



# THE BEACON

MT. GREYLOCK MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSLETTER-FEBRUARY 9, 2006

“Love is a canvas furnished by nature and embroidered by imagination”.

-Voltaire

## *Tomorrow Night at Williams Inn!*

The second annual **Food of Love** -- a celebration of **Shakespeare, love, and chocolate** -- will take place on **Friday, February 10, at 7:30 p.m.** at the Williams Inn in Williamstown. This benefit for the Fall Festival of Shakespeare features students and alums, in Elizabethan costume, performing love scenes, sonnets, and soliloquies, while the audience enjoys an unlimited chocolate buffet.

Love will be the theme of the evening -- requited, unrequited, tragic, comic, and romantic. You'll meet many of Shakespeare's most famous lovers up close as they flirt, fight, and utter some of the most beautiful love poetry in the English language. Included will be Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet and Ophelia, Cleopatra, various kings and queens, various girls disguised as boys, the tempestuous fairy king and queen of A Midsummer Night's Dream, and others. Renaissance music will accompany the scenes, played by Kit DeCandia and Emily Baker-White, and there will be a short performance by the Williams College Elizabethans.

The evening will include the drawing for Beth Nesbitt's sumptuous handmade quilt (benefiting the PTO) and a raffle for a variety of irresistible items related to the themes of Shakespeare, love, and chocolate. Seating is limited. Advance tickets are \$18 for adults, \$12 for students, and will go on sale Thursday (Feb. 2) at Wild Oats and Where'd You Get That?! in Williamstown and Country Tack in Lanesborough. Robin Lehleitner will also sell tickets at the high school. **Tickets at the door will be \$20 and \$15.** Admission includes the chocolate buffet; alcoholic drinks are available from a cash bar.

This is the main fund-raiser for the Shakespeare program, and the only one where the teenagers do all the work! For more information, see this Thursday's Advocate or contact:

**Deb Burns at [deb.burns@storey.com](mailto:deb.burns@storey.com) or 458-0925**

## *College and Career Center Opportunities*

The College and Career Center above the school library has a large selection of **Summer opportunities** that are available to all students. Joe Colpoys, a center volunteer, has put together a few highlights that might get you thinking about other possibilities:

- \*Go to a summer college with undergraduate students at Georgetown University in Washington, DC.
- \*Change the world one friendship at a time in Botswana with the Experiment in International Living.
- \*Hike and kayak in the Pyrenees and on the Costa Brava with Overland.
- \*Be a Landmark volunteer on a maintenance project at Acadia National Park.
- \*Go to a musical theater camp at Oberlin College in Ohio.
- \*Enter the world of Leonardo da Vinci at Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire.

Many more programs, camps, travel, and college summer opportunities are available for you to look through. If you need help at the Center, see Mrs. Gill or Mrs. Callahan in the guidance office.

## **BOOK SWAP/BOOKS NEEDED!**

The Williamstown Elementary School is having its annual book swap in March. If you are cleaning your book shelves and have good books for 5th and 6th graders (or younger), please drop them off in the WES lobby. They will be put to good use.

They need about 16 more boxes...

Thanks ever so much for any books you can donate!

**Betsy Barnard 458-5136**

## *The History of Valentine's Day*

Every February, across the country, candy, flowers, and gifts are exchanged between loved ones, all in the name of St. Valentine. But who is this mysterious saint and why do we celebrate this holiday? The history of Valentine's Day -- and its patron saint -- is shrouded in mystery. But we do know that February has long been a month of romance. St. Valentine's Day, as we know it today, contains vestiges of both Christian and ancient Roman tradition. So, who was Saint Valentine and how did he become associated with this ancient rite? Today, the Catholic Church recognizes at least three different saints named Valentine or Valentinus, all of whom were martyred.

One legend contends that Valentine was a priest who served during the third century in Rome. When Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families, he outlawed marriage for young men -- his crop of potential soldiers. Valentine, realizing the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. When Valentine's actions were discovered, Claudius ordered that he be put to death. Other stories suggest that Valentine may have been killed for attempting to help Christians escape harsh Roman prisons where they were often beaten and tortured.

According to another legend, Valentine actually sent the first 'valentine' greeting himself. While in prison, it is believed that Valentine fell in love with a young girl -- who may have been his jailor's daughter -- who visited him during his confinement. Before his death in 270 A.D. (martyred on February 14), it is alleged that he wrote her a letter, which he signed 'From your Valentine,' an expression that is still in use today.

Although the truth behind the Valentine legends is murky, the stories certainly emphasize his appeal as a sympathetic, heroic, and, most importantly, romantic figure. It's no surprise that by the Middle Ages, Valentine was one of the most popular saints in England and France.

Over the centuries since then, the holiday evolved, and by the 18th century, gift-giving and exchanging hand-made cards on Valentine's Day had become common in England. Hand-made valentine cards made of lace, ribbons, and featuring cupids and hearts eventually spread to the American colonies. The tradition of Valentine's cards did not become widespread in the United States, however, until the 1850s, when Esther A. Howland, a Mount Holyoke graduate and native of Worcester, Mass., began mass-producing them.

Today, of course, the holiday has become a booming commercial success. According to the Greeting Card Association, 25% of all cards sent each year are valentines.



## SPORTS

### **Girls 7/8 Basketball**

Sun. Feb. 12 at 11:30 am vs. Adams-away

### **Hockey**

Sat. Feb. 11 at 8 pm vs. Greenfield-HOME

Mon. Feb. 13 at 7:30 pm vs. St. Joe-HOME

Wed. Feb. 15 at 6:30 pm vs. Wahconah-away

### **Nordic Skiing**

Sat. Feb. 11 Coaches Invitational at 10am at Mohawk

Tues. Feb. 14 at 10:30 am Freestyle State Meet at

Notchview

### **Girls Basketball**

Thurs. Feb. 9 at 5:30 pm vs. Lenox-HOME

Mon. Feb. 13 at 6 pm vs. St. Joe-away

Thurs. Feb. 16 at 5:30 pm vs. Hoosac Valley-away

### **Boys Basketball**

Fri. Feb. 10 at 5:30 pm vs. Taconic-away

Tues. Feb. 14 at 5:30 pm vs. Drury-HOME

### **Wrestling**

Feb. 10/11 Western Mass Championships at Southwick

## GOINGS ON

**Sun. Feb. 12**– President Lincoln's birthday

**Mon. Feb. 13**– PTO Meeting at 7 pm in library

**Tues. Feb. 14**-Valentine's Day

**Wed. Feb. 15**-Building committee meeting at 7 pm in library

**Fri. Feb. 17 at 2:30 pm-SCHOOL CLOSSES FOR WINTER VACATION**

**The Forum**-submissions for the March issue are due **Friday, February 17**. Send to:  
[pakmach@adelphia.net](mailto:pakmach@adelphia.net)

Please send items for the next issue of The Beacon by **noon, Tuesday, February 14 to:**  
[Larsolaris@yahoo.com](mailto:Larsolaris@yahoo.com) / 458-8015 or  
[Lizcostley@adelphia.net](mailto:Lizcostley@adelphia.net) / 458-5894