

Journalists & Tourists Flock to Hyde Park

by Alan



President Barack Obama

Living in Kenwood, a neighborhood bordering Hyde Park, president-elect Barack Obama has brought with his campaign much attention to this otherwise unperturbed area of Chicago. With many people interested in getting first-hand information from our president, many journalists, reporters, and just plain curious people have come in from all areas of the world. Nearly every media and news outlet is represented in Hyde Park now, with the eyes of the world watching.

With a population of just around 44,700 people, according to the Hyde Park South East Chicago Commission, Hyde Park comprises just a small portion of Chicago's populous. Ranging longitudinally from 51st to 60th street, and latitudinally from Cottage Grove to Stony Island, Hyde Park is not that large of an area. However, it remains one of the more diverse and influential areas of Chicago.

Once on the forefront for abolitionists and the Underground Railroad

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"Crazy Cat Ladies"

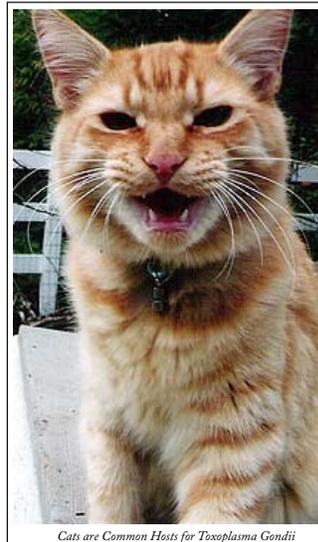
Victims of Circumstance

By Alan

There are many phenomena in this world that seemingly cannot be explained. Among them is the well-known "crazy cat lady" story of women with dozens upon dozens of cats who seem to have lost their sanity. Many people regard this as just a fabricated story without any real explanation or logic behind it, but recent studies have revealed that there

are both scientific and psychological explanations for such strange behavior.

There is a parasitic infection that plays quite a major role in the whole crazy cat lady ordeal. The protozoan, zoonotic pathogen *Toxoplasma gondii*, has been known to lead to the infection toxoplasmosis. Toxoplasmosis is quite prevalent among mammals, mainly felines,



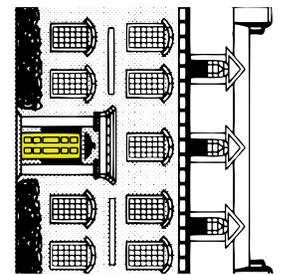
Cats are Common Hosts for Toxoplasma Gondii

and is communicable from cats to humans. The para-

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January 26, 2009

YDC door Chronicles



**Volume 4
Issue 4**

hot topic hot topic

Question: If you could save any endangered species, what would it be and why?

"Tigers. They are one of my favorites."

-Anonymous

"A panda because they are so cute."

- Eddie

"Plants because they are our source of oxygen."

- Katie

"Bald eagle. It stands for America."

- Josh

"I would want a panda because they're cute and very soft."

- Anonymous

"Bald eagle. It is our American symbol."

- Nick T.

"I cannot answer because there are many animals that are endangered and I care

about all of them. I would hate myself if

I saved one species and all the rest become

extinct." - Michael G.

"Neverland dwarf rabbits." - Billy

"I would choose to save the elephants because their tusks are getting chopped off for use as ivory. This is brutal and cruel."

- Tommy

"Pandas because they are adorable."

- Anonymous

"Pandas because they are cool and do kung fu." - Anonymous

"Polar bears so that devastating TV commercial won't be on...not really. They are cute." - Anonymous

"R.A.K. (Random Act of Kindness. Enough said.)" - Julia

"ALL OF THEM. ENOUGH SAID!"

- Matt N.

"Gorillas." - Kayla B.

"Snow leopards, because they are so cute, and they are cats and leopards are my mom's favorite animal." - Olivia

"Wolves, because they are my favorite animals. As much as they always seem to have a bad reputation, if you really study them, they're very much like humans, the way their pack lives are structured." - Julie

"The red panda because I can identify myself most with them." - Brooklyn

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Making Wishes Come True

By Kayla B.

George Marijan is a 7 year old child from Buffalo Grove, IL, who was diagnosed with lymphoblastic leukemia. He had a dream to be a police officer. A few weeks later his mom and dad talked to Make-A-Wish, and he got his dream day on October 28, 2008.

Make-A-Wish, which used to be Make-A-Wish Memorial, grants wishes to children who have terminal medical conditions. Make-A-Wish grants wishes for anything from meeting someone famous to traveling across the world or even being in a movie. According to Jessica Miller, Communications Manager of Make a Wish Foundation, Illinois, the most requested wish is usually related to Disney, including going Disney World or Disney Land, or taking a Disney cruise.

Make-A-Wish has four steps to granting a wish. The first step is to get a referral from a doctor, parent, or child. The second step is to make sure that the child's diagnosis is life threatening and that they could die soon. The next step is to find out exactly what wish



Disabled Child's Wish to See Air Force Base Granted by Make a Wish Foundation

they want granted, and the final step is to make their dream come true.

This process can be challenging because most wishes cost money. Make-A-Wish gets their money from donations, and from Organizations and Corporations. It still costs, on average, about five thousand dollars per wish, explains Ms. Miller.

The first wish that Make-A-Wish ever granted was for a little boy named Chris Greicious, who was 7 years old and diagnosed with Leukemia, just like George Marijan. Ironically, they both wanted to be a police officer. On April 29th,

1980, Chris got his chance to have his wish come true and was given the chance to meet many people in the police force. Chris was put in the hospital on May 2nd of that year, and they decorated his room so he could see his uniform and the other stuff that he received from his day as a police officer. Unfortunately, the next day, Chris Greicious died.

Ever since Chris Greicious got his wish granted, Make-A-Wish Foundation decided that they liked seeing how a child got a wish granted, and how it made him feel so happy. The organization is still growing each and every day.

The Fall of a Rising Star

By Natalie

On October 13th, after colliding into a teammate, Alexi Cherepanov collapsed in the 18th minute of the 3rd quarter of a hockey game and died. He was in Russia playing hockey for his club, Avangard Omsk. Family, friends and fans were distraught at the funeral. The hockey league stated they were saddened at the sudden death of their player.

An autopsy revealed that his cause of death was cardiac arrest due to HCM. After Alexi's death, 49 hockey players were tested and 5 players came back positive for heart defects. Due to confidentiality the heart defects are not able to be known. Not all players have been tested so this number could rise.

HCM is the thickening of the heart

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Yellow
national/world

The Fall of a Rising Star

By Natalie

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National Hockey League, Official Puck

walls. It is common in athletes who have been through extended amounts of athletic training or in people who have high blood pressure. One in 500 people and one in 1,000 births have HCM. The symptoms of HCM are shortness of breath, chest pain, palpitations, feeling light headed, and blacking out. HCM is easily mistaken as sports induced asthma. Currently, there is no cure for this disease, but there are surgical devices that can be put in to help control the symptoms. When someone has HCM there is the possibility of sudden death but only a one to two percent chance.

Cherapanov's and the other players' coaches said there is no suspicion of steroids; there is no connection between steroids or doping and HCM.

The Hypertrophic Cardio Myopathy Association, or HCMA, is working on promoting a cure for this disease.

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during times of slavery in the late 1800's, founded by the abolitionist and businessman Paul Cornell, and now hosting the world-renowned University of Chicago and Sonia Shankman Orthogenic School, its importance and history proves to be quite vast and significant. Hyde Park also featured the Columbian Exposition in 1893, otherwise known as The Chicago World's Fair, which made the Midway Plaisance what it is today. It has been home to many famous and interesting people, such as Senators Paul Douglas, Barack Obama, Carol Moseley Braun, and other movers and shakers of the world, including Marshall Field, Enrico Fermi, Elijah Muhammad, Rabbi Arnold Jacob Wolf, and Saul Bellow.

Another interesting fact about Hyde Park is that it is one of the most diverse neighborhoods around, with a very mixed racial demographic only rivaled by places like Boystown. While many north-side areas are mainly white and many south-side areas are mainly black, the US Census Bureau of 2008 states that Hyde Park boasts 13,689

Caucasians, 11,413 African Americans, 3,372 Asians, 1,230 Hispanics or Latinos, 21 Other Pacific Islanders, and many multiracial residents as well.

While most Hyde Park residents are happy that Obama has been elected, many are irritated with the heightened security and flood of foreigners, which has made daily life more difficult for Hyde Park natives. With parking scarce and privacy fleeting, many residents are upset about this whole ordeal. Avi Stopper, a local resident and former soccer coach at the University of Chicago, said in a CNN interview, "There are tons of police cars and secret service on every street it seems. You have to kind of navigate through this labyrinth to get to where you want to go." Drew Thomas, another Hyde Park local, said that "The other day, it was three helicopters just hovering, you know. I didn't know they could do that. I guess when they start running out of gas, somebody else is going to take their place."

However, some are happy that business is flourishing with all of the added

tourism which has come up recently. Others are unsure about the economic situation. Rabbi Arnold Jacob Wolf of the Kehilath Anshe Maarav Isaiah Israel Synagogue, one of the oldest Jewish congregations in Chicago, told reporter and news anchor Jessica Yellin that "... prices went up. They may go down now because of all the security that prevents you from going to your own house or your own synagogue." When things will settle down again is unknown. However, Rabbi Wolf will not see the day when they do settle down again, because he sadly passed away at the age of 84 on December 23rd of 2008. The Jewish Forward stated that Rabbi Wolf was a "dear friend" of Obama, and Obama was upset to hear about Wolf's death, which happened right across the street from his house in the Rabbi's Hyde Park synagogue.

Another question that has risen recently is whether or not the added security for Obama is really necessary or just overkill. Sure, it might make him safer and less likely to become the target

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“Crazy Cat Ladies” Victims of Circumstance

By Alan

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site is typically passed through felid excrement. Even without direct contact with the fecal matter, the *Toxoplasma Gondii* traces found within cat feces can still be passed on to human hosts.

Dr. Jose G. Montoya, and Professor, Dr. O. Leisenfeld estimate that up to thirty three percent of the world's population is infected with toxoplasmosis. Many hosts show no symptoms at all, but some of the effects of toxoplasmosis can lead to neuroticism, psychosis, schizophrenia, cognitive distortions, differences in behavioral patterns, and even death. Pregnant women and their fetuses, and people with compromised immune systems, such as those with HIV or AIDS, are especially at risk to have fatal results from a toxoplasmosis infection, so it is advised that pregnant women avoid any and all contact with cats during their pregnancy.

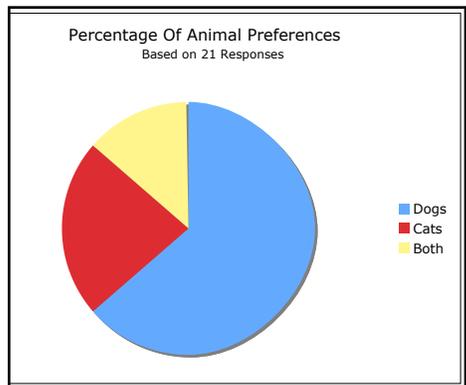
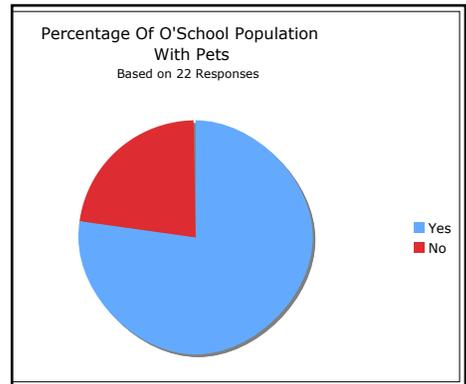
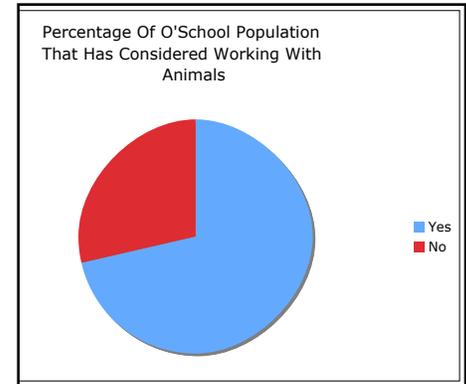
Another interesting property of Toxoplasmosis is that, according to the National Center for Biotechnology Information, (NCBI), it can alter the behavior of its host. It has even been known to make mice and rats seek out cats, making them more likely to be eaten. This is beneficial to the parasite; once the rodent host is eaten, the infection can spread throughout the cat, and eventually pass on to greater life forms, allowing for the pathogen to thrive. It is still not known why this function exists or how it works. However, what is known is that with an increased

amount of pets comes an increased chance to become infected with toxoplasmosis, so people who tend to have large amounts of cats as pets are more at risk to develop toxoplasmosis than others.

The psychological aspect of this theory entails something referred to as “animal hoarding.” The Humane Society of The United States, HSUS, defines animal hoarding as the act of taking in and owning more animals than one can care for with the intention of being kept company by them, but without any real regards to their health or well-being. These people mistreat their animals, usually neglecting their basic needs, not because they don't care about their animals, but rather because they just aren't able to care for all of them.

AnimalPeopleNews.org claims that unmarried or divorced people, mainly women, are more likely to engage in animal hoarding than anyone else because they often are socially isolative and tend to seek out the companionship of animals in order to avoid feeling lonely. There is not much research about the animal hoarder psyche, but what has been concluded thus far is that most animal hoarders have social development problems and often times have mental illnesses, but nothing specific can be tied to them.

Even before acquiring toxoplasmosis, many of these people are already mentally ill or unstable, which is what leads them to hoard animals. Toxoplasmosis just contributes more to their poor condition and is not



entirely to blame. It is hard to determine just what exactly comes first – the mental illness or toxoplasmosis, and it varies from case to case. One might wonder if mentally unstable people tend to hoard animals, or if hoarding animals makes people mentally unstable. Perhaps it's a combination of both. The question can't be answered with such limited data on this subject, because awareness of the condition is relatively new.

Inauguration Day at The O'School

by Justin

On January 20, 2009, the day after Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday, America was anxiously awaiting the inauguration of its first black president. Even the students at the Orthogenic School were waiting for Barack Obama to take his oath and make his inaugural speech. For some people who did not vote for him, this was a sad day, but everyone can agree that this was a historic day; the day that we have a black president.

Many members of the Orthogenic School community gathered in the art room to watch the ceremony. There was a lot of discussion among the students and staff during the inauguration coverage. I heard someone mention the dangers that he might face during his speech, and, in fact, Obama was wearing bullet-proof clothing. A lot of people were talking about their own political views, and regardless of their opinion of our new president, there was excitement and interest in the air. Most of the people seemed

genuinely hopeful for the new administration.

The performers at the inauguration were absolutely inspiring. Aretha Franklin totally nailed *My Country 'Tis of Thee*, and an orchestra piece that was

composed by John Williams, who has composed music for *Star Wars*, *Jaws*, and the Olympic Games, was really good as well. The Orchestra consisted of Venezuelan pianist Gabriela Montero, cellist Yo-Yo Ma, violinist Itzhak Perlman, and clarinetist Anthony McGill. In addition to the artistic performances, the pastor, Risk Warren led a very inspiring prayer.

Obama was very modest about his address. He hit on the important issues our country faces such as war, foreign affairs and the current economic crisis. This was a good day for Americans everywhere, and a day those of us able to share at the O'School, streaming issues and all, will likely not forget.



President Obama taking the presidential oath on January 20, 2009

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of terrorist attacks, but it has definitely made life for the nearby residents much more inconvenient. Secret Service constantly stop people around the area to make sure they're locals and not assassins, terrorists, journalists, reporters, or other unwanted peoples; though with good intentions in mind. It has had at least a somewhat negative impact on the community.

Not everyone thinks that this is a bad situation though. For example, residents David Hyatt and Frank Burns don't seem to mind the added security in the area, probably because they don't

live in the immediate area where all of the security-checks take place and because they support Obama. When asked about how Obama being president-elect affects David's everyday life, he replied "Not at all, in any way. I know they closed off some streets and stuff, but I'm not really over there [near Obama]." He also said he does not have to show his ID to get through security checkpoints or anything.

Coach Frank Burns of the Orthogenic School said that "It gives the community a sense of pride because Hyde Park is a very eclectic community

made up of diverse individuals, and they are proud that one of their own has risen up and become the president of the United States. I personally am excited that with a Chicago president that Chicago will have a good chance of getting the 2016 Olympics."

This is a rare opportunity for Hyde Park, being host to president-elect Barack Obama, the first African-American president of the United States. This formerly discreet neighborhood has now made its niche in American, and perhaps even national, history.

Welcome to TLC

By Kayla B.



TLC Common Room, Sonia Shankman Orthogenic School

This year there have been many students making their way up to the Transitional Living Center, TLC. Casey, Ryan, David, Nick A, Ethan, Derrick, Kayla V, Kaitlin, and Felicia are all current members of TLC. Getting to TLC isn't a small task or short process. If a student wants to move up to TLC, they have to meet certain requirements.

Students who wish to go to TLC will be given an application to fill out. Some of the questions include things like, what do you believe would be the most beneficial and realistic life plan for you once you have graduated from the Orthogenic School? After the application is filled out and turned in, the student will have interviews with the TLC staff.

In the Minstrels Dorm, students must be in their areas at 9:45 and the lights go out at 10:00. TLC is a little different. TLC students must return to the school by 9pm, must be in TLC by 10 pm, and by 11pm must be in their rooms. TLC has a lot more privileges. They have automatic alone time,

independent outings, and they have the option to go home every weekend.

TLC students have expectations that they must follow to stay in TLC. They must go to school and have a job in the school or in the community. TLC students are to attend all meals, unless a TLC staff says otherwise. TLC students cannot use any physical or verbal aggression. Before a TLC student leaves the building, they must notify their staff. Even TLC still needs to complete chores every week. Their rooms are required to be clean, and they also must wash their own laundry.

Some reasons that students move up to TLC include, "[learning] skills that the dorm could not provide," says Ethan, and "I wanted my own independence," says Kaitlin. Some of the Positives about living in TLC are having your own room, having less supervision, and gaining independence. TLC is a great place when you are ready to gain more independence, and get going on a good path for the future.

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Staff Profile: Lauren Berebitsky

By Natalie

Lauren is a therapist at the Orthogenic School. She runs group and individual therapy and is in charge of the interns. Lauren laughs and makes funny comments, and she always tries to make light of situations. She has her serious moments too, but only when needed.

As a kid, she had cats and played field hockey and soccer. She is also thinking of getting a kitten or puppy now. Lauren moved around a lot. She was born in Ohio and moved to San Francisco, Philadelphia, and then Ann Arbor for college. She now lives in Chicago, and likes Chicago the best because it's easy and it's close to her family.

Lauren went to University of Michigan for her undergraduate degree, and then the Illinois School of Psychology for her masters and doctorate. She said "I don't think I would want to go back to college again, but I loved my time in Ann Arbor during those four years. My favorite course in college was an experiential one where I got the opportunity to mentor two students at a local high school."

In her spare time, Lauren enjoys watching T.V. shows like *Lost*, *Project Runway* and *Friday Night Lights*. "TV is a good way for me to relax and do something mindless after work-

ing all day." As for movies, she says, "I don't get to see movies as much as I'd like." Her favorite movie from the past year or so is *Juno*. "I also really liked the *Dark Knight*. Heath Ledger was really good but creepy." She also watches University of Michigan football, even though they aren't doing well, and loves trying new restaurants in town. Her favorite type of food is Italian and Japanese.

Her favorite museum is the Field Museum, and her favorite exhibit was *Body Worlds*. "It was amazing and so interesting." Lauren also loves to travel to gain cultural experiences. At one point, she backpacked around Europe. "A favorite part of my month-long backpacking trip to Europe during college was visiting Cinque Terre, which are five small towns on the Italian Coast, and eating the best seafood ever there." She goes on to say, "During that and other trips, I also loved visiting cities with so much history and culture like Florence and Prague."

This summer she is going on a cruise to Alaska. "I am most excited to see and explore a part of the country that I've never seen. I've heard that it's so beautiful there." Aside from seeing new places, Lauren also likes to spend time with family. "I'm also look-



Lauren Berebitsky, Therapist

ing forward to spending a week with my whole family - nephews, niece, everyone."

Diana Ross is her favorite music artist, but she does like other music. "I like all different kinds - I like some hip hop/rap like Kanye West, some alternative like Keane, and popular stuff like Justin Timberlake."

Her favorite memory at the Orthogenic School is the time when Dr. Roth dressed up as Santa even though he is Jewish and the talent show is her favorite event at the Orthogenic School. Lauren's favorite part about the school is the courtyard. She has been a therapist at the Orthogenic School for almost three years and loves being

a therapist.

Kaitlin referred to her as "a great therapist, very helpful, caring, fun to talk to and knows how to do her job well."

"She is a great group therapist, she is extremely funny and good to talk to," said Natalie.

"She does a very good job at communicating with teachers and telling them what is going on," said Meagan. Courtney adds, "Lauren is a great person to work with."

Lauren is a great therapist, fun to talk to and very understanding. She is very good at her job and she adds a lot to the Orthogenic School community.

YDC Gets a Makeover!

By Michelle Pegram

If you are a loyal reader of the *Yellow Door Chronicles*, you will notice some changes in our layout this issue. In an attempt to modernize and streamline our newspaper, as well as match layout elements to other Orthogenic School publications, the YDC team enlisted the design services of Ryan K to give us a makeover.

There are several reasons for the new look. First of all, the original masthead was done by the very first YDC staff when we were working within the very limited program, *Printshop*. The Program did not allow for a great deal of design, and since there was such a large learning curve for producing the paper, we

were happy to keep the old masthead and focus on other issues that arose.

We are now using *Adobe InDesign*. First we had to learn the program, which was no easy task, while also concentrating on good content, and then we were able to start thinking about new layout and design ideas. We knew all along that we wanted a fresher, more interesting look to our paper. If the Tribune can make a change, so can the YDC.

We hope you enjoy the new look as well as continue to enjoy the content of our school paper. The YDC staff thanks Ryan for his hard work and seriously cool design.

Thanksgiving at The O'School

By Justin

On November 27, 2008, the students of the O'school went to the Mighty Fine Grill. What is unique about the Orthogenic School is that we have many traditions for the holidays. Every year, students who don't go home for Thanksgiving go to a very nice restaurant and to see the lights downtown. The staff tries

to let the students have fun. They also would see a movie. This year was the same. The students dressed nicely and went out eat.

This year the outing was to the Mighty Fine Grill, which is a buffet at the Water Tower Mall in the back of the food place. The Mighty fine Grill had your typical Thanksgiving fixings such as turkey, mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce; the works.

The staff and Michelle Z originally planned for the students to go Michigan Avenue, see the Christmas lights, and go see a movie at the movie theater. The staff was anticipating that the students would have an awesome time.

Sadly, not all of this happened according the students were here on Thanksgiving. There are three main reasons why the Thanksgiving outing didn't fully unfold. One was the lack of commutation between the staff and Michelle.Z, two was a time factor, and three was the lack of funding they had to go towards the outing.

Each student had different opinion about the food. Kyle liked the food. He said, "They had pretty decent Mac and cheese and Pineapple cured ham." He also liked the beef sirloin dipped in red wine sauce. A certain female student thought the food was average, while Nick.A gave the food 7 out of 10.

The people at the Mighty Fine Grill were very welcoming and pleasant to be around. The students were not too excited to go on the outing and you can't blame them. They would rather be at home during Thanksgiving. Kyle was not really that thrilled about going on the outing, but he still enjoyed the food. Nick.A said, "Yeah. I had fun." Some other students thought differently.



Turkey, most recognized symbol of Thanksgiving

Student Work Program: A New Management Team

By: Brooklyn

For several years, Yolanda has been in charge of the Student Work Program at the O'School, but this year the program is under new management. Yolanda has chosen a partner to assist her with her duties in managing the Student Work Program, and the O'School welcomed this person with open arms. In fact, the students here were well acquainted with Yolanda's assistant because she is none other than Michelle Z, who has been in charge of the Fine Arts department for years.

The Student Work Program has undergone many changes over this past year. One of the major changes is that one can only apply for a student job four times a year instead of applying anytime. This avoids the confusion and hectic nature of continuous applications. The process of applying for a job begins with an informational meeting and then progresses to the actual application itself. Once the application is turned in, Yolanda and Michelle Z. conference with each other, and work with the specific supervisors to set up interview times for the students who are ready.

After that, an interview takes place. During the interview, students are questioned about their qualifications and previous job experiences they may have had. The students also are instructed to dress the part when arriving for their interviews, and they are told that the most important part of the interview is just to relax and give honest answers to the questions.

Following interviews, students will receive a letter stating whether or not they have been hired. In the letter it explains in detail

what the job expectations are, and it tells when the training will be held. Then the student attends a job training session so that they can learn what the behavioral and academic expectations are for them to do their job correctly as well as learning what they are expected to do in their job.

The expectations of the student workers are vocational, behavioral, and academic. "You have to come to work on time and be working instead of shirking your duties while at work. Also the only reason why you should ever call in sick is if you're actually sick and contagious," said Kayla B., one of the student workers. In addition, you need to be managing yourself appropriately in the classroom, dormitory and at home.

Basically in the realm of academics, you can't have many missing assignments or be on the watch list when you are a student worker. The behavioral expectations are the same if you have ever been in Student Council, Junior Achievement, or Community Service. You can't be disrespectful to your staff or your peers, you can't show up to work late or shirk your duties while you're on the job, you can't be a danger to yourself or others, and you have to be attending your classes as well as making progress in the dormitory in order to obtain and keep your job as a student worker.

Unlike the minimum wage in the real world, the minimum wage at the O'School is \$3.50 per hour. The maximum hourly wage that a student worker can earn is \$5.00 per hour. A student worker earns a pay raise by first keeping their job for at least six months. After they do that, they are eligible for a pay raise of \$.10 at maximum. Every three months after their initial pay raise, they are eligible for yet another pay raise.

Time cards add expectations to the mix. According to the Student Work Program Handbook, there are nine expectations that apply to time cards alone. The first one is that all time cards have to be signed by the student's supervisor, and the second one is that it has to be completed with hours clearly written and totaled. Trainings are provided on how to manage the cards prior to the student's start date. If your time card is not turned in on time, you will lose one hour of pay and will have to wait until the next pay period to receive your pay.

Another important change in the Student Work Program is that students have the power to propose new jobs for the program. The way to go about this is to photocopy and fill out page 13 in the Student Work Program Handbook, turn it in to Michelle Z. or Yolanda. They will review the proposal with the O'School Staff and then let you know if it is a possibility. New positions will only be considered or added during the four application periods.

"I think that the new changes to the Student Work Program make the program more organized and more helpful. For example, I work in the kitchen, and once we had a job training specifically for kitchen workers that allowed us to ask questions and explained in detail what we're required to do," Kayla B. said. "In my own words, the Student Work Program is to help people start to experience what happens when they graduate."



Jesus And Manga: Do They Mix?

By Brooklyn

If you are really desperate to have God involved in your life, then you should start reading anime and manga immediately. My home church is in Normal, Illinois, and in our Lutheran congregation a lot of things are talked about. Everything from shoe shopping to movies to philosophical ideas about life and death are discussed behind the pulpit. When movies like *The Golden Compass* come out, the congregation goes to our pastor to see if it would be their best religious interest to go see the film and if it's against their religion then protest groups will be formed. It was in this church, surprisingly, that I learned about anime and manga.

Anime is the most popular form of art in Japan, and manga are the actual Japanese comic books that are sold at local bookstores everywhere. My pastors and youth minister had introduced anime to our youth group and then asked us what we thought about it. They made it pretty clear that they were supportive of it, and after further research on the subject I could see why.

For starters, the basic beliefs of Christianity can be told in a nutshell, otherwise known as John 3:16, which clearly states, "For God so

loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life." Basically Christians believe that if you believe in God and his son, Jesus Christ, you will go to heaven when you die. Christians also believe that God is omniscient, all-powerful, and all-knowing, meaning that he has power over life, death, and everything in between.

There is even a church, called The Christian Church of Anime Inc., that is dedicated to honoring the Christianity of anime. It's located in South Carolina, and it's a non-denominational, non-profit organization that uses anime to witness about the Christian faith to nonbelievers. The pastors there not only have to study the Christian doctrines, but they also have to be avid followers of the anime and manga scene. They know of pretty much every series out there, but they can also recite Bible verses that support their beliefs. According to their website, there are only thirty-eight members of the church so far, but they're always looking for new people to join.

Some of the religious messages that are expressed through anime and manga are almost identical to Biblical stories. For example, there is an anime series entitled *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, and it's about angels that enter Neo-Tokyo and carry out exactly what is described in Revelations as the end of the world. Another example of a Christian message in anime shines through in a series entitled *Manga Messiah*, which basically tells the story of Jesus Christ from birth to death to resurrection, and then to the end of the world.

Sometimes the Christian messages that are used in anime and manga derive from Biblical verses instead of stories. An example of this would be an anime series called *Fruits Basket*, which follows the character, Tohru Honda, an orphaned girl in high school who is invited to live with two of her classmates. Tohru's classmates had never met her before the day they invited her to live with them, and on the surface they would be considered

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Anime Character

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Skatopia: A Skater's Paradise

By Justin Fields

Skatopia is a place in Rutland, Ohio, that was built in 1995. Its two founders, Brewce Martin and his 10 year old son, Brandon, lived on a farm in West Virginia. Brandon managed to get them kicked off their West Virginia farm for building too many skate ramps, so they had to fulfill their dream somewhere else.

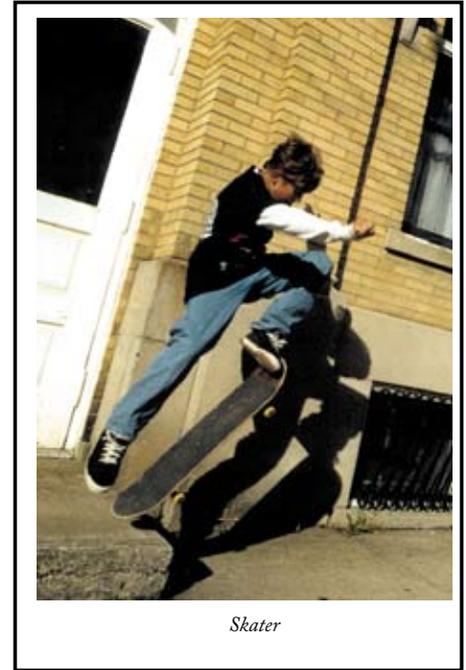
They moved to a farm in Ohio. They also got a friend, Jim Jones, to help them build a multi-million dollar skate park, with the help of the fifty Corporation Instigating Anarchy, C.I.A, Agents, which make up their government. This place has been featured in video games such as Tony Hawk Underground 2 and THUG2, and has been featured on TV shows such as Viva La Bam.

Skatopia is consists of sections where you can tear it up, or, in other words, skateboard. There is even a skateboard museum that contains 15,000 skateboard-related items including

skateboards from the 1920s and from the 1970s. There is a bowl that is called the 'King Dong' that drops in at 13 feet and consists of plywood that is on top of two intersecting metal bars. There is the main barn, where everyone hangs out, often talking and drinking.

Believe or not you can get a misdemeanor just for trying to get to Skatopia. The police are strict about who goes there because there is a lot of illegal activity and vandalism. As a result, you have to be 21 years old to enter, and there is a certain procedure that you have to follow in Skatopia. If you are a newcomer you have to do an hour of work on the farm. Martin even advises things you should bring to Skatopia. He strongly advises you should bring a tent, Dr Pepper, beer, water, a skateboard, music, and a donation to the Museum. They even suggest bringing girls.

There are some laws, but they are very vague. The CIA is kind of like the



Skater

police of Skatopia and they make sure that people don't do anything too stupid. In Skatopia they have outlawed guns; people can just use fireworks, BB guns, and shovels. The CIA also help to raise money for the park by having their own clothing company.

Jesus And Manga: Do They Mix?

By Brooklyn

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strangers. That is important because there is a part in the Bible where God is looking at two groups of people, blessing the ones who gave strangers a place to stay and condemning those who did not do that. In *Fruits Basket* the characters help Tohru find the right path for life and, in the end, find God. Another example of this is an anime series called *Angel Sanctuary*, which is mainly about angels. It shows how everyone on earth lives among the angels who were assigned to become guardian angels and how the angels disguise themselves on the earth.

Surprisingly there are several Christians who are against anime.

There are even websites created by Christian groups that are set up specifically to protest anime and manga. However, there are several churches around the country that are becoming more lenient towards accepting anime. In fact, one of these churches is even in Hyde Park, the University Church, the Unitarian Universalist church on 57th Street and Woodlawn. At this UU church, Reverend Nina Grey has been known to include anime in her sermons and in Sunday school lessons that the local children attend.

I would encourage you to look further into anime and manga if you want to have a deeper relationship with

God, because anime has a lot of Christian messages in it just waiting to be discovered as well as several Christian messages that already exist. I was never able to relate to God until I looked further into anime and manga, and I strongly believe that this connection can help others. Sometimes when I am struggling in life, I turn to my favorite anime and manga to find the answers. I feel like God speaks to me through the stories since it's one of the only languages I understand.