Odyssey of the Mind® Newsletter

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THANKS COACH!

There are members of Odyssey of the Mind that spend just as many hours at practices as teams — yet never see the spotlight of performance. They take responsibility for helping millions of children and they donate their time and energy to students worldwide. They have mastered the art of ordering pizza, helping to manage disputes, and offering tons of invaluable skills, all while holding back their own creative ideas. When it comes time for awards and accolades, they are left cheering in the wings. They do not receive medals or scholarships, and do not even expect it. They always give encouragement and pats on the back, but are rarely given the same. However, Odyssey of the Mind could never work without its COACHES.

A 2006 WF winner from Kentucky celebrates with her coach.

That's why at the 2006 World Finals CCI gave a "surprise" Creativity Award in honor of OotM coaches. Sammy Micklus, Program Director, said when giving this award, "We could not think of one group of people who do more for creativity than this group of people."

Coaches Maryann Williams and Michelle Lipovich from Mars, Pa. accepted the Creativity Award on behalf of all Odyssey coaches.

"On behalf of all the coaches we'd like to thank you for this recognition. As coaches we are teachers, mothers, and fathers, but we all have the same love of Odyssey and the love of these kids. In no other forum could we ever facilitate building trash into treasure or building a foundation for young people to make a better future for us all," said Williams in her acceptance speech.

The Creativity Award is given to a person or group that helps instill creativity in others. That is the definition of an OotM coach. They work tirelessly to help draw out creativity in students and help shape countless lives in the progress. Coaches work as guides helping students to find their own paths to creativity. Coaching is at times difficult and stressful and could be a thankless job. So how can this group of people best be honored?

Just seeing the teams in action is enough according to Coach Lipovich. She said, "This is why we make the time in our busy lives, because our reward for coaching an Odyssey of the Mind team is just witnessing the five to seven students, each with different personalities, skills, and opinions, come to a solution to a complex problem."

Perhaps the best "thank you" is the reaction from teams when Sammy says at the Awards Ceremony, "Will the team with the greatest coach in the world make noise now!"

The resulting wall-shaking, ear-busting, thunderous applause and screams from an arena filled with thousands of appreciative kids expresses the sentiment best.

Also in this issue . . .

2. MAX MANSFIELD AWARD ✹ GREAT MINDS ✹ 3. 2007-2008 PROBLEM SYNOPSES
4. WORLD FINALS COACHES PROBLEM ✹ 5. 2007-2008 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
6. NASA AT WF ✹ A NOTE TO TEAMS

The Max Mansfield Memorial Association Membership Award Winner Announced

Delaware Odyssey of the Mind (Delcaps) has won the Max Mansfield Memorial Association Membership Award for the 2006-07 Program Year. This award is given to the association that shows the largest membership growth for the year.

Delaware Odyssey has shown the greatest increase in membership, with a 16% growth over last year. Co-AD's **Ron Raab-Long** and **Mary Kay Valentine** have worked hard with their association to keep Delaware Odyssey growing. In fact, they have shown a steady increase in the past five years going from 20 schools in 2002 to 74 schools in 2007.

Thanks to all volunteers, officials, and teams that helped the Delaware Association continually expand. This gives even more students a chance to expand their creative thinking.

Other associations to look out for are Michigan, Florida, and Pennsylvania. They all had a great year as well. Past recipients include New York OM Association and CU in NJ.

Creative Competitions, Inc. created this award in honor of Max Mansfield, a long-time OotM volunteer and friend. He will always be remembered as someone who selflessly volunteered for Odyssey so that as many people as possible could experience OotM. This award is CCI's way to honor him and all Odyssey associations attempting to do the same.

Shark Tags: Taking a Bite out of this Deep-Sea Mystery

In Hawaiian mythology, sharks were considered gods called **Aumakua** and were guardians of the sea. Today, the image of a shark's dorsal fin slicing through water strikes fear into many who believe that sharks are bloodthirsty killers. These misconceptions have continued throughout the years because little is known about sharks. However, with increasing technology comes increasing knowledge about these misunderstood animals.

Surprisingly, Greek philosopher **Aristotle** was one of the first to study sharks. Aristotle was intrigued by marine biology. He recorded the first scientific study of sharks and their relatives, and was the first to group them together as one family since they have cartilage instead of bones. Aristotle wrote about sharks in his book ***On the History of Animals*** in **350 BC**. His studies are the basis for much of today's knowledge of sharks.

What would Aristotle learn if he were able to use today's technology? In his time fishermen cut small notches in tails of fish in order to study population and to see where they traveled by capturing and releasing them again.

Not much has changed in the way sharks are studied today, but advances in technology have helped scientists to learn information that is more exact. One of the most up-to-date tagging systems uses satellite technology to study sharks. Scientists use "tags" equipped with satellite transmitters so they can learn swimming and migration patterns, diving depths, and feeding locations. It can also help measure age and growth by allowing scientists to locate the shark again for more study.

The satellite tag used by the **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration** (NOAA) is composed of an **ARGOS satellite transmitte**r, long-life batteries, and aerial and saltwater switches. All of these components are encased in a waterproof resin pod that is attached to the base of the shark's dorsal fin. It is streamlined in design and lightweight so it will not interfere with the shark as it swims.

The transmitter sends a unique shark identifying code with radio waves to orbiting satellites that have the ARGOS receivers. The signal from the tag is then sent to a lab where a biologist can plot the shark's track and study the data.

Because radio waves do not travel well underwater, especially at the varying depths the shark can live in, the tag records and saves all the information and then sends it in spurts whenever the shark's fin is out of the water. The saltwater switch on the tag ensures that it does not transmit when underwater so it can save battery power.

Of course, before scientists can tag a shark, they have to catch it first! This also hasn't changed much from the past. There are various methods depending on the type and size of the shark. They usually involve nets or tools that hold a shark's tale. In all cases scientists and fishermen who participate in tagging programs are trained how to capture, tag, and release the sharks safely. In order to study them, the sharks need to live a full, healthy life.

Once the shark is tagged and measured it is released. Scientists push the shark through the water until it starts swimming under its own power to ensure its well-being.

By studying things like migration patterns scientists can help sharks and humans coexist safely. They would know where to avoid areas where there is a chance of being attacked such as breeding grounds and feeding grounds. Through tag studies scientists have learned these to be very specific. Fisherman could also lessen the amount of sharks accidentally caught in their nets by avoiding areas of high traffic.

Learning the nature of sharks can stop misunderstandings and make it possible for sharks and humans to live together peacefully. As you can see, it takes teams of creative minds, technology, and time, to learn about these mysterious animals.

2007-08 Long-Term Problem Synopses*

Tentative as of April 27, 2007.

All problems have an 8-minute time limit.

Problem 1: Sports Cars

Road Rallies and Sporting Events are popular activities. This problem combines both and requires teams to design, build, and operate an original Sports Car. The team will drive its Sports Car in a road rally that has four checkpoints. At each checkpoint, the Sports Car will compete in a sport-related event. The team will choose three of the events from given lists and will create an original sport-related event for the fourth. The team will also develop a theme for the presentation of the solution.

Divisions I, II & III. Cost limit: $145.

Problem 2: DinoStories

What might have happened to the dinosaurs that existed so many years ago? In a humorous performance, teams will present their original theory of what caused the dinosaurs to become extinct. The performance will include a dinosaur, a replica of the same dinosaur, an animal that is not a dinosaur, and a technical simulation of the team's "extinction theory." At least part of the performance will take place in a setting from the Triassic, Jurassic, or Cretaceous periods.

Divisions I, II, III & IV. Cost limit: $145.

Problem 3: *Classics . . .* The Wonderful Muses

In Greek Mythology, muses were the source of inspiration for the creative works of artists and scientists. The team's problem is to create and present an original performance that includes one of the nine Greek muses. The Muse will inspire two people during the performance: (1) a historical person who made an actual positive contribution to the world, and (2) an original, team-created person who tries to make a positive contribution to the world. The Muse will use the art form attributed to her during two "moments of inspiration," when all the characters in the scene, except the Muse, will "freeze." The team will also create two original works in that art form to include in the performance.

Divisions I, II, III & IV. Cost limit: $125.

Problem 4: Tee Structure

The team's problem is to design and build a structure using only balsa wood and glue. The team will test the structure by having it support weights that are balanced on golf balls without touching anything else. The team will receive score for the amount of weight the structure holds during testing and bonus points for each golf ball used to support the weights.

Divisions I, II, III & IV. Cost limit: $140.

Problem 5: The Eccentrics!

This problem requires teams to create and present a humorous performance about three Eccentric Characters that demonstrate odd behavior, peculiar mannerisms, and unconventional dress. The performance will include a team-created "problem" within or involving an Earth system — the atmosphere, biosphere, cryosphere, geosphere, or hydrosphere. The Eccentric Characters, which seem to be misfits, will solve the problem. As a reward, a celebration is held in their honor and they end up launching a new fad. *Sponsored by NASA*

Divisions I, II, III & IV. Cost limit: $125.

Primary: Rude Awakenings

This problem requires teams to create and present a humorous performance that includes a character that keeps waking up in a different time and/or place from where it fell asleep. This will happen at least three times before the character returns to where it started and something or someone stops the character from "traveling" in its sleep. The performance will also include a pet, a helpful character, and narration.

Grades K-2. Cost limit: $125.

COACHES & OFFICIALS PROBLEM

DISTANCE DROP

A. The Problem

Your problem is to design and build a device that extends as far as possible and safely drops a marker on the floor. The device that places the marker farthest from the foul line will win the competition.

B. Limitations

1. The device:
   a. must be an original design. It may include commercially produced parts and team members can help with construction, but not in the competition area.
   b. must be safe in its design and the way it operates. If it is judged to pose potential harm to people or the competition site, it will be prohibited.
   c. is allowed to be touched/operated by only one person during the competition. Only the device may move the marker.
   d. must completely fit within a 2' x 2' x 3' closed container.
   e. must be only one or two components. That is, only two components may be placed in the container. However, each component may be made up of many parts. For example, you may assemble four parts into one component and three into another component.
      1. The components cannot consist of parts with the sole purpose of connecting parts in the individual component. For example, using string to "connect" pipes in order to make a single component.
   f. must be carried to the competition site.
   g. must be completely inside the taped lines when time begins.
   h. when time begins the device may extend beyond the taped boundary lines, but its base must remain inside the lines.
2. The Marker:
   a. must include your name and state/country.
   b. has to become detached from the device for score.
   c. cannot be able to move on its own.
   d. is allowed to touch the floor as the device moves it as long as it does not help the device extend.
   e. must travel with the device. If the marker travels farther than the end of the device it will not count for score.
   f. will be judged for creativity and distance traveled.

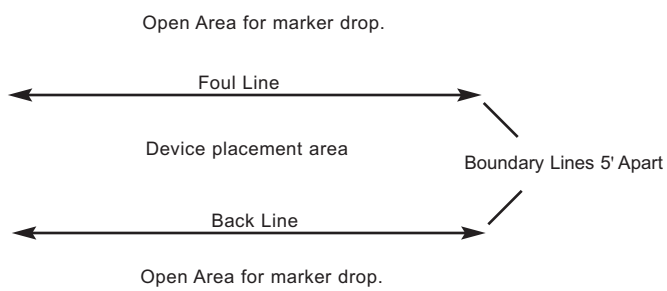
C. The Competition

1. Teams will be assigned a number when registering at the competition site.
2. When your number is announced you must bring your device and marker to the competition area. (Judges may check your solution here for size limitations.) This is anywhere between the two taped boundary lines, which will be 5' apart. (See Figure A.) The rest of the gym floor will be open for marker placement.
3. You may not practice on the site at any time including before the competition begins.
4. Judges will signal when to begin. At this time the device must begin to function in a visible manner. The judges will then signal after one minute has passed. At the one-minute signal you will have 30 seconds to finish dropping your marker. Judges will call time after 30 seconds.
5. Extension chords cannot be used in the solution.
6. The marker that is dropped the farthest when time ends will win. If there is a tie, the more creative marker will win.

D. Awards

1. Trophies will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place in both divisions.
2. A trophy will be awarded to the person with the most outstanding STYLE. Every contestant is eligible, even those who place 1st, 2nd, or 3rd.

Figure A. Competition Area



— Teams can place device anywhere within the two boundary lines, which will extend as far as the judges need.

— Markers can be placed anywhere outside of the start lines in order to receive score.

ODYSSEY OF THE MIND®
2007-08 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Questions? Email info@odysseyofthemind.com or call 856.456.7776.

For new memberships or renewals, complete this form and return it with a check, purchase order, or credit card information (see below).

Check one:

Divisions I, II and III:

_____ **Individual school:** Must register in the school name. May enter one team per problem per division in competition.

_____ **Two or more schools:** Must share the same principal to be under the same membership. Use school district name on application. May enter one team per problem per division in competition.

_____ **Home-schooled students:** Must include at least four home-schooled students. May also include up to three members from **one** school. May enter one team per problem in competition.

_____ **Community Group:** May enter one team per problem in competition. May not be an organization established solely for the purpose of participating in Odyssey of the Mind. Please submit by-laws if this is a new membership.

Division IV: _____ All team members must be high school graduates and registered for at least one class at a college or university. They do not have to attend the same institution. May enter one team per problem. May proceed directly to World Finals.

Membership name _____ Membership number (for renewal, if known) _____

Grades covered by membership _____ School district _____ County _____

Contact person (may be a coach) _____

Mailing address (for newsletter delivery and correspondence) _____

City _____ State/Province _____ Zip_____ Country _____

Daytime phone _____ FAX _____ Email _____

Each individual membership costs **$135, but you will receive discounts if you purchase more than one membership. For each membership purchased, you get five competitive **long-term problems,** one **primary problem,** one copy of the **Program Guide**, Odyssey of the Mind and NASA **curriculum activities**, one **newsletter subscription,** and more!*

_____ **Individual 2007-2008 Odyssey of the Mind membership @ $135** ..... _____

_____ **Additional membership(s) for the same school or community group @ $100** ..... _____

_____ **6-10 memberships for the same school district** (registered at the same time) **@ $120** ..... _____

_____ **11 or more memberships from the same school district** (registered at the same time) **@ $100** ..... _____

ODYSSEY OF THE MIND SUPPORT MATERIALS

_____ ***A Creative Experience —*** *Odyssey of the Mind promotional video* DVD @ $9.95 ..... _____

_____ ***Lots of Problems . . And Tips to Make You More Creative* @ $19** *tips on problem-solving.* ..... _____

_____ ****Creative Interaction* @ $19** *Discusses the importance of interaction between students . .* ..... _____

_____ ****Applying Your Creativity* @ $18** *Discusses different types of human creativity* ..... _____

_____ ****Creativity + Teamwork = Solutions!* @ $18** *Includes tips on building effective teams.* ..... _____

_____ ***Spontaneous Problem Competitions* @ $7.50** *Booklet of problems and tips* ..... _____

_____ ***Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide* @ $7.50** (one is included with membership) ..... _____

_____ ***Coaches Training Video* @ $20** *Tips and techniques for coaches* ..... _____

_____ packs of **Balsa Wood** (premium grade AAA 36" x 1/8" x 1/8") **@ $20 per 100 pieces** ..... _____

** Spend $40 or more and get free Shipping & Handling. Orders under $40, add **$6** Shipping & Handling.*
Contact CCI for S & H outside of the U.S.
There are no Shipping & Handling charges for membership packets.
***These books are a collection of long-term and spontaneous problems from past competition years.*

Subtotal _____
S & H _____
Total _____

Payment Method:

- **U.S. Mail:** Send this completed form along with a check, money order or purchase order, **payable to CCI**, or with your credit card info to: **CCI, 1325 Route 130 S, Suite F, Gloucester City, NJ 08030**
- **FAX:** Send this form along with a copy of your purchase order, or include your credit card information and fax to **856.456.7008.**
- **On-line:** If paying by credit card, go to **www.odysseyofthemind.com** to access this form.

____VISA ____MasterCard ____American Express ____Discover

Acct. no. _____ Exp. _____

Signature of cardholder _____

SHIPPING ADDRESS (For UPS Delivery)

Is this a residence? _____ yes _____ no

Name _____

Address _____

_____

City _____ State/Prov _____

Zip _____ Country _____

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www.odysseyofthemind.com

Hey Teams,
It's that time again! Renew your membership now and be one of the first to get next year's long-term problems.
Your friend,
OMER

The *Odyssey of the Mind Newsletter* is published by Creative Competitions, Inc.

NASA AT WF

An Odyssey of the Mind World Finals would not be complete without NASA. Each year it not only sponsors an OotM problem, but it also provides fascinating supplements, many of which are handed out during WF.

Last year it had many activities for teams to choose from including E-Theatre presentations that highlighted high-tech satellite capabilities. The presentation took viewers on a world-wide tour from space. They even had the chance to see many different views of earth using satellite technology.

NASA also used the same technology during Opening Ceremonies by giving every WF participant a birds-eye view of Ames, Iowa. The camera even zoomed in "live" to the exact building that the ceremonies were held.

NASA always has one of the most popular booths at the Creativity Festival. Last year, participants had the chance to try on a spacesuit and have their picture taken as a souvenir. There were also lots of free NASA information and memorabilia like posters and stickers.

This year will be NASA's seventh year attending World Finals and there are sure to be even more surprises. If you are attending WF be sure to stop by its Creativity Festival booth or E-Theatre presentations and thank NASA representatives for being an important part of Odyssey. If you don't visit World Finals, NASA also has a web portal just for Odyssey of the Mind.

Visit: http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/odysseyofthemind

A NOTE TO THE TEAMS

Congratulations on solving your long-term problem for this year and for doing your best at competition. This is what makes you a winner!

Something to Remember:

"It is better to have enough ideas for some of them to be wrong, than to be always right by having no ideas at all."

— Edward de Bono, author on creativity