



# Odyssey of the Mind<sup>®</sup>

## Newsletter

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Number 3

### NOBEL PRIZE WINNERS TO DELIVER SPECIAL LECTURE TO WORLD FINALS PARTICIPANTS

As if World Finals were not exciting enough, this year's participants are in for a very special -- and stimulating -- discussion about physics and discovery. University of Colorado at Boulder (CU) is the site and professors Eric Cornell and Carl Wieman are the featured guests. The professors were jointly awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics in 2001 "for the achievement of Bose-Einstein condensation in dilute gases of alkali atoms, and for early fundamental studies of the properties of the condensates."

What's that mean, you ask. The professors will provide an explanation that's fun and easy to understand. In a nutshell, Bose-Einstein condensate is a new form of matter produced by cooling atoms to 0.1 millionth of a degree above zero. According to the Royal Swedish Academy of Physics, which awarded the prize,

"When a gas consisting of uncoordinated atoms turns into a Bose-Einstein condensate, it is like when the various instruments of an orchestra . . . after warming up individually, all join in the same tone." The new 'control' of matter is going to bring revolutionary applications in such fields as precision measurement and nanotechnology.

World Finals is all about challenge and being inspired by others. What better inspiration than to hear professors Wieman and Cornell speak of their discovery?

The session is scheduled for Thursday, May 23, 1:00-2:30 p.m., in the Benson Earth Sciences building, Room 180. 



CU professors Eric Cornell (l.) and Carl Wieman (r.) received the Noble Prize for Physics in 2001.

### IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY MEETS ODYSSEY OF THE MIND -- AGAIN!

While many teams are planning the trip to Boulder for the 2002 World Finals, it's not too early to set sights on next year's site. It's now official: the Odyssey of the Mind 2003 World Finals will be held at Iowa State University (ISU), in Ames, May 28-31.

Current Odyssey teams might not remember World Finals 1990 at ISU, but some might remember the 1994 World Finals there. It's been a while, but Odyssey of the Mind is eager to return to ISU, which is, according to *U.S. News & World Report*, among "The Top 50 Public National Universities."



The Campanile is a familiar site on the ISU campus. Its bells first rang in 1899.

### ATTENTION SCHOLARS! ODYSSEY ANNOUNCES OUTSTANDING DISSERTATION AWARD

Creative Competitions, Inc. announces its Outstanding Dissertation Award. Any doctoral candidate may enter if his or her dissertation was completed and approved since the 1999-2000 academic year from an accredited institution of higher education.

Dissertations should advance the knowledge and understanding of education theories, concepts and practices relating to creative problem-solving.

A summary and complete entry must be submitted by September 1, 2002. Winners will be notified by December 1, 2002. First-place winner will receive \$1500. Second-place winner will receive \$750. To enter, submit a hard copy to:

Creative Competitions, Inc.  
Outstanding Dissertation Award  
1325 Route 130 South, Suite F  
Gloucester City, NJ 08030 



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# China Celebrates Its 15th Year

by Dr. Sam Micklus

The Shanghai Odyssey of the Mind Association invited Carole and me to attend its fifteenth anniversary competition. After we said that we would love to, the Hong Kong Association asked us to attend its sixth competition, scheduled for the week before. I was asked to present workshops in both cities. We said "yes" to what would turn out to be the trip of our lifetime.

## First stop -- Hong Kong

We left Florida and, after overnight stops in Seattle and Tokyo, arrived in Hong Kong, where we stayed for a week. I had been to Hong Kong fifteen years ago, but it has grown quite a bit since my last visit. Countless skyscrapers and other high-rise construction is underway. It is one of the great business cities in the world. The view overlooking Victoria Harbor is breathtaking, especially at night.

The Hong Kong tournament was spectacular. A beautiful set, including the Odyssey logo in lights, provided a perfect background for the ceremonies. The teams' solutions were great and our hosts were wonderful. After touring the harbor, the city, and the surrounding areas, it was time to depart for Shanghai.

## On to Shanghai

The Shanghai Odyssey of the Mind fifteenth celebration was a major event. Outside of East China Normal University, large banners hung from lighter-than-air

balloons. An inflatable arch-shaped sign marked the entryway. Inside, more banners were everywhere. Some 220 teams participated in the two-day competition.

To take part in the celebration, people came from a number of provinces across



*Mr. Chen Weixin (l.) and Dr. Sam (r.) join the Odyssey mascot OMER in greeting the crowd at Shanghai's 15th anniversary competition.*

China. Others came from Germany, Hong Kong, Japan and Singapore. Carole and I represented the U.S. The international friendship and support was heartwarming.

Since it began in Shanghai, the Odyssey of the Mind program has spread to 11 of China's 30 provinces, making it the largest national membership outside of the U.S. The program receives strong support

from the Chinese government, but its growth is due largely to the efforts of Association Director Chen Weixin, who has traveled extensively to promote the program.

Odyssey of the Mind is so popular in China that for the last three years China Central TV aired a one-and-a-half-hour special about the program and is planning another for this year. More than 100 million people watch the broadcast annually.

## Third leg -- Beijing

The final stop on our trip was Beijing. We took several tours in and around the city, and it was here that we experienced a severe dust storm. The dust was actually particles of sand blowing off the Gobi Desert. One newspaper reported that 30,000 tons of dust was in the air. We toured the Forbidden City that day. The dust made it difficult to see buildings that were only a few hundred feet away. The next day, on a visit to the Great Wall of China, most of the dust had cleared and we were able to view what may be one of the most impressive constructions on earth.

Finally, it came time to begin our long journey home. Tired, but happy, we arrived in Florida 22 hours after departing Beijing. We will never forget our trip to China and sincerely thank all those special people who helped to make it so enjoyable.

## SPECIAL FUND HONORS HELGA PLAGEMANN

Odyssey of the Mind has lost a dear friend: Helga Plagemann, wife of Germany International's Dr. Karl-Ernst Plagemann, passed away this past summer.

While Karl is the one credited with growing Odyssey throughout Europe, Helga was behind him all the way, doing whatever she could. Together, they were steadfast promoters of tolerance (a necessary subject in today's world) and international cooperation through various mediums.

In tribute to Helga's dedication to the Odyssey of the Mind, Creative Opportunities Unlimited has established the Helga Plagemann Memorial Fund. Proceeds from this fund will be used to aid international teams in participating in Odyssey of the Mind tournaments.

When learning that a fund would be established in his wife's name, Karl responded, "... I appreciate it very much. Helping kids to meet within our wonderful Odyssey of the Mind program is very near to my heart." Karl will be the first contributor to the fund with a donation of \$1,000 (U.S.). We ask our members to contribute to help keep the international spirit of Odyssey of the Mind growing strong. Please send donations (in U.S. dollars) to:

Helga Plagemann Memorial Fund  
Creative Opportunities Unlimited  
13 Stonehedge Dr.  
Conway, AR 72032 USA  
Attn: Jimmie S. Jones, Treasurer



## 2002-2003 Odyssey of the Mind Long-Term Problem Synopsis

*These problems are tentative as of April 24, 2002, and are subject to change. An updated description of the problems will be released in June on [www.odysseyofthemind.com](http://www.odysseyofthemind.com). Time limit for all problems is 8-minutes.*

### A Scene From Above

The team's problem is to design, build and run three small vehicles to transport items from an Orbit Area to an Assembly Station. The items will be added to a three-dimensional representation of a scene of the Earth as viewed from space. As the items are added the scene will change. The scene may be real or imaginary and may be zoomed in to any degree. The team will present a humorous performance about the scene and its changes. The vehicles will be powered by different types of energy sources: one will have an internal power source that it carries while moving; the other two power sources will be external.

*\*\*Sponsored by NASA\*\**

*Divisions: I, II, III & IV Cost limit: \$135*

### The Know-It-All

This technical performance problem requires teams to design and build a character that possesses "artificial intelligence" (A.I). The A.I. character is believed to be all-knowing, and people come from near and far seeking its wisdom. However, the advice A.I. gives is unrelated to the questions asked. People read into A.I.'s advice and interpret it into brilliant pieces of wisdom. During the performance the A.I. character will speak, move and perform two team-created tasks.

*Divisions: II, III & IV Cost limit: \$135*

### Classics... Put a Spin On It

The team's problem is to create and present an original performance about the development of a classical work of great human achievement, chosen from a given list. The performance will include a scene showing an original reason for the creation of the work. During the performance the team will hold a "spin session" to devise a more acceptable reason for the creation of the work. Ultimately, the spin session generates the reason that is accepted today as fact. The performance will also include a team-made representation of the chosen work.

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

### Odd Pod Structure

This problem requires teams to design and build a structure of balsa wood and glue that will rest on an odd number of team-made pods while holding as much weight as possible. The team must have a minimum of three pods and will be awarded score for using additional pods. The pods can be made of any material but must measure no more than 2" x 2" x 3/4". The team may place the pods anywhere outside of an 8-inch circle on the tester. Once the structure is placed on the pods, it will be tested by balancing and supporting weights.

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

### Fooled Ya!

The team is to create and present a performance that includes two characters who perform at least five "illusions" that entertain other characters in the performance. One of the illusions will turn out to be not an illusion at all -- it will actually happen! The team will also include a special effect in its performance.

*Divisions: I, II & III Cost limit: \$100*

### Music Lessons

In this musical problem, teams will create and perform a song with lyrics that help to teach something. The team will make and play two musical instruments to accompany the song. The team will show how learning the song helps a character in the performance.

*Primary: Grades K-2 Cost limit: \$50*



## COACHES & OFFICIALS PROBLEM

# EGGS-actly Placed!

### A. The Problem

Your problem is to design and build a device that will move a raw, unaltered chicken egg 20 feet into an unpadding wooden trough without breaking the egg.

### B. Limitations

1. The judges will provide a plastic bag labeled with your name and with a Grade A medium-sized egg inside. Each participant will receive only ONE egg.
2. When time begins, you may add something to the inside or outside of the bag.
3. The bag must be completely sealed when you begin to transport your egg.
4. You may not directly propel your solution, e.g., by throwing, kicking, etc.

### C. The Competition

1. All participants and devices must be entirely behind the starting line at all times **during the competition**.
2. Once time starts, participants will have 5 minutes to get their eggs into a trough that measures approximately 4 feet deep x 6 feet wide x 2 feet tall.

### D. Scoring

1. The first five participants who get their egg into the trough -- unbroken, uncracked and still in the plastic bag -- advance to the final round.
2. Judges will also choose three participants in each group to advance to the final round based solely on their costume and theme.
3. In the final round, participants will be scored on their costume, their theme, and their success in getting their eggs, unbroken and uncracked, into the trough.

### E. Awards

1. Trophies will be awarded for first-, second- and third-place in both divisions.
2. A trophy will be awarded to the person with most outstanding STYLE. Every contestant is eligible, even those who place first, second or third.



**COMPETITION SETUP**



*Crazy costumes could be seen at the 2001 Coaches Competition at the University of Maryland.*

# 2002-2003 ODYSSEY OF THE MIND MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

For new memberships or renewals, complete this form and return it with a check, purchase order, or credit card number (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. Use school district name on application. May enter one team per problem per division in competition.
- Home-schooled students:** All students on the team must be home-schooled. May enter one team per problem.
- Community Group:** May not be an organization established solely for the purpose of participating in Odyssey of the Mind. May enter one team per problem in competition. Please submit by-laws if this is a new membership.

**Division IV:**  All team members must be registered for classes at a college or university, and at least one must be full time. May enter one team per problem. Proceeds directly to World Finals, but may compete at the Association level.

Membership name \_\_\_\_\_ Membership number (if renewal) \_\_\_\_\_

Grades covered by membership \_\_\_\_\_ School district \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person (may be a coach) \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address (for newsletter delivery and correspondence) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_ 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**, one copy of **Spontaneous Problem Competitions**, one **scholarship application**, one **newsletter subscription** and various other materials.

- Individual 2002-2003 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

- \*Applying Your Creativity @ \$18** (plus s&h) *Discusses different types of human creativity*..... \_\_\_\_\_
- \*Creativity + Teamwork = Solutions! @ \$18** (plus s&h) *Includes tips on building effective teams*..... \_\_\_\_\_
- \*Odysseymania! @ \$17** (plus s&h) *Includes a chapter on humor and creativity*..... \_\_\_\_\_
- \*Make Learning Fun @ \$17** (plus s&h) *Provides a history of the program*..... \_\_\_\_\_
- additional copies of Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide @ \$5** (plus s&h) (one comes with membership) \_\_\_\_\_
- additional copies of Spontaneous Problem Competitions @ \$7.50** (plus s&h) (one comes with membership).. \_\_\_\_\_

*\*These books are a collection of long-term and spontaneous problems from past competition years. Shipping & handling is \$3.50 for the first book, \$1 for each additional book.*

**\*\*There are no shipping & handling charges for membership packets and these items.**

- \*\*Coaches Training Video @ \$20** Tips and techniques for coaches (includes s&h)..... \_\_\_\_\_
- \*\*packs of Balsa Wood** (premium grade AAA 36" x 1/8" x 1/8") **@ \$20 per 100 pieces** (includes s&h)..... \_\_\_\_\_

Contact CCI with any questions

856.456.7776 • [info@odysseyofthemind.com](mailto:info@odysseyofthemind.com) • fax 856.456.7008  
[www.odysseyofthemind.com](http://www.odysseyofthemind.com)

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## To submit payment:

- Complete this form and mail it to **CCI, 1325 Rte 130 S, Suite F, Gloucester City, NJ 08030**, along with a check, money order or p.o., **payable to CCI**, or with your credit card information.
- If paying by p.o., you may FAX your order to **856.456.7008**.
- If paying by credit card, you may FAX your order, order by phone: **856.456.7776**, or e-mail [info@odysseyofthemind.com](mailto:info@odysseyofthemind.com).

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## Odyssey of the Mind

c/o Creative Competitions, Inc.

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Join Now for 2002-2003!



Hey Teams,

We've got another great year coming up and another super set of long-term problems!

Your friend,

OMER

The *Odyssey of the Mind Newsletter* is published by Creative Competitions, Inc. Editor: Carol Ann DeSimine; Assistant, Kristy Kaminsky.

## An International eODYSSEY

**C**reativity knows no boundaries and eODYSSEY proves it! This Odyssey of the Mind project brings together seven team members from five different countries to solve *Center Stage*, Div. III, via the Internet. Although they are oceans apart, team members from Russia, Moldova, Lithuania, Poland, and the U.S. have come together through the wonders of technology.

After a discussion at the 2001 EuroFest in Hungary and months of work, the eODYSSEY idea became a reality. With the support of coaches Marilyn Gibb (Colorado), Tom Scott (Texas) and Robin Tennant (West Virginia), the eTeam of seven was formed.

The team members are Dimka Matvev and Daria Akimenko (Russia), Diana Casapu (Moldova), Darius Soporas (Lithuania), Joanna Niewiadomska (Poland), and Cain Harrelson and Samantha Tennant (U.S.). Although they have never met, they are already friends. They communicate through email and regular Saturday chats on the Internet.

This team proves that creativity and problem solving do not recognize physical borders, or language or cultural barriers. The Internet has brought the members together in the spirit of creativity. The future possibilities for them and the program are endless.

The team is hoping to raise enough funds to attend the 2002 World Finals. We ask anyone interested in supporting the team to please write to [eodyssey@yahoo.com](mailto:eodyssey@yahoo.com). 

## Odyssey of the Mind Family Album

- Creative Competitions, Inc. is pleased to welcome our newest employee: **Fai Yip** is providing part-time in-house computer support. He is a 2000 graduate of Rowan University with a degree in computer programming.
- In what may be an unprecedented record for Odyssey of the Mind, the entire **Nadji** family participated at the Traverse City, MI, Regional Tournament on March 2 as follows:
  - **Mother Rick Babcock Nadji** coached two teams in two separate divisions.
  - **Son #1** judged the competition for the second year. He had been a team member for six years.
  - **Son #2** participated in *Center Stage*, Div. III. He's been to World Finals twice, and his team placed second in 2001.
  - **Son #3** participated in *Center Stage*, Div. II. His team made it to states last year.
  - **Son #4** participated in *It's a Snap*, Div. I.
  - **Daughter #1** participated in *The Chameleon*, Div. I. Her team made it to states last year.
  - **Daughter #2** participated in *Me and My Shadow*, Primary.
  - **Daughter #3** judged and volunteered in previous years.
  - **Baby Nadji** observed it all and is well-known in Odyssey circles. He was almost delivered on the bus to Worlds last year.
  - **Father Nadji** – their number 1 fan – cheered them on and lent his moral supporter. 