

January, 2010

# THE GREEN MOUNTAIN GAZETTE

Green Mountain Union High School/802-875-2146  
Home of Academic Excellence

PRINCIPAL'S PERSPECTIVE  
tferenc@wsusu.org

TOM FERENC  
Principal



One kind  
word can  
warm three  
winter  
months.

## Japanese proverb

It is hard to believe that this is our January 2010 issue. The school year is going by very quickly. As I observe the students, I think of the four phases of group dynamics. They are orientation, dissatisfaction, integration and productivity. Our students have gone through the orientation stage where they get to know other students and adults while getting used to the new routine. The dissatisfaction stage is usually seen around the middle to end of October. It is then that the newness wears off and the struggle begins. Students begin to doubt themselves. They don't yet fully realize that added effort is needed to become successful. After the holiday season, the students begin to feel a bit better about their place in school and start to enter the integration phase. It is then followed by the productivity phase where they feel an added confidence. It is up to us, the parents and teachers, to continue to monitor the students, constantly checking with them about how they feel and why they feel the way they do. Seniors especially need monitoring and conversation as they are undergoing a significant life-changing transition.

Budget season is upon us and it is going to be a difficult task to craft a budget that balances the needs of the students with the resources of the community. I am confident that we will run the school on whatever money that the citizens of our district approve. I would urge all to ask themselves what kind of a school they want. As the inevitable budget trimming occurs, the Administration, with guidance and direction from the Board and Budget Committee, will be creative and pursue the use of

technology to backfill offerings to students. We are confident in our ability to continue to offer a high level of education and service to our students. Please do your part when it comes time to vote.

Thank you and please contact me with any questions or concerns you may have.



### **REMINDER!**

Sometimes it's hard to remember all the people you need to contact when your phone number or address changes. Please call the Main Office at 875-2146 with any changes you may have so we can update Powerschool. This is how you receive automatic alerts when there is no school because of the weather or other important announcements. Thank you.

**TOM BURKE**  
**Associate Principal**

[tburke@wswsu.org](mailto:tburke@wswsu.org)

In a previous *Gazette* article, I mentioned my intention to comment further on legal issues that involve our schools. This month I want to discuss the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act – also known as FERPA. The legislation, enacted in 1974, and amended several times since then, is a “spending clause statute.” Simply put, any educational institution, public or private, who is the recipient of Federal aid must implement policies or procedures outlined in this Act or risk loss of financial support. To that end, it is in the best interest of Green Mountain to adhere to such legislation, as we receive financial support from the government in several ways, including the Free and Reduced Lunch Subsidy Program and the various Federal grants we apply for and receive annually.

FERPA requires schools to protect the privacy and confidentiality of student records and it provides parents some discretion regarding these records. For example, parents have the right to access their children’s records – you’d want to know how well your child is doing in school, be it academically or socially, wouldn’t you? This may seem like a ridiculous question to pose, but Congress sought to establish your rights to your student’s records, even though most schools, including Green Mountain, regularly mails home copies of records, such as report cards and incident referrals. FERPA allows for the inspection and review of records, and if a parent disagrees with the accuracy of these records, there is an avenue available to seek a remedy.

Schools are required to provide access to student records, upon request, to a parent or guardian within a reasonable time frame – not more than forty-five (45) days. [20 U.S.C. 1232g(a)(1)(A)] Should a parent contest the accuracy of a record, a parent may request a hearing with a school official in order to present evidence to the contrary. However, the final decision to amend or delete any contested information in a student’s record remains with the institution.

I share this information with you because sometimes we are not fully aware of rights and responsibilities. FERPA, like many statutes, is rather complex and requires some interpretation. FERPA just doesn’t apply to student files; directory information, financial aid information, or any identifiable personal information about a student has FERPA implications. I’d be happy discuss FERPA and our procedures pertaining to this law with any inquiring parent or student. More information about FERPA is available at this recommended site: <http://www.fetaweb.com/04/ferpa.summary.htm>

## **Middle School News**

**Norm Merrill, Middle School Coordinator**  
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At Green Mountain, we encourage all students to participate in extra-curricular activities. However, as always, the first goal for our students is academic success. Therefore, in order for middle school students to play basketball or any other sport, they must stay eligible according to the athletic eligibility policy. The policy is as follows:

Students’ grade check for eligibility is conducted weekly during the season or time period for the co-curricular activity. Students must have a minimum of 60% in every subject area they are enrolled in, inclusive of specials and electives in order to remain eligible for their co-curricular of choice.

On the first instance that a student falls below the academic threshold (60%), the student is placed on probation for one week—no practices, rehearsals, games and/or performances are permitted during this probationary period. Students must raise their grade(s) to 60% or better to meet the standard for eligibility to participate.

On the second instance where a student falls below 60% in any class, they become ineligible for participation in their co-curricular of choice for the remainder of that season/activity.

**Grades for 2nd Quarter close on January 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

## JANUARY HAPPENINGS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day – No School
Jan. 5	Registration Deadline for Feb. ACT Exam Booster Club Meeting – 7:00 pm
Jan. 6	FAFSA Forms Night – 6:30 in the Library
Jan. 9	VT All-State Music Festival Auditions
Jan. 14	School Board Meeting 5:00
Jan. 18	Martin Luther King Day – No School
Jan. 19	In-Service Day – No School
Jan. 22	End of Second Quarter
Jan. 23	SAT Exam

**FAFSA FORMS  
NIGHT  
WEDNESDAY,  
JANUARY 6  
6:30 PM  
GMUHS  
LIBRARY**

### AP EUROPEAN HISTORY

Kelley Brennan, Dept. Chair  
kbrennan@wswsu.org

Students in Advanced Placement European History class brought historical characters to life through skits. Using an interview format, Martin Luther and rival Johann Eck discussed abuses of the Catholic Church, Francis I of France argued with Charles V of Spain, and Dominican priest Girolamo Savonarola discussed abuses of the Medici family in Florence. Students are currently working on developing their characters to participate in a French Salon, which is a sophisticated gathering of intellectuals discussing enlightened ideas on government and society.



Alexsander Houk- King Frances I of France



Anna Martel- Dominican priest  
Girolamo Savonarola

**ATHLETICS SCHEDULE – JANUARY, 2010****BOYS VARSITY BASKETBALL**

Jan. 5	Websterville – 6:00
Jan. 9	@ Websterville – 6:30
<b>Jan. 12</b>	<b>@ W. Rutland</b>
<b>Jan. 15</b>	<b>Poultney</b>
Jan. 18	@ Leland & Gray
Jan. 21	@ Arlington
Jan. 29	@ Proctor

Varsity games begin at 7:30 pm unless otherwise noted. JV plays all games in **BOLD** at 6:00 pm

**GIRLS VARSITY BASKETBALL**

<b>Jan. 5</b>	<b>Proctor</b>
Jan. 8	Poultney
<b>Jan. 11</b>	<b>@ Arlington</b>
Jan. 14	Black River
<b>Jan. 19</b>	<b>@ Leland &amp; Gray</b>
Jan. 22	MSJ
<b>Jan. 25</b>	<b>@ Proctor</b>
<b>Jan. 30</b>	<b>West Rutland</b>

Varsity games begin at 7:30 pm unless otherwise noted. JV plays all games in **BOLD** at 6:00 pm.

## Green Mountain Union High School

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.gmuhs.org](http://www.gmuhs.org)



## COME OUT AND SUPPORT YOUR TEAMS!

Eric Anderson, Athletic Director  
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David's House provides a home-away-from-home for families with children receiving treatment through CHaD (Children's Hospital at Dartmouth) at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center and for the third year in a row, Linda Ewens is taking a collection of money for this worthy cause. Students have been bringing in their spare change or coins they find lying on the ground. What a great way to show students how to give back to the community. Thanks to all who have donated and keep them coming. If you would like to learn more about David's House or make a direct donation, please visit [www.dauids-house.org](http://www.dauids-house.org)

CLASS OF 2010—Scholarships are available! Applications including the VSAC Scholarship Book are in the Guidance Conference Room. Come check them out!



Recently the Wilderness Adventures class tested their outdoor knowledge by participating in a daylong survival exercise in the GMUHS forest. The class was divided into two groups of ten students. Each group had to complete the following tasks in order to survive.

1. Build a shelter
2. Start a fire
3. Make two traps and one snare
4. Make six feet of rope
5. Find and filter water
6. Follow five different sets of tracks to locate hidden items

This may sound easy, but the only equipment the students were provided was a knife. There were no matches, lighters, tarps, tents or any outside assistance allowed. The students had to use their skills and things they found in the forest to accomplish all of the tasks on the list. To make things even more difficult, some of the students were stricken with “injuries” which limited their ability to function. The groups had to deal with hypothermia, panic, loss of an arm, and even blindness of some team members.

How did they do? They survived! Both groups were able to complete most or all of the tasks on the list, even the fire, which was started with a bow and drill. Many of the students commented on how hard it was and how quickly the day went, but all of them wanted to try it again. Most agreed that starting the fire and finding all of the tracks were the hardest parts. “I was very impressed with the results of this exercise”, said Mr. Garvin. “The students did a great job and had this been a real situation, they would have survived.”

Watch out Man vs. Wild and Survivorman, here comes Wilderness Adventures!

## MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Cindy Austin, Choral Director

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The Music Department is pleased to congratulate Georgia Ladd, Kathryn Svec, and Monica Keith for being accepted into the High School District Festival which will be held in February at Windsor High School.

Five high school girls will be traveling to Hartford High School on January 9 to audition for All State Festival which will be held in May of 2010. The five are Maggie Roper, Ann Chase, Georgia Ladd, Kat Svec and Monica Keith. Wish them luck!

The year’s musical production is “Anything Goes” by Cole Porter. We are in the process of auditions and the cast will be decided by December 23. The production is scheduled for April 8 – 10. Lots of fun stuff going on in the music department!



FOOD SERVICES	JANUARY 2010 LUNCHES	JACK CARROLL jcarroll@wswsu.org
Mon., Jan. 4	Chicken Patty Sandwich, French Fries, Veggie, Fruit or Quesadilla	
Tues., Jan. 5	Taco Tuesday! Beef tacos, tomato, lettuce, sour cream, salsa or personal pizza	
Wed., Jan. 6	Turkey with gravy and biscuits, carrots, fresh fruit or cheeseburgers	
Thurs., Jan. 7	Meatball Sub, potato chips and fresh fruit or Chicken Patty	
Fri., Jan. 8	Pizza Friday!	
Mon., Jan. 11	Spaghetti and meatballs, garlic bread and Fruit	
Tues., Jan. 12	Nachos with chili, cheese, sour cream and salsa and Fresh Fruit	
Wed., Jan. 13	The Return of Grafton Mac & Cheese, bread, veggie and fruit or Burgers	
Thurs., Jan. 14	Hot Homemade Soup and Deli Day or Chicken Patty	
Fri., Jan. 15	Pizza Friday or Cheeseburger	
Wed., Jan. 20	Spaghetti with Meat Sauce, Garlic Bread and Fresh Fruit or Cheeseburger	
Thurs., Jan. 21	Oven Baked BBQ Chicken, Mashed Potato, Gravy, Veggie and Fruit or Chicken Patty	
Fri., Jan. 22	Pizza Friday or Cheeseburger	
Mon., Jan. 25	Chicken Fajitas, salsa, sour cream and fresh fruit or Quesadillas	
Tues., Jan. 26	Steak and Cheese Grinder, chips and Fruit or Chicken Patty	
Wed., Jan. 27	Goulash, garlic bread and fruit or Cheeseburger	
Thurs., Jan. 28	Dog Day! Corn dogs & Grilled dogs with baked beans and coleslaw	
Fri., Jan. 29	Pizza Friday or Cheeseburger	

### THE DELI

**Variety of deli meats and cheeses, fresh breads and rolls, veggie toppings and salads available every day along with yogurt and bagels**

### LIBRARY NEWS

Mike Kelly, Librarian  
mkelly@wswsu.org

Research shows that girls read more than boys, particularly in high school. In their intensive study of boys' reading habits, Michael Smith and Jeffrey Wilhelm made the following observations:

- Boys take longer to read than girls do
- Boys are less likely to talk about or overtly respond to their reading than girls are
- Boys have much less interest in leisure reading and are far more likely to read for utilitarian purposes
- Significantly more boys than girls declare themselves "nonreaders"
- Boys and girls have different reading interests

Among the books which appeal most to boys are those which focus on action, adventure, sports, humor, and, for lack of a better term, murder and mayhem (crime, gangs, war, etc.).

In an attempt to narrow the reading gender gap, Mr. Kelly is now building a collection of books which boys may find particularly interesting. A small group of books has already been assembled, and additional books for this collection have been ordered. Since this is a work in progress, Mr. Kelly is welcoming suggestions. When offering suggestions, please keep in mind that Mr. Kelly must be able to find a good review in a reliable source (such as *School Library Journal* or *Booklist*) before considering a book for purchase.

## Does it make sense for students who have done well in AP Calculus to skip Calculus I in college?

This is the question for which we have the most evidence, yet even here the evidence is imperfect, most of it has been funded through the College Board or the Educational Testing Service, and most of it is at least ten years old. **Morgan & Ramist, 1998** This was a large-scale study conducted in Fall 1991 at 21 colleges and universities chosen from among those that receive the greatest number of AP Calculus scores. It looked at students who received at least a 3 on an AP Calculus exam and chose to use this credit to skip at least one calculus class. It shows that even for students who scored a 3 on the AP Calculus exam, they did better in Calculus II than the average student who has passed Calculus I taken at that university. The study suffers from several flaws: All that is reported are averages taken across all of the universities; there is no attempt to compare students with a given AP score with students who received a particular grade in Calculus I; and there is no attempt to control for the possibility that the population of students who earn AP credit for and are sufficiently confident to skip Calculus I are not completely comparable to the population of those who take and pass Calculus I.

Nevertheless, this study does suggest that even at the most demanding universities, the student who chooses to take advantage of advanced placement is not putting him- or herself at a disadvantage.

Placed via	average grade in Calculus II
Passed Calculus I	2.52
3 on AP exam	2.67
4 on AP exam	2.79
5 on AP exam	3.23



The business math class this semester is doing a Project Based Learning unit on energy efficiency. The students have been researching all areas of energy use at GMUHS. They have talked with people involved with electricity, lighting, heating, plumbing and insulating. We have used the internet and emailed some questions to the Vermont State Department of Energy. They have used energy usage meters to check individual appliances. Some students have designed posters to encourage energy conservation. The class will be presenting at the January School Board Meeting.



## MIDDLE SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES

Keith Hill  
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It is that time of year again! The Green Mountain Middle School is preparing for the final round of the National Geographic Bee (GeoBee). Students in Ms. Newton and Mr. Hill's social studies classes have been working hard to prepare for this annual event. The GeoBee provides a real challenge for the students while allowing them to have fun with the study of geography.

The GeoBee is sponsored by the National Geographic Society. It is open to students in both the seventh and eighth grade. There are three stages to this competition. First, the Preliminary Round is held in each middle school classroom. This round will determine the ten finalists that will move on the Final Competition Round. Second, the Final Competition Round determines the two school champions who go head-to-head in the third and final Championship Round. Finally, the school champion will take a written state-qualifying test to compete for advancement to the state level competition. With a National Level first-place prize of a \$25,000 college scholarship, the GeoBee is designed to encourage the study of geography.

The Final and Championship Round competitions will be held in the GM Auditorium on Thursday, January 7<sup>th</sup> from 8:15 – 9:15 AM. All middle school classes and middle school parents are invited to attend.

## ALUMNI ART

Christa Valente, Art Teacher  
[cvalente@wswsu.org](mailto:cvalente@wswsu.org)

Artwork from Greg Wilson, Andrew Clingenpeel, Heather Hawkins, Evon Calabrese, Courtenay Houk, Shana Currie, Meg Crawford, Miranda Wheeler, Shannon Parker and Hannah Parker decked the halls of GMUHS's Gallery on the Bridge for the "Reunion Night" Performance by local musicians sponsored by the Green Mountain Festival Series on November 21<sup>st</sup>. Thank you to all of the Alumni that participated!



Hannah Parker



Heather Hawkins

## SEVENTH GRADE LANGUAGE ARTS

Sharon Jonynas  
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The seventh grade Language Arts classes are doing a bit of multi-tasking for the month of December. The students have been working on narratives, which should be finished before winter break. We have adopted a mantra: "Every time someone new speaks, a new paragraph begins." We are also finishing a class book, *Tangerine*, by Edward Bloor. This book spends a lot of time building up the rising action leading up to the climax, and we are now at the exciting part. Another book report is due before going on break, but the students have known about this for quite a while, so it should not be adding much to their homework burden. I hope you all have a restful holiday season. I'm already tired of shoveling and winter has only just begun. Be well.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL GUIDANCE

ALLY OSWALD, SCHOOL COUNSELOR  
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This year we will begin the Second Step program in grade 7 and 8. Students need to practice social skills in order to use them effectively. The Second Step program focuses on skills that will help your student succeed in school and in life. These skills include:

- Empathy
- Communication
- Perspective taking
- Respectful disagreement
- Negotiation and compromise
- Emotion management
- Coping with stress
- Decision-making

You play a vital role in helping your student develop strong social skills. During the next few months, the focus of the lessons will be on empathy and communication. Ask questions about the skills your student is learning, such as:

- “What does it mean to have empathy, and how does it help you in school?”
- “Who are some people you can count on if you need an ally?”
- “What are the steps you use to negotiate and compromise?”

If you have any questions about the program, please do not hesitate to contact me for more information. Thank you for supporting your student in learning the skills that will lead to success in school and in life.

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts****Norm Merrill, Dept. Chair**  
[nmerrill@wswsu.org](mailto:nmerrill@wswsu.org)

I hope everyone had a nice winter break! The month of January in language arts brings persuasive writing and public speaking. As we finish drafting our persuasive essays for our writing portfolios, we will transition into our public speaking unit. For this unit, students will use their persuasive essays as the basis for a persuasive speech. Students will deliver this speech three times, each time with fewer note cards to work with. We will also practice speaking skills, including appropriate eye contact, rate, volume, and enthusiasm. The more students practice speaking in public, the greater their comfort level becomes. This is often a very nerve-racking assignment for our students, but a very important one. Public speaking is a skill that is necessary in most careers and one found in many aspects of day-to-day life.