

# JAGUAR TRACKS



D'EVELYN JUNIOR SENIOR HIGH

10359 WEST NASSAU AVENUE • DENVER, COLORADO 80235

## NOVEMBER 2010

PRINCIPALLY SPEAKING . . . 1  
 STEERING COMMITTEE . . . 2  
 ACCOUNTABILITY  
 COMMITTEE . . . . . 3  
 DEF . . . . . 4  
 DEF SUBCOMMITTEES . . . 5  
 Performing Arts  
 Jr. High Boosters  
 Volunteers  
 Jags Athletics . . . . . 6  
 FROM THE HALLS . . . . . 6  
 Library  
 Mathematics  
 DID YOU KNOW . . . . . 7  
 SCHOOL NOTICES . . . . . 7  
 UPCOMING EVENTS . . . . 8



*D'Evelyn: An engaging place where students achieve and thrive in a challenging liberal arts program.*

## PRINCIPALLY SPEAKING

# Thriving!

By TERRY ELLIOTT, principal

As I submit this month's column, we find numerous examples of students and staff THRIVING here at D'Evelyn. Let's take a minute to celebrate this month:

Our boys' golf team traveled to Colorado Springs for their state tournament and returned with the 2nd place 4A state title. The team was led by the 4A individual state champion, John Ahern (12), Sam Phillips (12), TJ Grave (12) and Andrew Pilkington (11).

In the arena of academics, we are proud to have six commended National Merit students in our senior class. The National Merit scholarship program assesses over 1.5 million students through the PSAT exam which is administered during a student's junior year in high school. Commended award winners are the top 2 percent of students nationally. Congratulations to Ian Atherton, Eric Garza, Luke Graber, Alicia Matz, Rachel Telles, and Christine Zhou. Additionally, the program recognizes the top 1 percent of students by designating these students as National Merit semifinalists. D'Evelyn, with only 158 seniors, is proud to have not one, but two, semifinalists. Great work and congratulations to Nathan Bremmer and Heli Wang!

Not to be outdone by athletics and academics, our activities program is THRIVING as well. Our marching band secured a bid to the state marching band competition and followed up their regional qualifying performance by earning their highest score in school history as well as earning the high percussion honors at the Legend Invitational.

Add to the above:

- Our Lady Jags softball team won their regional tournament and was seeded second for the state tournament.
- The boys' soccer team completed their regular season with two impressive victories compiling an 8-1 record. Expectations are running high for their journey into the state tournament.
- The girls' volleyball team has been spiking to victory all season long! They will be representing D'Evelyn during the regional (and hopefully state) tournament.
- The girls' and boys' cross country teams placed third in the league meet and they continue to train up "The Hill" as they prepare for the district and state meets. A special congratulation to Josie Warren (10) for her second-place finish.
- Although love means nothing to a tennis player, it means hours of enjoyment to the spectators as we have loved watching the boys' tennis team rack up victories all season long. Our Jags sent five players to state. Well-played, Sam Haley (12), Matt Jordan (9), Sten Larson (11), Jack Oblack (11), and Matt Wilson (12)!
- Our football team has battled throughout the fall and has been victorious on all levels in their gridiron wars. The balance of the season and future are very promising for D'Evelyn football.
- Helping all our teams, the D'Evelyn cheers and poms have demonstrated and led great sportsmanship as well as acrobatic and dancing skills in their routines engaging the crowds.
- Not to be outdone by their older school mates, our Junior Jags cross country team has been running wild around the neighborhood. The team has hosted and participated in several competitions with great success. Great job, Jr. Jags!

*(continued on page 6)*

STEERING COMMITTEE – MAINTAINING D'EVELYN'S CORE PHILOSOPHY

## Recommended Reading

By CINDY GEE, Steering Committee parent member

As the days get cooler, and eventually rain and then snow keep us indoors more often, many of us start assembling our fall reading selections. Many will seek out Oprah's book list or *The New York Times* bestseller list for ideas of great books to read. However, a very carefully thought-out and time-tested alternative reading list can be found on the D'Evelyn website under "[English Reading Book List](#)." This is the required reading for our students, identified by grade level. Along with many D'Evelyn parents, when my oldest started at D'Evelyn, I decided to read (or more often, re-read) at least one title from the required reading list each year as my children studied the selected books for their grade level.

### FORGOTTEN TREASURES

This turned out to be an incredibly rewarding experience in many ways, and I know other parents who have felt similarly enthused about their experience. I re-discovered forgotten treasures such as *Siddhartha*, *Jane Eyre* and *The Old Man and the Sea*. I read books including *The Good Earth* that I had somehow missed along the way. And yes, just like my children, I even struggled through a couple books that simply failed to catch my interest (I'll skip specific examples here). These books are enduring "great reads" and you already own them. But the greatest joy and the most compelling reasons to pursue this reading list are the sharing and the conversations. Reading the books that your student is reading provides spontaneous opportunities for debate, discussion, shared insights and shared joys. While reading *The Great Gatsby* we, as a family, watched the various movie versions and held a healthy debate about which movie version was



the best portrayal of the book (sorry, Robert Redford). These books are a wonderful opportunity to continue to share and experience your children's education. If you have not picked up one of these books in recent years, you should check out the D'Evelyn reading list and choose a title. You are in for a treat in many ways.

### READ ON

While you are on the D'Evelyn website, there is some other great reading to be found there. The tab titled "Our Program" includes the school's philosophy and the school's founding documents. These are valuable documents in providing perspective about the D'Evelyn education experience. Also on the website is the reading list required of D'Evelyn's Steering Committee members. There you will find the books that the school's Founders studied and referenced in formulating the school's philosophy and establishing the school; sources for the curriculum, graduation requirements and school policies. These books are educational philosophy books, including well-known titles such as *Begin Here: The Forgotten Conditions of Teaching and Learning* by Jacques Barzun. When pondering the success of D'Evelyn students and "The D'Evelyn Difference," these books can provide insights that you will not find elsewhere. And they are all available in the D'Evelyn library. So, grab a cup of tea and enjoy a good book this fall!

## TRY YOUR HAND AT STEERING

If you have time to contribute to our community in a significant way and would like to run for Steering Committee, information packets are available at the front office or from any current steering committee member. A S/C candidate workshop will be held on **Nov. 2** at 6 p.m., before the Accountability Committee meeting. This workshop is for you to express your interest in being a candidate and learn more about the opportunity.

## ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE – FOCUSING ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

# Giving Thanks

By PRISCILLA FLANDERS, Accountability Committee first vice-chair

*“Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.” -- William Arthur Ward*

Gratitude just seems to go hand in hand with autumn. Harvests, abundance and, especially, the season of Thanksgiving all serve to focus our hearts, helping us appreciate how fortunate we are to be Americans, Coloradans and more specifically, D’Evelyn Jags.

The first few minutes of the October Accountability Committee meeting were devoted to expressing our thanks. Comments clearly showed we all share a mutual appreciation for our school, as defined by the facility itself and, more important, the leadership provided by the administration and staff. We likewise appreciate the happy and hardworking kids, the peer group that our students spend their days with, and the parents who represent our community and who share the same high expectations (character and academic) for their students. One member recalled her daughter commenting that “no one makes fun of you when you get an ‘A’; in fact, kids are surprised if you don’t do your homework, and offer to help.” Another member who volunteers in the counseling office relayed that “College admissions reps who come to present always speak so highly of our school; they love our kids.” Principal Elliott summed up pages and pages of our program document sharing simply that he was grateful that “we get to work on things we are supposed to work on as a school” and added “we have great parental support.”

## UNITED WE STAND

October’s main agenda item was an explanation of the School Unified Improvement Plan (SUIP). The SUIP was developed to replace all the various accreditation plans in place throughout school districts in Colorado. The Unified Improvement Plan template satisfies multiple accountability requirements within one plan, rather than having to complete several different plans. Detailed information about this process can be accessed at <http://www.schoolview.org>. Briefly, the SUIP consists of four categories: academic achievement status, academic growth, academic growth gaps and post secondary and workforce readiness performance indicators. The first three categories are exclusively calculated from CSAP data and the last category includes graduation rate, dropout rate, and mean ACT composite scores. School student performance measures are compared to federal and state expectation reference points, which are the minimum requirements a school must meet for accountability purposes. This information generates the district/school performance framework report (SPF), and each category, depending on its score, is classified as exceeding, meeting or approaching target. This ranking determines what type of plan a school needs to develop (performance, improvement, urgent improvement, turnaround plan). Finally, a thoughtful process of data analysis and root cause identification are conducted, a data narrative developed, and action plan/school goals are completed.

We can be grateful we have skilled administrators and staff who take this process seriously, and who challenge each other not to be comfortable with their past successes, but to continually make improvements. Principal Elliott shared parts of a presentation he gave to staff at the beginning of the year, specifically Data Analysis and Reflection Time (DART). He stressed that CSAP by no means defines us, but is instead one of numerous data streams that assists us in working through the very complex nature of educating students. With this in mind, the next time you log on to the parent portal to look at your student’s grades or progress reports, consider all the effort that went into to educating your student -- and then don’t just be silently grateful for all the passion, talent and hard work that D’Evelyn staff/administrators poured into your student; but do something, thank someone, let them know you appreciate all they do!

## MAKE YOURSELF ACCOUNTABLE

“Wow, these meetings sound really worthwhile,” you must be thinking to yourself. “Who can participate on Accountability Committee?” you ask. Great news: ANYONE can be on the Accountability Committee, including students. The agendas are relevant, fast-paced, and designed to progress understanding of the D’Evelyn program. If you would like to vote on important issues throughout the year, you must attend at least one of the first three meetings, which means if you were not there in September or October there is ONLY ONE meeting left, which will take place on **Nov. 2** in the library media center. A/C meetings are held on the **first Tuesday of the month from 6:30-8:30 p.m.** (please note time and date change). The November agenda will include a presentation by the science department, review of the 2010 Welcoming Environment Survey results as well as further discussion about the school Climate and Culture Strategic Plan. We look forward to seeing you there. To receive minutes from the A/C meetings, be sure to provide your e-mail address to Angie Withers at [awithers@jeffco.k12.co.us](mailto:awithers@jeffco.k12.co.us). Minutes are also posted on the school website (Community Groups/ A/C).

## COUNTING ON YOU!

Parents interested in understanding more about D’Evelyn and its educational philosophy can obtain some of that information and more by attending an Accountability Committee (A/C) meeting. Cooperating with the principal and staff, A/C focuses on the improvement of your student’s school. Check the school calendar for the next opportunity.

D'EVELYN EDUCATION FOUNDATION (DEF) – SUPPORTING STUDENT EDUCATION & ACTIVITIES

## How Far We've Come

By REED SAUNDERS, DEF Board of Directors, D'Evelyn Class of '99

I can remember it vividly, the most frightening day of my life.

It was August, 1994, and there I was: a gangly young lad plopped down in a steel folding chair in the middle of a soccer field, surrounded by hundreds of strangers. It was the first day of school in my eighth grade year, and the first day of school in the history of the brand new David S. D'Evelyn Jr./Sr. High School.

I expected that day to start in a classroom, or at least a hallway, waiting for the first bell. Facing the early-morning sun, baking like rotisserie chicken and listening to administrators speak on stage? Let's just say it fit perfectly with the many startling contradictions that comprised such a strange morning.

This was a new school, but only in name and organization. The building for our "new" school was anything but. Constructed sometime in the 1950s, the Manning building had been used over the years for everything from a junior high school to adult education dog-grooming classes. Our new school would start in a one-story, antiquated and noticeably air-conditioning-free building.

What exactly was I thinking? What had I gotten myself into?

I had to remind myself of the day when I first heard about this "D'Evelyn" school: It was late 1993, and I was a seventh grader at a local public middle school. Though I enjoyed being around my childhood friends and some of my teachers were fun, something was definitely missing.

First and foremost, the discipline at my middle school was nothing short of a joke. Eighth graders ruled the school with an iron fist, making life miserable for us "Sevies" seemingly at will – knocking over kids during lunch and recess, "book-checking" us in the crowded hallways, dumping our notebooks and papers to the floor for us to clean up. The ridicule was infuriating; our ire only heightened by the fact school administrators seemed to turn a blind eye to the treatment of the younger students.

In addition to the *Lord of the Flies* atmosphere, there were also several brow-raising moments in regard to the academics.

Classmates routinely exchanged papers to turn in as their own, unbeknownst to the teachers. Sub-par work received high marks. Minimal effort resulted in straight A's and a 4.0 GPA. Part of me thought, "Hey! This is great!" But more and more, I felt disappointed by the lack of challenges in this environment.

My mom showed me a newspaper article one day. A new "alternative" school was opening near our house – one that would focus on rigorous academics and a college prep curriculum. We attended an informational meeting and left convinced this would be worth the leap – worth leaving behind my life-long friends for a chance at a premium education. My mom left the choice to me. I decided to jump.

Despite the early struggles that usually accompany changing schools, things did settle down for me and I started to find my place at D'Evelyn. Not that we didn't have growing pains as a school.

Our first sports teams had no mascot and no real uniforms (the original uniforms for all sports consisted of black pants and gray T-shirts with multi-colored fluorescent script saying "D'Evelyn Softball" or "D'Evelyn Soccer" ... not exactly intimidating), to say nothing of the bare-bones facilities, athletic and academic alike.

Even as the years passed and newer classroom materials became more common, there were always different challenges to overcome. Our league-champion baseball team practiced infield on a tennis court for lack of a real dirt diamond, for example.

Looking back at those lean years at the Manning building, I wouldn't change a thing. That was OUR school and we were proud to build the many traditions of academic and athletic excellence that current Jaguars hold true today.

As a current member of the D'Evelyn Education Foundation Board of Directors, I've been fortunate to see the inner workings of the D'Evelyn "machine" that I never really knew existed when I was a student. Getting to know the administrators and parents alike who work so hard to keep the D'Evelyn dream going has been a blessing and another chapter in my proud DHS allegiance.

Walking in to the October board meeting this past month, I couldn't help but be in awe of how far this place has come. To see sports teams practicing on first-rate fields and facilities, the immensely talented performing arts department get to showcase their skills in the amazing auditorium, and so many of the same amazing educators gracing the hallways of this gorgeous building today who have been there since the beginning of D'Evelyn – it speaks to the dedication and hard work of so many to get the best out of themselves and each other; to truly set the standard for excellence and be a part of something special.

**“Our league-champion baseball team practiced infield on a tennis court for lack of a real dirt diamond. ...”**

DEF | PERFORMING ARTS

## 11th Annual Feast-i-ville O' Fun

By MONTE MURPHY, D'Evelyn Disguise director

Please join our own improv troupe, D'Evelyn Disguise, in the DHS Auditorium on **Tuesday, Nov. 23 at 7 p.m.** for the 13th annual Feast-i-ville O' Fun benefiting Denver's Tennyson Center for abused children. This is a great way to give back to the community; come laugh the night away! Your donation (please donate at least \$3) goes directly to the children of the Tennyson Center so these kids can celebrate Thanksgiving.



**HOLD ON TO YOUR HATS** folks, for this show promises to be unlike any you've ever seen ... or will ever see again! Think Charlie Chaplin, *Saturday Night Live*, and unscripted mime – all rolled into one. Because improv (improvisational theatre) is based on direction from the audience, the result is always the invention of something new.

DEF | JR. HIGH BOOSTERS

## Jr. High Jumpin' at Jumpstreet

By GERI WILLIAMS, parent volunteer

Calling all seventh and eighth grade students: Come celebrate the last Friday before Thanksgiving with a two-hour jumping and pizza party at Jumpstreet in Littleton, on **Nov. 19, 3-5 p.m.** Cost is expected to be \$12 for jumping and pizza. All jumpers need parent-signed waiver, available at <http://www.gotjump.com/waivers>. For more information, please contact Geri Williams at [gwilliams@dnvrlaw.com](mailto:gwilliams@dnvrlaw.com).



DEF | VOLUNTEERS

## November Volunteer of the Month

By AMY CARDA, DEF parent volunteer coordinator

As an integral part of volunteer network at D'Evelyn, Cymantha Higgins has been nominated by the D'Evelyn Education Foundation (DEF) as parent volunteer of the month (November 2010). She chaired the Dinner & Silent Auction with great success last year and will again chair the event this year. Cymantha has been involved with the *Jaguar Tracks* for several years, first acting as assistant editor, then as editor for two years. During that time, she steered the *Tracks* through the transition to becoming an electronic newsletter. Currently, she is once again functioning as editorial assistant. Another of Cymantha's contributions is to the D'Evelyn Dash, where she has been in charge of publicity and sponsorship. In addition, Cymantha has been a regular contributor to teacher conference dinners.

Cymantha has two children: Amber, who graduates this year, and Forrest, who is three years older and attended junior high at D'Evelyn.

(PRINCIPALLY SPEAKING continued)

Did I mention the outstanding activities? Our fall play, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, opens while I am writing this column. I hope you enjoyed the show. If you are new to D'Evelyn, I cannot emphasize enough how much enjoyment you will have by attending our school performances from the fall play and our choir and instrumental concerts, to talent shows and the D'Evelyn Disguise (improv troupe), as well as to the Tri-M (performing arts honor society) show. If you missed them this fall, be sure to keep an eye on the announcements for upcoming performances in the winter months.

Additionally, we have seen our junior high students enjoy their first homecoming week (something other middle school students do not necessarily get to engage in) and dance. Thank you to all the parents and to our junior high student council for their support of these events.

I could go on about so many other wonderful things occurring here – but hopefully you are already aware of the many ways in which your student and all D'Evelyn students are THRIVING!

Finally, thank you to all the coaches and sponsors for your time and efforts in support of our programs; and to the students – keep up your efforts and THANK YOU for representing JAG PRIDE in all that you do!

DEF | JAGS ATHLETICS

## Go Get 'Em, Poms!

By KAREN QUIGLEY, parent volunteer

The girls have been doing a great job in their fundraising efforts, and want to extend a heartfelt THANK YOU to the D'Evelyn community for making their Noodles night a big success. As part of their ongoing fundraising, the Poms recently turned their efforts toward cheering on runners participating in the Rock and Roll Marathon.

In November, the Poms will be participating in a number of competitions. Their first competition will take place on **Nov. 6** at Legacy High School. League competition will take place at Bear Creek High School on **Nov. 9**. The final competition of the month will be held on **Nov. 13** at the Denver Convention Center. All of these competitions are in preparation for the big state competition scheduled for the first weekend in December at the Denver Coliseum.

Did you know that for the first time in D'Evelyn history, we now have a junior high dance team? Come see them dance and show your support. They will be performing at all home JV basketball games. Go get 'em, Poms!

FROM THE HALLS | LIBRARY

## Buy Books – and Help our Library

By LISA PORTER, teacher librarian

Save the date for our Barnes & Noble event at Denver West on **Monday, Dec. 6 from 4-9 p.m.** Barnes & Noble Booksellers will donate up to 25 percent of their sales to benefit The D'Evelyn school library.

FROM THE HALLS | MATHEMATICS

## Math Tutoring

By PARIO-LEE LAW, mathematics teacher

D'Evelyn's chapter of Mu Alpha Theta, an international high school and junior/community college mathematics club, provides math tutoring during 7th Hour for students at D'Evelyn (usually 6 to 8 times per semester). We have already had three successful sessions in October. Please encourage students who need some extra help in math or some practice with math study skills to take advantage of the remaining opportunities for these outstanding tutors to assist them. Students should sign up in their math teacher's room or in Mrs. Law's room E115. The remaining dates for 1st semester are **Wednesday, Nov. 3, Thursday, Nov. 11, Wednesday, Nov. 17, Tuesday, Nov. 30, and Thursday, Dec. 9.**



## DID YOU KNOW?

This past year, the D'Evelyn Education Foundation (DEF) provided the D'Evelyn principal with \$10,000 for textbooks and another \$6,000 for technical support. Another \$12,000 is routinely provided for student scholarships each year.

Parent volunteers are the backbone of DEF, which supports a myriad of school programs and activities, from marching band, performing arts and Jaguar Athletic Groups (JAGS) to Jr. High Boosters and student mentoring programs ... and even this newsletter. Check the school calendar for meeting times. Get involved in DEF, and watch our students continue to thrive!

SCHOOL NOTICES | STATE OFFENDER REGISTRY

## Community Safety

The State of Colorado passed a law in 2003 requiring public schools to provide parents and guardians with a statement about how they can access information regarding registered sex offenders in their law enforcement jurisdiction.

The sex offender registry provides the public with certain information on the whereabouts of sex offenders so that members of local communities may better protect themselves and their children from these known sex offenders.

In Jefferson County, parents and guardians can request the sex offender registry by contacting their local law enforcement agency. Registry information is released to any person 18 years or older residing or doing business in the law enforcement agency's jurisdiction. You can also check the Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) website – <http://sor.state.co.us> – that contains a statewide list of certain high-risk registered sex offenders.

In addition, the Colorado Sex Offender Management Board publishes the School Resource Guide to Sex Offender Registration, including information about the list itself and facts about sex offenders. Access this link for a copy of the resource guide:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/download/pdf/ChildAbuse-SchResGU.pdf>

A copy of the School Resource Guide is also available for review in the Communications Services Office, Jeffco Public Schools, 1829 Denver West Drive, Building #27, Golden, CO 80401. We hope this information is helpful to you.





D'EVELYN EDUCATION FOUNDATION  
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Steering Committee  
 candidate workshop  
 - Nov. 2, 6 p.m.

Improv Feast-iville-O' Fun  
 - Nov. 23, 7 p.m.

Thanksgiving holiday  
 - no school  
 - Nov. 24-26

DATED MATERIAL

## Upcoming Events

November 2010 and beyond

*Please confirm dates on the D'Evelyn website school calendar.*

11/2	DEF subcommittee managers' meeting	7:30 a.m.
11/2	Steering Committee candidate workshop	6 p.m.
11/2	Accountability Committee meeting	6:30 p.m.
11/3	Prospective parent info. mtg. @ Dennison	6:30 p.m.
11/8	Steering Committee meeting	4:30 p.m.
11/10	Prospective parent info. mtg. @ D'Evelyn	7 p.m.
11/16	DEF Board of Directors meeting	6 p.m.
11/19	Jr. High Booster event at JumpStreet	3 – 5 p.m.
11/22	Steering Committee meeting	4:30 p.m.
11/23	Improv. show - Feast-iville-O' Fun	7 p.m.
11/24 - 26	Thanksgiving holiday - no school	
12/6	Barnes & Noble Denver West fundraiser	4 – 9 p.m.
12/6	Steering Committee meeting	4:30 p.m.
12/6	Jr. High Choir concert	7 p.m.
12/7	DEF subcommittee managers' meeting	7:30 a.m.
12/7	Sr. High Choir concert	7 p.m.
12/8	Early Release day	
12/9	Full instrumental concert	7 p.m.
12/10 & 11	Holiday improv show	7 p.m.

## JAGUAR TRACKS

A PUBLICATION OF THE D'EVELYN EDUCATION FOUNDATION

**GUEN SUBLETTE**, parent editor-in-chief  
**MARIANNE WALTHIER**, parent editorial assistant  
**CYMANTHA HIGGINS**, parent editorial assistant  
**MONIQUE HELFER**, parent graphic artist

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All submissions are due by the 20th of the month prior to publication. Due to space limitations, not all information may be printed and may be edited. All submissions for publication must be sent only by e-mail to: [jaguartrax@yahoo.com](mailto:jaguartrax@yahoo.com). No hardcopy or handwritten articles will be accepted.

### D'EVELYN JR./SR. HIGH SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

Main office number: 303-982-2600  
 Attendance line: 303-982-5771  
 Bulletin board: 303-982-5770

### VISIT THE D'EVELYN WEBSITE FOR THE MOST UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION:

<http://sc.jeffco.k12.co.us/education/components/scrapbook/default.php?sectionid=188>