

# The Changing Chameleon Cat



*The November model of the infamous, decorated cat.  
Photo by India*

By Chris

Many of you know of the cat in the transitional hallway. Some of you newer to this school may know the more colorful side of this cat. Its true colors have all but faded

away, literally. The first model was much different and a long time past.

Three years ago at one of the Halloween dances, Jillian, the art teacher, made multiple paper black cats as decorations

to hang up at the Halloween party, one of which was hung up in the coverage hallway. For some reason or other, it was never taken down with the others. It hung there for many months the same and unaltered.

Many of you who have been here a while may know Michael Dewhirst. This cat was his hallway companion for the duration of his stay here as a staff, but the cat grew older and slowly faded.

When Tony became the new coverage staff, there was a new discussion. Why not change the cat with the months and holidays? The verdict was the same as the question. "Why not?"

Jillian then began making new cats with the suggestions and advice of Tony and other students."It's usually Tony's idea... and I kind of

*Continued on page 14*

# The YDC Changes Over Time

The *Yellow Door Chronicles* is the O'School newspaper. This non-profit newspaper was first published in summer 2005. The articles are mostly current events when written.

Michelle Z., the art teacher, remembers, "a few students approached me saying they were interested in having a school newspaper. I asked the teachers at a meeting and Michelle P. thought it would be a great idea." Thus, the YDC was born. A school newspaper "provides the students and our community with information about our program and life beyond our program. It is also a great opportunity to experience

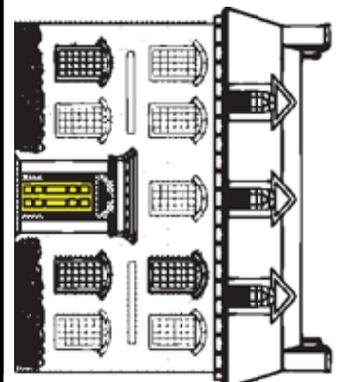
*Continued on page 15*



*Past issues of the YDC.  
Photo by YDC Staff, Tommy*

Volume 6  
Issue 1  
NOVEMBER 24, 2010

**Yellow Door Chronicles**  
The student newspaper of the  
Sonia Shankman Orthogenic School



# yellow

## letters

# Watch out for the Watch List

*Editorial by the YDC Staff*

You hear the theme from *Jaws*. You know the one. The music gets more insistent until you know that something is going to attack. It isn't a great white shark, though. In this case, the culprit strikes every week in the classrooms of the Orthogenic School. It is the Watch List.

The Watch List is an inventory of students who are in danger of failing, or already failing one or more of their classes. The list is compiled every Wednesday and students receive their list of missing assignments on Friday. The missing assignment sheet, along with their teacher, will notify the student that they are on the Watch List.

Being on the Watch List means that a student is at risk of not earning credits for a class. The threshold for the Watch List is below 70%. Some dorms take away privileges from students, such as using electronics or going off-grounds. Some students get on the Watch List by not doing their homework, missing classes, or turning assignments in late. If you are in a school group or hold a job through the student work program while on the Watch List, you are on probation for two weeks. After the probation, you are put on suspension for two more weeks. If you are still on the watch list after suspension, you will lose the opportunity to be part of the group or have your job for the rest of the semester.

The thought of being on the Watch List can be a scary thing to think about, especially when you have a job. When you take care of yourself, though, falling into this downward spiral of academic doom can be less likely. Here are some ideas for a successful school day. Everything starts off with a good night's sleep. This leads to waking up with an open mind. While sleeping is important, good hygiene has its place too. If you are clean and NOT smelly,

you, and others, will be able to concentrate better. You will feel better, too, which is important for learning. Another important way to take care of yourself, is to eat healthy meals and snacks. The salad bar is not a decoration. There are always people around to help you make healthier choices including exercise. If you exercise, you will have more energy to learn and focus on homework. **DON'T JUST SIT AND WASTE YOUR TIME!!!** If you follow these steps you will increase your chances for success and lower your chances of falling onto the Watch List.

Another way to stay off the Watch List is to attend and actively participate in all of your classes. In most classes, teachers give out participation points. You get participation points when you show up for your classes and do what you're supposed to do. Participation points are a significant part of your grade, and will help to keep you off the Watch List. In addition to participation points, attending and participating in class will help you understand your homework, so you can complete it correctly and on time. This will help you understand the material on which you are being tested.

After attending class all day, lugging your backpack up the steps and to your dorm can be a pain. With an assignment notebook filled in with a task for each class, it can seem an impossible feat to finish your homework for the next day. When you have a day like this, even if it is every day, managing your time is key. One of the first steps is to take a look over your assignments and prioritize. First, you should complete your current assignments. Then decide which class you have the most missing assignments in and which grade you need to improve most and schedule a time and place where you can do your work quietly. If you come across a dif-

ficult decision, such as dinner out with your dorm/friends or spending time doing missing assignments, request that they bring you back something, but homework is your priority. The more you focus and try to get work done, the more time you will have for fun activities. Also the harder and faster you work, the less time teachers and staff will spend asking you to do your work.

Utilizing the support of your teachers and counselors is a key point in avoiding having your name on the Watch List. How you ultimately decide to utilize this support is your decision, however, here are a few recommendations for how you could do this easily. When completing your homework, it's usually a good idea to approach your teachers or trusted staff members to help you make a schedule to get your homework done on time. If people know that you're actively making plans to get your homework done and that you're giving your best efforts to complete your assignments in school, then it's more likely that they'll be willing to help you follow through with your planned schedule than if they don't know you're struggling in the first place.

Another idea you could try is to attend the after school groups on Thursdays so you could get the extra help and support that you might need. There's usually less people in the after school groups, thus creating easier opportunities for you to have more specialized guidance from your teachers. You could also ask your teachers for help during your academic support periods or even during base class. When you approach your teachers directly during these times, it shows that you're 100% committed to getting your homework done.

Now that you have a few suggestions to get you started, why not try out these ideas to keep yourself from being "watched."

# Hunting for Treasures in the Art Room Storage Closet

By Kevin P.

As I was storing some equipment in the Art Room stock closet for Coach after a softball game, something caught my eye. Then another object caught my eye. I ventured deeper into the closet, and came upon a plethora of other interesting items. These items turned out to be an integral component of one of the Orthogenic School's founding philosophies.

The original director of the Orthogenic School, Bruno Bettelheim, used art to enrich the students' life at the school. He believed that the students would do better in their treatment if they were in a comfortable and home-like environment as opposed to other treatment facilities, which were often barren and plain.

The item that originally caught my eye was a large pink dollhouse that was sitting there, just collecting dust. The dollhouse is very detailed and delicate. The dollhouse and all the furniture inside were handmade. According to Michelle Zarilli, the dollhouse has been around since the direction of Bettelheim. The dollhouse was originally kept in the front living room, and could only be used under staff supervision because it was so delicate. Each year a student was given the "honor" of being able to repaint the exterior of the house.

As I searched further into the depths of the closet, I came upon a box of old vinyl records. I pulled out the box to investigate further, and found that the whole shelving unit next to it was filled from top to bottom with more records. As a music enthusiast, I could not believe my eyes. Why did the school have the records and why were they sitting in this backroom just collecting dust? It turns out that the records came from the unit. Up until the 1980's the Orthogenic School did not have a television set. Michelle explains that one of the common forms of group entertainment at the Orthogenic school was to go "listen to the records and spend time talking with one another."

Sorting through the records I had

some interesting finds. There were records from all over the world. The collection included symphonies, poems, stories, popular music from the time, and even a copy of the War and Peace soundtrack that proudly states "Newly Recorded in the USSR."

After looking through the boxes of records, I found a box of pewter emblems. One of which was easily the fiercest looking unicorn I have seen in all my days of reporting. It turns out these emblems would match the name of each dorm and were mounted at the head of each bed in the dorms. Unfortunately, the dorm names change too often for these emblems to remain practical.

All of these items make the Orthogenic School a more interesting and unique place to live. With a transition to a new building in the near future, it will be important to preserve these items because they represent a large part of the philosophy of the school.

yellow  
letters



*Some old surprises from the art storeroom.*

*By YDC Staff, India*

# yellow

## leisure

## Infectious Tees Continue to Spread

By Brooklyn

Another year for the Infectious Tees company has started up again at the O'School, and a whole new team of student recruits are happily employed and working hard to keep up with customer demands.

This year, the Infectious Tees company is being led by Michelle Zarrilli, Jillian Swinford, and Hague Williams, but there's a lot more emphasis on gaining new customers and student leadership this time around. Meeting during base class on Thursdays and Fridays and sometimes even after school, the new recruits are proving to be a hard-working crew thus far.

The student employees of the Infectious Tees are Lane, Kendall, Jordyn, Kevin D., and Kevin P. They each had to go through an application process, which involved filling out and turning in an application and then being interviewed for the employee positions.

According to Hague, they all "answered the questions very well." A lot of the questions that were asked during the interviews were about commitment levels and department preferences, he explained.

Each department is responsible for different tasks, according to Jillian. The marketing and sales department is responsible for contacting the client base, gaining new customers, and advertising the company in order to boost sales.



*Infectious Tees merchandise.*

*Photo by YDC Staff*

This is different than the design department, which is responsible for creating new and original product designs. The production department is responsible for producing the products, while the finance department is in charge of anything that has to do with collecting payments, paying bills, or with the stocks that the employees sell at the be-

ginning of the year.

As for the budget for the company, has an answer. "Infectious Tees generates its initial revenue from selling stock to individuals at the school and family members associated with the school." Investors and t-shirt wearers be ready.

# Drama Takes the Stage

By India

YELLOW  
leisure



*Drama group leaders, Josie and Phillip.  
Photo by YDC Staff, India*

As you walk back to your base class on Tuesdays and Thursdays, you may notice a very tall man who you don't know. Chances are it's Phillip, who runs the drama group on each of those days.

Phillip and Josie run Drama group. Phillip has a very impressive history in drama. He has been acting since he was nine, when he auditioned for a play at a community theater. Josie studied drama briefly while working on her undergrad at the University of Texas Dallas, UTD.

The goal of drama group is "to work together using drama, creative/dramatic writing to come up with an awesome end product to perform in front of an audience," said Phillip.

Drama group meets in the lab on Tuesdays and Thursdays during base

class (2:15-3:00). Each rehearsal begins with Phillip or Josie stating what the group will be doing that day. Then participants will work both on their feet and from their seats. The group plays improvisation games such as 'click,' and works on creative writing.

Drama group faces many challenges. One challenge is attendance. Also, "working together with your peers can sometimes be challenging. You get a bunch of personalities in the same room, and it would be foolish to think everything would be candyland all the time. There's bound to be conflicts, but being on a drama team means figuring out how to work together to keep that drama on the stage only," says Phillip.

Drama group is different every year. "Each year has been so different and spe-

cific and rewarding. Some years have been more writing-heavy, some have been more acting intensive. I try to tailor the group to the needs and likes of the class. There really hasn't been one class that's been like the other," said Phillip, about past years. Phillip has been with the school for seven years. Last year, drama group put on a production called Property Rites, by Alan Haenel.

This year in drama, students will be working on both writing and performing materials. The group is planning on having a performance in the future. In previous years, Drama group has performed at the Ida Noyes auditorium. This year, however, they are looking into new venues. Where they will perform is still a mystery.

# Breakfast With Student Leadership

By Kevin P.

Student Leadership, formerly known as Community Service, is a group that teaches students how to take leadership roles in the community and be role models for other students.

Community Service was created by a former teacher, Kerri Elliot, in 2006. It was one of the first extra-curricular activities available at the Orthogenic School. The group met every Wednesday afternoon, discussed topics that they felt were issues in Chicago, and completed a project every month for those issues. Kerri said that she had started the group “as a way to provide positive reinforcement for kids who were showing leadership skills and to help them give back to others the way others were giving back to them.” So, the group was created, giving students an organized and structured way to serve the community through volunteer work.

The leadership of the group has changed a lot over the years, yet it has managed to change even more this year. The responsibility of planning the events has shifted to the students instead of the staff in order to allow for the students to take control of the group. The students are divided into pairs and expected to plan and complete a volunteer project of their choosing each month.

The change in the group’s policy also brought forth one of the more apparent changes to the group – the name. According to Megan and Mirielle, the name of the group was changed from Community Service to Student Leadership Group because they wanted to assert that the “group does not only do community service.”

They also wanted the students to be able to develop their leadership capabilities. Megan says she hopes the skills they learn in the group will “help them in the future,” and “hopefully be put into use for volunteer service outside of the school.”

The group’s tasks also have a new emphasis on working internally at the Orthogenic School. The focus of the group has been narrowed from the community abroad down to the opportunities the Orthogenic School has to offer. Although many of the planned



*Megan and Mirielle, Student Leadership coordinators.*

*Photo by YDC Staff*

projects take place on-site at the Orthogenic School, the group still does extend out to the community. For example, they will continue volunteering at the Lincoln Park Zoo during the holiday season.

As for projects within the school, the group is already off to a successful start. The Student Leadership Group helped recycle unused books from the school in hopes that the books would either be reused or recycled properly. The group also plans to organize a party for the Conquerors this holiday season.

After reading this article, the prospect of joining Student Leadership Group might seem appealing to you. Unfortunately, the group’s sign-up period for this semester has finished. For those who are still interested, there will be another opportunity to apply next semester.

# Going to Gallery

By India

You may hear certain students saying that “they’re going to gallery,” and wonder what that means. Chances are they mean Gallery 37. Gallery 37 is an after school program that offers paid internships for people who are advanced in the fine arts or the performing arts. Gallery 37 was founded by Maggie Daley, Mayor Daley’s wife, along with other After School Matters programs.

Currently, the O’School has two students who take classes at Gallery 37. These students are Angie and Olivia, who are both in TLC. Olivia is in the “Hip hop culture” class. She goes to Gallery on Thursdays and Fridays from 4:30-7:30 and on Saturdays from 1:00-4:00. Olivia said she applied to Gallery 37 because “it would fulfill the job requirement for TLC and [she] had heard good things about it. Now [she] goes because [she] loves it.”

Gallery 37 is part of After School Matters, a not for profit organization that offers teens in the Chicago area out-of-school activities. After School Matters activities include science37, sports37, tech37, words37, and, of course, gallery37. Gallery 37 provides a space for adults, families, and children to participate in many arts programs, such as the Chicago Public Schools’ Advanced Arts Education program.

Many classes are offered, from dance to drama, and from drawing to sculpting. To get into gallery, you have to audition if you’re looking into performing arts, and you have to have an interview if you’re looking into the fine arts. With both the performing and the fine arts, you have to complete an application with your name, address, and recommendations from teachers, as well as other information.

Olivia said that the audition was “nerve-wracking.” She said that she made a friend at the audition, who had just gotten the job. Then she learned a few eight counts.

When asked about her class, Olivia said, “I love my class. Ev-



Gallery 37, Downtown Chicago

Photo by YDC Staff

eryone is chill and laid back. We goof around, talk, work-out, and learn the routines.” About her instructors, Olivia said, “My two instructors are great, they are also very talented dancers and they know how to have a good time at work.”

To apply, you first need to have a discussion with your teachers and counselors. There is a lot of responsibility that goes along with being a part of Gallery 37, and your treatment team needs to be a part of the decision. Once you have approval, you fill out the online application, then contact Gallery by calling 1-312-742-1461 to RSVP for an application session. You should bring the completed application, and samples of you’re best artwork, if you’re a Fine Arts candidate. If you’re a Performance Arts candidate, you should come ready to sing/dance/act, and should bring your application. Culinary candidates can bring optional samples of their work and their applications.



Disco Zombie!

Photo by Ellie

## Disco Zombies Haunt the O’School

By Brooklyn

Student Council sponsored an O’School Halloween dance on October 29. With a disco zombie theme, the event was cut short slightly by a fire alarm but was otherwise a fun addition to traditional Halloween celebrations at the O’School.

Thanks to Ben Stover, the disc jockey for the Halloween dance, students were able to enjoy a night filled with songs requested by the students beforehand, if they chose to attend the dance. For students who chose not to attend the dance, there was open art in the art room available as well.

The kitchen was able to contribute to the Halloween events as well. Chef John and the kitchen crew invented a menu of spooky

treats with nutritional value, and they put in a lot of hard work to make sure that everything was cooked to its potential. They also provided a selection of snacks for people to eat at the dance, as well as in the art room.

The dorms played a role in the Halloween events also. Each dorm was decorated with a different theme in mind, and they each were on display for the other dorms to enter and view. Some dorms even decided to decorate pumpkins and have them on display, in addition to having the students dressed up in costumes. Each dorm won a prize for their decorations, and everyone seemed to enjoy the happy haunts of the O’School Halloween events.

yellow  
live

## Dining Alongside Miss America 2003

By Olivia

During the month of September, the Orthogenic School dined with royalty. It was not Her Majesty the Queen, but, Erika Harold, Miss America 2003.

Ms. Harold spent her evening at our school dining and talking with the students. She was accompanied by the president of the Orthogenic School Board, Mr. Brooke Whitted. Erika kicked off her visit by chatting with the girls and counselors sitting at the Starz table.

The night of conversations and hand shakes however, did not end there. When she departed the dining room, Erika spent some time with each of the dorms individually. Her Miss America tiara accompanied her as she sat down and spoke with the dorms.

Students were able to take pictures with her and her glittering tiara, if they were interested. Erika showed a great amount of understanding and genuine interest while interacting with the O'School students.

As you probably guessed, her tiara was her prize after her victorious pageant round in the Miss America 2003 pageant. Erika's platform during the competition centered on people from the younger generation and their approaches to hard circumstances. Throughout the pageant and her year as Miss America, Erika worked with youth who had been through difficult situations such as violence, bullying, and abuse. After visiting young adults Erika stated, "...[She] was

encouraged to see the inspirational way in which people face their challenges and refuse to be defeated by their obstacles."

Currently Ms. Harold works as an attorney, specializing in litigation. Her devotion to young adults, their self esteem and safety, definitely carried through. "I find it very rewarding to try and make a positive impact in other people's lives and hopes that as my career progresses, I will have more opportunities to try to influence the lives of children in countries throughout the world," she said. Erika continues to speak to students, parents, and community leaders discussing the significance of preventing bullying within schools and communities.

You may ask how the idea of Erika visiting came up. Erika came in contact with Mr. Whitted through common interest. Mr. Whitted and his law firm communicate the importance of young adults and children not being subject to bullying and violence. Mr. Whitted asked Erika if she would be interested in meeting the students at the O'School. After Erika responded, yes the team of Mr. Whitted and Dr. Pete Meyers arranged for Erika's visit.

Pete and Mr. Whitted thought Erika's visit to the O'School would be a positive experience for all of the students. "I thought it went well—brought a tear to my eye once— and I was impressed that she stayed so late and talked to everyone," Mr. Whitted shared. Erika made a last-



*Paul poses with Miss America.*

*Photo by YDC Staff*

ing impression, and is definitely "an impressive lady." Dr. Pete Meyers thought "It was amazing to be a part of."

By the end of the night it was clear that Erika's visit was a success. "I was extremely impressed by everyone that I met at the Orthogenic School. The school's faculty and staff inspired me through their dedication to the students, and the students' courage, intellect and compassion touched my heart." Ms. Harold replied. Miss America 2003's visit to the Orthogenic School was a success and a great experience for both Erika and the O'School students.

# A Day in the Life of an O'School Student: Why We Do What We Do

By Chris

Many of you know your schedule here at the O'School, but why are things that way? Why are the schedules and rules the way they are? Furthermore, why do some rules suddenly or drastically change? According to a counselor on the upper floor, "The number one reason for almost all the things we do or changes we make is safety." This is the reason that counselors and teachers usually go first in lines and hang around for meals and other activities.

The second big thing is structure. The general consensus is that having structure here gives us a sense of safety and security. This is why there are certain times for different things and eight periods in school. There's that consistency from day to day, so people can feel better and have a bigger sense of security. Many students have a hard time with structuring their day, so there is a set time and place for things like movie night or exercise night. This is supposed to reduce conflict.

This is why we have staff here at night to watch us, and why we get up and have breakfast at precisely 8:30 AM for example. This place is supposed to be a safe haven for everyone, and

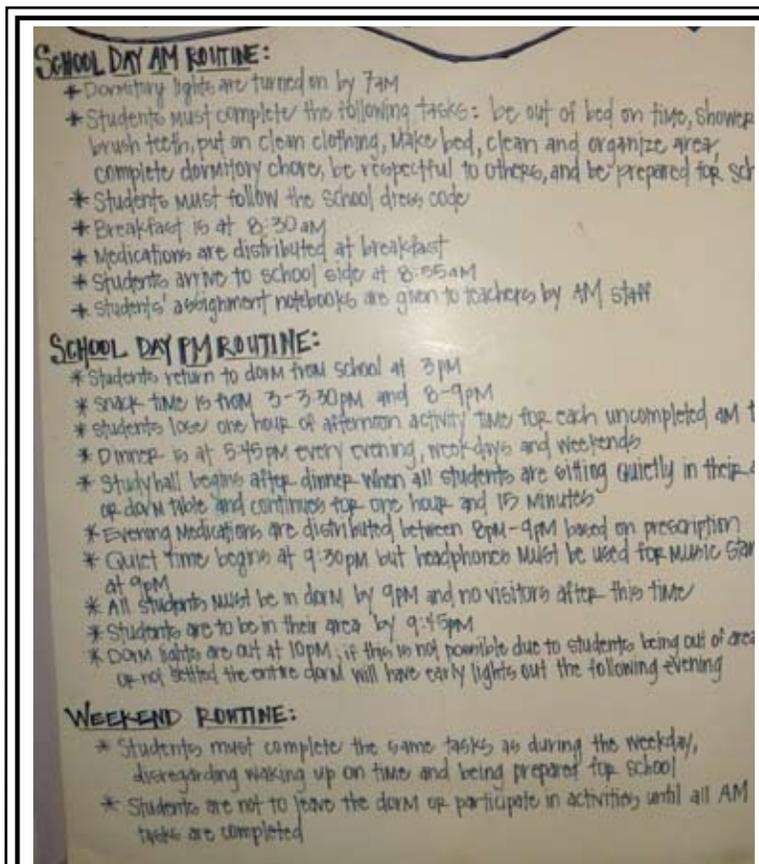
with due structure, this ideal becomes tangible.

Community meetings are also in place to establish order and help kids to know what is going on. They allow people to voice their opinions and hear those of others as well. Through these meetings we can go about changing things in a beneficial way without fear of anyone pushing out our opinion.

Overall, staff always want to look out for us so that we are safe and happy, so the main goals will always be safety and structure. The school teachers also have the student's best interest put first. As a general rule, people do what they do here because they care; and at the O'School there will always be someone who cares about you.

So next time you wonder, "Why are things this way?" Remember, it is for you as the students and residents.

YELLOW  
ive



Daily dorm routines  
Photo by YDC Staff

# The Hunt for Historical Dorm Names

By Kevin D.

O'School Dorm names are a tradition that students know and love. The dorm names spice things up. You don't just say, "I am going to the 1<sup>st</sup> boy's floor dorm." The name is almost a sense of who you are. Yet, while many people in the O'School can tell you the current names of the dorms, not many can tell you how many times they've changed names. This is a tricky topic for even the most senior of students or staff.

First of all, the dorm name that you know now has been most likely chosen by you and your dorm mates. Take the Phoenix, for example; the girls in that dorm were in the Minstrels at the time and didn't like the name; one girl found it derogatory. The change was necessary because the staff decided that it needed to be changed. The majority of the students liked the name change, which was requested by a former student.

The gryphon's dorm name was changed because no one knew what an adventurer looked like. Tommy went out on a limb to say he hated the change and wished it was still the Adventurers. Also, he said the change was unnecessary.

Kelly, Penguins counselor said that the name gives a sense of unity and allows an identity in the dorm. She also said that the dorm names are not easily changed. A lot of discussion goes into the changing of dorm names.

No one really stops to think about how many times the dorm names have been changed, but rest assured that they have been changed more times than you can imagine. Some of these names



*Dorm sign for the Broncos.*

*By YDC Staff*

we may find funny at this point in time. Some our names now may be found funny by past students. Either way, dorm names are a fun way to express dorm's individuality and give a sense of community.

## Cable Causes Complaints

By Tommy

Imagine planning on watching a Bears' game in the Unit. You flip through the channels until you find the football game. The channel displays a message saying that the program will be available soon, but it never appears, even after changing channels for hours. This is a serious concern for the students at the O'School.

Whenever my dorm visits the unit to watch TV, several local channels display the message "This channel should be available shortly." Channels such as CBS, Fox, NBC, and ABC haven't appeared since April 2010.

The boys' floor doesn't have cable anymore because some students were abusing property in the quiet room. They went through three TV sets in 2009, and their screens were constantly broken. The boys are then forced to watch non-cable channels in the library, where almost everyone complains about the small screen.

Gloria R., who works in the front office, claims that she

"was not aware there was a problem." Gloria E., a TLC counselor, notified Gloria R. a few months ago about TLC access. A wire outside had somehow been disconnected. Comcast arrived, saying that a squirrel or another animal could have pulled the wire. The wire was reconnected, and access was restored. However, this was a separate problem.

The O'School has had cable since 2008, as reported in an older issue of the Yellow Door Chronicles. Before then, people had to fiddle with satellites to watch major networks. According to Ellie, we have cable "to provide kids with some entertainment. Also, to ensure that when something big happens (news, culture, sports) the students are able to watch it."

Another ongoing concern about cable is the parental controls. This filters out any program or movie based on its rating. Most O'School students are old enough to watch PG-13 movies, which are blocked on all TV sets except TLC. The PG rating is blocked on the library TV and the girls' floor. Coverage, or anyone with the unlocking code, is paged to unblock the requested program. Changing the channel is a nuisance to some viewers because they don't even want to watch that program.

If anyone notices channels not appearing in the Unit, you should have your counselors ask the front office to inform Comcast about the faulty channels.



*Television in the unit.*

*By YDC Staff*

# Celebrating El Día De Los Muertos

By Kevin P.



*Day of the Dead display*  
By YDC Staff, Kevin P.

Due to the large Mexican-American population in Chicago, El Dia de los Muertos is now a well-known holiday in the area.

Here at the Orthogenic School the Spanish classes hosted a Day of the Dead party. At the party the students' displayed their ofrendas, which are memorials to people who have passed away. There were also stations where students could make their own sugar skulls or cut their own papel picado, which are traditional activities for the holiday.

El Dia de los Muertos, or The Day of the Dead in English, is a celebration that spans the first and second of November honoring the dead.

It is a Mexican tradition that has roots in Ancient American religious rituals and Catholicism which was introduced by the Spaniards.

Learn  
Yellow

# Parents are Exposed to Student's Way of O' School Life

By Kevin D.

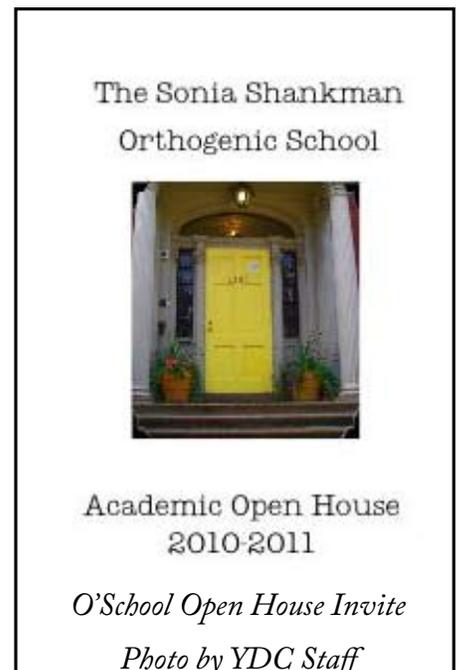
There is an event that happens once a year that everyone looks forward to: the O'School Open House. Open House is when parents and teachers get together to learn about student's schedules. Parents were interviewed by the "roving reporter" AKA Kevin D. These are some of his adventures and observations at this exciting O' School extravaganza.

The first part of the night is when teachers dress up to look presentable. They are going around their classrooms and getting things ready for the big night. They tidy up their rooms. While all this is happening Coach's Crew sets up. That includes setting up chairs, moving sporting equipment and of course carrying the refreshments from the kitchen to the school side. The refreshments consisted of coffee, fruits, veggies and of course everyone's favorite, delicious water. Teachers then gather in the halls and wait for the parents to arrive.

When the parents arrive they are greeted by smiling teachers and other staff. Then all of the parents and teachers pile into half of the gymnasium. Here all of the teachers and staff are introduced by a pun-full Diana. After her welcome, the parents are then dismissed by, get this, BASE CLASS!

When the parents are situated, the teacher gives them the rundown of their child's day. They then go over the student's schedule. After base class the parents are on the track! They break off and begin the "school day." That's right I said school day. Your parents follow your very own schedule! Right down to your eighth period float.

This is an important night for parents because they get to see and understand what their child's day is like. There have been a few changes to the school that parents hadn't seen yet. The Mariner's classroom has been split into the Pythagoreans and the Xenophiles. The aptly named Pythagoreans



Continued on page 13

# staff profile

## Lorrie

By *Olivia*

With double the coaching, the Orthogenic School Physical Education, (P.E.), Program is unstoppable! The P.E. program has added to the coaching staff by recruiting Lorrie as Coach Frank's new teaching assistant, (T.A.).

It's possible that you walked into P.E. at the start of this year and saw a recognizable face in a different class. Lorrie, formerly a World History teacher in the Archaeologists classroom, has moved on. She is now Coach Frank's right hand helper. Along with her new position, Lorrie has encountered a few changes. Since moving from working in the Archaeologists high school classroom, she has been able to see more students throughout the day. As the P.E. teaching assistant Lorrie doesn't only work with high school students now. She shared that, "It's nice to see all the kids; nice to get to see everyone every day."

Lorrie still works at the O'School, but that does not mean she is not missed as a history teacher. A handful of students are pleased that Lorrie is Coach Frank's new T.A., but do miss her in the Archaeologists classroom. Thomas, a student from Lorrie's old base class, the Archaeologists, said that it is not helpful to have a second P.E. coach only, "cause I want Lorrie back." Schuyler in the Conquerors said "it makes P.E. easier if there is trouble—there's more help," while Eddie stated, "Lorrie is simply awesome and gives extra support to those who need it."

As far as adding a second P.E. staff to the Physical Education Program, Lorrie and Coach Frank are in agreement that the ability to have a consistent two-person team in the department is a plus. In the past, each P.E. class would have a different teaching assistant assigned to each class period. Now, with a constant counterpart to work with, Coach Frank has someone who is up to date on what each class is doing and when without having to explain it to a different T.A. each class period. Coach

Frank believes that the addition of Lorrie to the P.E. Program has helped keep things organized, especially with scheduling and knowing

who may not be present due to therapy or a similar appointment.

Lorrie's background as a participant in athletics, and her love for working with students made her a natural choice for the position. Lorrie grew up as a talented athlete. One of her many achievements is that she was the state soccer goalkeeper for the state of New York. "(She) had an eccentric upbringing, and (she's) very talented," says Frank. Along with her background of participating in sports, Lorrie also has a way of sharing the joy of fitness, health, and sport with students. She is one of the few people who can not only play sports, but teach them to others so that they can enjoy and understand sporting events and athletics too.

Coach Frank and Lorrie are both looking forward to this school year's P.E. curriculum, with a couple of different highlights. A part of the school year that Lorrie is especially looking forward to is the interscholastic games with JCFS, a school we have played before in softball, soccer, and basketball.

Working as a team Coach Frank and Lorrie have a blast. Working with Coach is, "fun. He's hilarious and talented, I'm lucky to work with someone with so much experience teaching and coaching and (he's) a good friend." As the Orthogenic School grows, Lorrie will continue to be a vital aid to Coach Frank as they develop the O'School Physical Education Program further.



Lorrie, PE assistant  
Photo by, YDC Staff

# Romeo And Juliet

By Olivia

On Tuesday, October 26, 2010 the O'School English classes attended Romeo and Juliet at the Chicago Shakespeare Theater on Navy Pier.

The students piled onto a yellow school bus ready to embark on the treacherous journey down lakeshore drive to Navy Pier.

As the bus approached the theater Michelle P. and Geoff were explaining to the students that they represented the school and needed to be respectful, the usual field trip lecture.

After waiting in the hallway outside the theater amongst other schools, a lady brought the students to the theater lobby to explain how the theater works, that the actors do not use microphones so they had to be extra quiet.

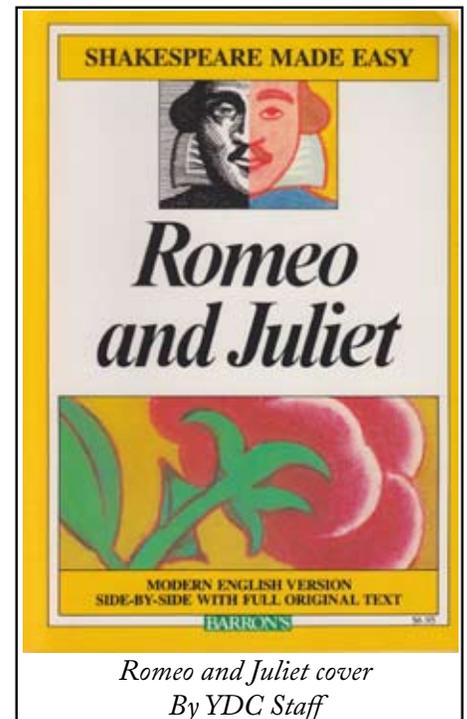
Upon entering the theater, the stage had

barricades with flashing lights and the students were introduced to the story and what would occur during the production by Steve Haggard, who played the role of Benvolio.

To say the least, the cast did an amazing job bringing the classic story to the stage. Matt commented, "The play was epically epic. Full of epic epicness." The Capulets, Juliet's family, were dressed with red tones whilst the Montagues, Romeo's family, had blue hues. However great the actors played the story out on stage, one character seemed to capture everyone's interest.

Ariel Shafir, who played the comedic character of Mercutio, seemed to be a favorite. Kyle shared, "Mercutio was awesome, [the] whole play was pretty awesome."

Overall, the field trip and the play were a success.



*Romeo and Juliet cover  
By YDC Staff*

## To Kill A Mockingbird

By Tommy

On Tuesday, October 19, several English students attended the play To Kill a Mockingbird at the Steppenwolf Theater downtown. The students were from the Survey of English, English 1, and English 3 classes. These classes had read the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, which takes place in 1930s Alabama.

The Steppenwolf lobby reminded me of a movie theater, but without the concession stands. There was a gift shop that sold play-related merchandise. The stage was upstairs, and the staircase showed posters of past plays.

## Parents are Exposed to Student's Way of O' School Life

By Kevin D.

reans classroom is the math classroom with Tom and Meagan, while the Xenophile classroom is home to the foreign language teachers Dana and Mirielle.

Then you have the Argonauts and Professors. They have some of the same teachers and the same programming, but now they have switched classrooms. The Professors have a whole new teaching staff. Linda and Mallory have moved on. To replace them are Maria and Marshall.

All the teachers seemed to be excited about the night. Some teachers such as Marshall and Maria chose to test the parents on the children's academic work. The funniest thing was that most parents knew less than the students. Other teachers, such as Hague, related to the parent's cultures

with famous artists from different countries.

Coach Frank and Coach Lorrie talked about the year's courses in their PE classes. Coach Frank also told parents how having fun can help with students participating in PE. Did you notice I said "Coach" Lorrie? Well, yes I did. The former social studies teacher is now the permanent PE assistant, and she's lovin' it. The Dynamic Duo also talked about safety and how to use the proper equipment. The two coaches enjoy teaching the fundamentals so everyone can play. This makes it more fun for everyone.

The atmosphere seemed to be very welcoming. Most of the parents looked comfortable. Plus the teachers appeared to be in their element. Katie's father said it was

both "welcoming and inviting," Phillip, the TA in the Conquerors, found it "easy to talk to the parents," and Michaels parents said "it was both easy going and informative"

It seemed that everyone who was there that day thought it was important to be there. Phillip said "I think it is important for parents to come and support their kids and their school." It turned out to be a successful Open House as many of the teachers and parents would agree.

This was a night to remember. Both teachers and parents were pleased in the end. Kevin D's father said "I got a sense of classes more than if I read about them." The whole night seemed to have a positive vibe and was very successful.

## Preparing for Your Treatment Team Meetings

*By Brooklyn*

Sweaty palms. Heartbeat racing against the clock. A whole room full of eyes that watch your every move. Anxiety levels escalating through the roof as your treatment team makes decisions to ensure your success as a student. Sounds like either an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or a Quarterly meeting.

The good news about these types of meetings is that they don't have to be this way. There's a way to decrease your anxiety, help your transition through the O'School run smoothly, and ensure that you aren't bored at your IEP and Quarterly meetings: prepare for them in advance. This task might seem impossible at first, but, if you break it down into a step-by-step process, it's really not that bad.

The first step is to be aware of your treatment goals. At both the Quarterly and IEP meetings, there's a set of goals that you're expected to be evaluated on, but the two sets of goals are different.

The IEP is managed by your academic team. "Students should be aware of their IEP goals and have some idea of whether or not they are making gains," says Michelle Pegram, the head of the English department at the O'School. "They should also be prepared to talk about their transition plans-this helps the team identify services that might be needed and courses

that should be included in your schedule. In addition, students should be prepared to talk about their progress, as they see it, and raise any concerns or points of pride at this time." Talk to your base class teacher if you are not sure what goals you are supposed to be working on right now.

Your treatment plan goals are managed by your residential team. Knowing your treatment goals is a fairly easy process. For Quarterly meeting goals, all you have to do is find out from your counselors what your daily goals are because they're the same as your Quarterly goals. Your IEP goals will also be addressed at the quarterly meetings to keep them updated.

Another step you should be prepared to take is to know the expectations of your school district. Often the same people attend all of your IEP meetings, and, therefore, they get to know you better as a person rather than just another statistic. This means that they can start to work with you on a more personal level to achieve your transitional goals. Your home school district is also responsible for scheduling your IEP and Quarterly meetings. The case managers for specialized placement work with Tina Rice, the academic liaison between O'School students and their home school districts, and Jerry Martin, the O'School principal, to finalize the actual dates of the

meetings.

Finally, you should also be aware why you're expected to have these meetings in the first place. "When a student is identified as needing special education services for any reason, then a multidisciplinary team that includes teachers, social workers/psychologists, a nurse, administrators, parents, and the student (if possible) have to meet to make a few key decisions. These decisions include what the least restrictive environment in which the student's needs can be met would be, what goals need to be the focus of their IEP, what additional services they need such as individual therapy, speech therapy, and occupational therapy, and what testing, if any, needs to be included," says Michelle Pegram. Each year, your IEP needs to be reviewed to make sure that you are progressing, and that the IEP still reflects your needs.

Quarterly meetings meet the same objective for your treatment plan. It is important that you, and all of the people you work with are aware of your goals and consistently looking at your progress towards them. This ensures that students are not coasting through or that the school is providing the services that they need to be providing.

So, you see, you are just one more member of a team focused on you.

## The Changing Chameleon Cat

*By Chris*



*The coverage cat is ready for school. Are you?  
Photo by YDC Staff, India*

take it from there. Some of the holiday cats will come back, but some of the fun of it is the novelty of new ones."

February was a pink cat with white and red hearts. March was green with a leprechaun's hat. In April, the cat had um-

rellas and rain showers, While in May there was a new style and new sprung flowers. July, the cat became Uncle Sam with sparklers and a beard, while August was the first ever time the cat was collaborated on by the students as a vacation collage.

Now... What you may know by the time you're reading this paper is that the October model, based on information from Tony, will be the first time the black cat has actually had its own Halloween costume. It will be parading as a three-toed sloth in memory of Dewhirst and his favorite animal. Jillian quoted. "December might have some winter holidays mixed in... perhaps a winter cat."

Something interesting that many people agree on is that everyone strangely has a kind of respect for the cat. In fact,

even through hallway leveling crises, and destructive paths, the black cat has never been harmed by any of the students. Even if the surroundings are damaged, the cat still remains unharmed. This strange spell of luck is probably just one of the quirks of this mysterious mascot.

A good thing is that there are plans to move the cat to the new campus. Most of us will be gone by then, but it will hopefully bring smiles to the next generation of O'School students and staff. Word is going around there might even be a parade of all the cats in the future. The cat might change into another animal for future months, so everyone should stay "bright eyed and bushy tailed" for updates.

This cat's got plenty of lives left.

# The Votes Are In!

By Brooklyn



*New Student Council binder.*

*Photo by YDC Staff, Tommy*

Student Council has been an important part of the O'School for years now, and, during this year's October 8th election of four new Student Council officers, that tradition is being kept alive. Under the management of Ellie, Lorrie, and Michelle Zarrilli, Student Council is continuing to progress this year as a student-led group. The four new officers promised a lot of changes for the upcoming O'School year, and their first task at hand is to organize the Halloween dance.

The new secretary, Jessica W., advertised herself in her campaign speech as someone with a lot of unique experience that would ultimately benefit her in office. She's previously been employed as a tour guide

at the Frank Wright Lloyd Home and Studio, and used high-quality marketing techniques to spread the word about her campaign platform, thanks to her colorful posters, powerful speech, and her clever usage of clothing as a way to advertise her campaign. She shared a lot of ideas on how to improve life at the O'School this year. Among them was the idea of incorporating an anonymous suggestion box for Student Council to use when discussing important issues.

In the office of treasurer, Valaria was elected after a week of humorous posters and a laughter-filled speech. Using humor to grab people's attention at the beginning of her speech, then delving into her suggestions for issues that Student Council should tackle proved to be an effective method of campaigning. Another quality that really helped Valaria win her place as treasurer was her enthusiasm in advertising her slogans through animated posters. As noted in her speech, Valaria explained that, to her, being treasurer of Student Council means "being a provider, being an agent, and just being herself." She, like Jessica W. had a lot of wonderful ideas about how to improve the quality of life at the O'School.

The new vice president, Olivia, was enthu-

siastic about informing the student body in her speech that "the needs of the students will become her agenda." Olivia said that she "wants to help the student body work together as one" and emphasized the point that she doesn't want to just do all the work. She encouraged students to give their input as to how the O'School can become a better place.

As for the new president, Kevin P., he's heavily involved in many extracurricular activities. Not only is he the president of Student Council, but he's also a proud member of Infectious Tees, as well as Student Leadership. He promised to the student body in his speech that he would be a great candidate because of his former involvement with Student Council and because of his "good work ethic."

The classroom representatives were elected on October 12th, and the following Monday was the first Student Council meeting of the year. The main item on the agenda was the Halloween dance, which seems to be a popular event among the student body. The students seem to be looking forward to the event, and the Student Council crew seems to be a very promising one.

# The YDC Changes Over Time

By Tommy

working as a group to put together a publication," said Michelle Z., who has supervised every issue with Michelle P.

Topics vary during every issue, but the topics usually involve the O'School itself. Older issues had more coverage on national and world events. Current issues contain more O'School news. Past issues are available at <http://oschool.org>. Parents can even subscribe for \$15 per year.

Over the years, many writers have worked for the *Yellow Door Chronicles*. The reporters have had a wide variety of interests. Some students were convinced that they couldn't write; yet they became excellent reporters. The students also work as content, involvement, photo, or copy editors. Photo editors take pictures using cameras, Copy editors look for spelling or grammar errors, and Content editors suggest content for articles.

Involvement editors decide on a Hot Topic for each issue. These open-ended questions involve at least one article per issue. The YDC uses Hot Topics to learn opinions from the student body. Polls may appear in select issues. These questions collect a general

idea of what most students believe.

Students have their own thoughts on the YDC. Angie, an Archaeologist, suggested more staff profiles. Thomas, another Archaeologist, doesn't think we need a school newspaper because "nothing important happens with it." George, a Professor, thought that the YDC is "informative and well-written."

There have been some major changes. Earlier issues had a different logo for the newspaper, and they were designed with Photoshop. A former student redesigned the logo and the layout of the paper in 2009 with Adobe InDesign. He currently studies graphic design in college. Of course, long-time readers may notice the gradual changes in between issues.

The *Yellow Door Chronicles* will likely follow the O'School after the "big move" in 2014, but the goal remains to inform the audience about life at the O'School. Many students will work on this paper in the future, and the readers will learn more about the O'School community.

# hot topic

## Did You Enjoy Miss America 2003's Visit? Who Would You Like to See in the Future?

"Miley Cyrus, Justin Bieber, and SpongeBob."  
-Matt N.

"Yes, Bret Michaels or Adam West." -Michael C.

"Yes, Bill Gates." -Brian

"Yes, a celebrity like Brian Urlacher." -Jordyn

"Yes, I'd love to see Chuck Palahniuk read to the high school students, and I think it would be cool to meet Tim Burton or Johnny Depp."  
-Brooklyn\

"Not really, but I would like to see The President sometime." -Lane

"Yes." -Sky

"Sure, President Obama. I'll settle for Bush Jr. though." - Kevin P.

"No, but I would like to meet Dustin Pedroia."  
-Kevin D.

"Yes, she was really nice and intelligent. Someone inspirational would be nice in the future. Maybe a Liverpool FC player." -Olivia

"Yes, Justin Bieber."  
-Meggie

"Yes, I think we should meet some U of C Professors." -Alexa

"Maybe Bret Michaels, or my favorite football players - Cade McNown." -Tommy

---

## yellow door chronicles

c/o Sonia Shankman  
Orthogenic School  
1365 East 60th Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60637

## yellow door chronicles

### SENIOR ADVISORS

Michelle Pegram  
Michelle Zarilli

### ASSISTANT ADVISORS

Geoff Keegstra  
Jillian Swinford

### STAFF WRITERS

India, Tommy, Chris,  
Kevin P., Kevin D.,  
Brooklyn, Olivia

**INVOLVEMENT EDITOR**  
Student

**PHOTO EDITORS**  
India and Tommy

**COPY EDITOR**  
Student

**CONTENT EDITOR**  
Student

**CORE LAYOUT DESIGN**  
Ryan

---