboro elementary to help create common vocabulary and behavioral expectations.

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- The Attorney General's office will be sending someone to do a workshop for principals and some teachers at the end of January. Travis handed out that office's anti-harassment policy and asked for feedback.
- Travis is to meet with the Lanesboro PTO to discuss the Second Step program and the Attorney General's policy.
- It is very likely that we have a donor to bring back to the school the World of Difference program, which among other things will train student peer mediators.

Questions focused on how to empower kids to speak up when interactions are unwanted and how to deal with kids who don't realize that their actions may be unwanted. The issue was also raised of just what due process is for kids who are being disciplined. The handbook lays down a policy once punishment has been decided on but not procedures before that point. When an issue is considered at all serious a second adult will sit in while a student is being questioned and disciplined. The suggestion was made that coming up with more of a policy at that stage could be the role of the School Council which is charged with coming up with a school improvement plan each year.

Increasingly teachers are being encouraged to report even small-seeming incidents because they may be part of a larger picture. And parents are encouraged to contact one of the principals if they have any concerns.

The School Committee will adopt an anti-bullying policy. Suggestions for further discussion at PTO meetings included reporting on cyber-bullying at the February meeting and finding out more about Second Step in March.

NEW BUSINESS

Sally announced that Jerling Kubler, who has been maintaining a bulletin board with information about Mount Greylock at the Williamstown Public Library, will be stepping down from that position. She is to be commended for doing a great job and anyone who might like to take over from her should contact the PTO. She posts copies of the Echo and the Beacon and relevant clips from the newspapers. Kathleen Flynn-Kasuba said that she would look into something similar being done at the Lanesboro library.

Get Ready, Get set, BID!

Next Sunday is the "At Your Service Auction" located in Goodrich Hall. Items to look forward to are: pies, flowers, horse back riding lessons, babysitting, yoga, artwork, acupuncture, fresh home made dinners, massage, baked goods, editing and gardening help, architectural and gardening consultations, and SO much more! Come spend a wonderful evening bidding on these great services!

Hope to see you there!

Can you help?

Are you able to help out and serve refreshments at the Auction or bring small plates, cups, napkins, tablecloths or a punch bowl?

If so, please contact:

Beth Goodman, ecg@waregoodmanlaw.com

Betsy Johnson, betsy@bcn.net

Cindy Nikitas, cnikitas@verizon.net

SPORTS

Alpine Skiing

Mon. Jan 30 at 5:00 at Bousquet

Nordic Skiing

Sat. Jan. 28 at 10:00 at Notchview

Girls 7/8 Basketball

Sat. Jan. 28 vs. Lenox at Lenox (time TBA)

Wrestling

Fri. Jan. 27 at 5:00 vs. Mt. Everett/Harwood-HOME

Boys Basketball

Thurs. Jan. 26 at 5:30 vs. Lee-HOME

Tues. Jan. 31 at 5:30 vs. St. Joe-HOME

Girls Basketball

Thurs. Jan. 26 at 5:30 vs. Mt. Everett-away

Mon. Jan. 30 at 5:30 vs. Lee-HOME

Thurs. Feb. 2 at 5:30 vs. Hoosac Valley-HOME

GOINGS ON

Tues. Jan. 31 at 7:00 pm -Building Committee Meeting at Lanesboro School Cafeteria: to discuss Building Assessment and Educational Space Issues of MGRHS

Fri. Jan. 27-End of Semester

Sun. Jan. 29 at 3-5 pm PTO-Services Auction: at Goodrich Hall at Williams (between art museum and Lasell Gym). All welcome

Wed. Feb. 8: Early Release Day: 11:45 dismissal

Fri. Feb. 10-Middle School Dance at MGRHS-(TBA)

Fri. Feb. 10 at 7:30 pm-Shakespeare and Chocolate at the Williams Inn

Please send items for the next issue of The Beacon by **noon, Tuesday, January 31 to:**
Larsolaris@yahoo.com / 458-8015 or
Lizcostley@adelphia.net / 458-5894