



Odyssey of the Mind®

Newsletter

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Seniors Embark on Ground-Breaking Odyssey

When the Opening Ceremonies usher in the 26th Annual Odyssey of the Mind World Finals, there will be a not-so-typical group of team members eager to compete at the event. They've never been to Worlds before; in fact, this spring they participated in their very first Odyssey of the Mind tournament. As "newbies," they lack the experience of more seasoned teams; but what they lack in Odyssey experience, they make up in life experience.

They are all senior citizens. And, they make up Maine's first-ever Division IV team.

The 62- to 83-year-olds have been refining their solution to *Laugh-a-Thon* as students at York County Senior College. These "pioneers" (or "pie on ears," as they call themselves), presented their solution at Maine's Association Finals on April 2 and



Maine's very first Division IV team finds creative ways to move balls into an egg carton without touching them to solve their spontaneous problem at the Maine Association Finals. Clockwise from left: Lottie Fortune, Louise Hackette, Ed Scott, Harold Cebulla, Elsie Cebulla, Josephine Kezar, and Margaret Kent.

received a standing ovation. Many well-established teams were impressed by their creativity and risk-taking.

The team of seniors is an outgrowth of YCSC's "Mind Games" class, which brings Odyssey-type challenges to those over age 55. The class's instructors, Maine Association Director Fern Brown and her husband, long-time Odyssey volunteer Elmer Brown, coached the team. They wondered if seniors would be able to demonstrate the teamwork, risk-taking and divergent thinking necessary for Odyssey, but their concerns were unfounded. The senior students quickly

showed that creativity has no age limit.

Most of us dread visits to the doctor — especially seniors. But these seniors now look forward to visiting the doctor, because their next visit will be with their *favorite* doctor, Dr. Sam! 🐾

Hey Teams,
You're gonna love
next year's problems!



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OotM® Endorsed in Book About Creativity

There's a new book out that is a must-read for every parent, teacher, and coach whose goal is to nurture the creativity in young people. Stephanie Lerner's *Kids Who Think Outside the Box: Helping Your Unique Child Thrive in a Cookie-Cutter World* presents strategies for harnessing a child's natural talents and gifts, whatever they may be. The book features first-person narratives by 22 achievers from diverse professions who offer insight on mentoring and empowering children with high potential.

Lerner lists the Odyssey of the Mind in the book's directory of exceptional programs and resources. To order *Kids Who Think Outside the Box*, go to the publisher's Web site:

amanet.org/books/catalog/0814472753.htm



In Memory of Frank Mansfield

The Odyssey of the Mind recently lost a great friend, Frank "Max" Mansfield of Bradenton, Florida. Max, 83, was killed in an auto accident in March.

Max became involved in Odyssey of the Mind when the program was in its infancy as one of our original long-term problem judges. A dedicated volunteer who always put children first, he served on the Creative Competitions, Inc. Board of Directors for more than 20 years.

Max and his wife, **Bobbie**, another long-time Odyssey volunteer, often made the trip to World Finals, where they judged or served in some other official capacity.

In 1992, Max was a member of the only WF judging team ever to win a Ranatra Fusca Creativity Award. The *Hybrid Relays* Division II judges were recognized for the entertaining and personalized welcome they gave every team who competed. They were the first to respond to, "Judges are you ready?" with a problem-related response instead of a simple, "Yes, we're ready." They changed the course of Odyssey history.

In recent years, Max manned the CCI tunnel at the World Finals Creativity Festival and took special care of OMER's pin collection.

In addition to his wife Bobbie, Max is survived by a son **Rob**, a daughter **Melanie** and her husband **Ralph Meyer**, and two granddaughters, **Catherine** and **Christina**, who are now participants in the Odyssey of the Mind program in Virginia. 🏠



George Washington Carver

A great mind can overcome great challenges. **George Washington Carver's** life began turbulently, but he went on to become a chemist who helped restore the southern farming industry with his ideas, which included more than 300 uses for the peanut, and hundreds more for soybeans, pecans and sweet potatoes.

Carver was born into slavery in Missouri around 1864. When he was an infant, "night riders" stole him and his mother from the plantation. The owner of the plantation gave the kidnappers a \$300 racehorse to get baby Carver back. The plantation owners raised Carver from then on.

It was on the plantation that Carver learned how to read, write and spell because schools in his hometown did not accept African-Americans. He also grew into a true nature lover, and would spend hours collecting plants and rocks. He became known as the "plant doctor" because neighbors would come to him for help with their ailing plants.

At age 10, Carver left home to attend school. He worked as a farmhand and studied in a one-room schoolhouse until he completed grade school. He then went on to graduate from Minneapolis High School in Kansas.

At age 30, Carver gained entrance into Simpson College in Iowa, becoming the first African-American student there. Because of the college's limited offerings, he studied art and music. Intent on studying science, he transferred to Iowa State Agricultural College (now Iowa State University), again, as the first African-American student. After receiving a master's degree in bacterial botany and agriculture, he began teaching there,

becoming the first African-American faculty member. He taught what was then called "Chemurgy," a science that creates industrial products out of agriculture.

In 1897, Carver accepted a job from **Booker T. Washington** as the Director of Agriculture at the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute in Alabama. He worked there until his death in 1943 and willed his life savings to the school.

Carver used his education and his proficiency with plants to help revive the farming industry. The two cash crops, cotton and tobacco, were draining the soil of its nutrients. Carver discovered that peanuts would survive and produce plentiful crops. He found that growing peanuts and other plants would improve the decimated soil because of their nitrogen-rich properties. This allowed farmers to continue to grow cotton, but what to do with all those peanuts? Some of the uses Carver found for them include shampoo, instant coffee, axle grease, ink, laundry soap, and adhesives. By 1938, peanut products had grown to become a \$200 million industry.

Another way Carver revolutionized farming was in developing crop rotation. Alternating cash crops with nutrient-producing crops allowed farmers to continuously make money. He also started a traveling school, where he visited farms and taught the owners how to make their land profitable.

Of all of his discoveries, Carver patented only three. All three used the agriculture of the South to make textile dyes, which were previously imported from Europe. Carver's purpose was to help others and not to make a profit. He believed his ideas should be free for everyone, and he kept his formulas simple so anyone could use them.

Carver's many achievements prove that great ideas are more powerful than adversity. He took ordinary things and turned them into something extraordinary. Many of the products already existed; he just found new uses for the materials available to him — much like in an Odyssey of the Mind problem!

And, in true Odyssey spirit, Carver believed in the importance of creativity. He once said, "Since new developments are the products of a creative mind, we must therefore stimulate and encourage that type of mind in every way possible."

2005-2006 Long-Term Problem Synopses*

**Tentative as of April 8, 2005.*

Problem 1: The Great Parade

Teams will design, build and drive a vehicle that will be used as three different floats in a parade. The vehicle will leave a Back Lot decorated as the first float, travel around a parade route and return to the Back Lot. There, it will change appearance into another float and travel the route again. It will repeat this one more time. One of the floats will have a technical feature. The parade will conclude with a Spectacular Celebration, which will also include a technical feature. The team will create a theme for its parade and include a featured character in its presentation.

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

Problem 2: Tech Transfer

This problem requires teams to create and present an original performance that includes the use of a technical device that extends into different areas to move items. The team will design, build and operate the device, and create the items. The team will integrate the moving of the items into its performance.

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

Problem 3: Classics . . . Ancient Egypt

For this problem, teams will create and present an original performance that includes a scene that takes place in ancient Egypt. The presentation must include a pharaoh, king, or queen, and ancient egyptian works of art or artifacts created by the team. The performance will also include a humorous explanation about the construction of an architectural structure from ancient Egypt.

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

Problem 4: Geometry Structure

The team's problem is to design and build a structure of balsa wood and glue. The team will build geometric shapes into the structure's design and attach colored paper to the shapes. The type and number of required shapes varies according to division. The team will test the structure for its ability to balance and support as much weight as possible. The team's stage set will include some type of replica of the structure.

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

Problem 5: The Jungle Bloke

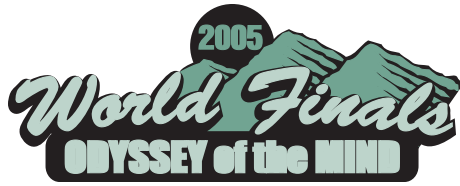
Teams will create and present an original performance about a "Bloke," a person who has the ability to talk with and understand animals from a jungle. Part or all of the performance will take place in a jungle selected from a list. The animals will tell the Bloke about a problem that exists there and get the Bloke to help. The animals will also help the Bloke in some way. The Bloke will convince someone else that he has the ability to talk with the animals. The presentation include an original song and dance.

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

Primary: Space Trek

For this non-competitive problem, the team will create and present an original performance about traveling through outer space. On its trip, the team will overcome an obstacle or difficulty, encounter another space traveler, and discover an unknown planet. The team will name the planet and retrieve two samples using a team-created device.

Grades K-2. Cost limit: \$50.



COACHES & OFFICIALS PROBLEM

JUMP & STOP

A. The Problem

Your problem is to design and build a vehicle that will be released from behind a Start Line on a ramp to travel across a barrier and come to rest as close as possible to a target without touching it.

B. Limitations

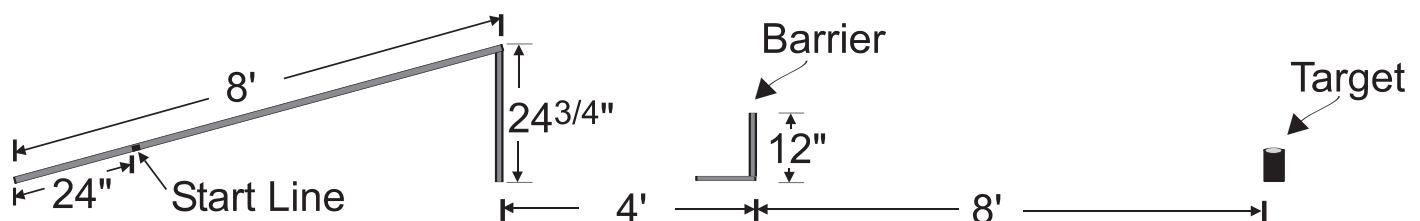
1. Your vehicle must:
 - a. be original; however, it may include commercially produced parts.
 - b. be self-contained. All components that make the vehicle function—including its propulsion and steering systems—must be one unit. Everything counts as part of the vehicle and must meet all limitations at all times.
 - c. not exceed 16" in length, width or height at any time.
 - d. be powered by using only the energy stored in 1, 2, 3 or 4 "AA" batteries. The batteries must be part of the vehicle.
 - e. be safe in its design, the way it operates, and the way it travels. If judges feel it may cause harm to others or to the competition site, it will be prohibited.
2. Each contestant will be assigned to a course that consists of a ramp 8' long and $\frac{3}{4}$ " thick, a barrier, and a target.
 - a. The ramp will be positioned so one end rests on the floor and the other end rests approximately $24\frac{3}{4}$ " above the floor ($\frac{3}{4}$ "-thick ramp on top of a 24"-high support).
 - b. The Start Line will be on the ramp 24" from the end that rests on the floor.
 - c. The barrier will be 12" tall and positioned 4' from the elevated end of the ramp (10' from the Start Line).
 - d. Each contestant will have a target: an empty 12-oz. soft drink can located 8' beyond the barrier.
3. Running your vehicle:
 - a. When the judge blows a whistle the first time, you must place your vehicle entirely behind the Start Line.
 - b. After 10 seconds, a judge will blow the whistle a second time and you must release your vehicle. If you fail to release your vehicle within 10 seconds of the second whistle, it will be disqualified.
 - c. Your vehicle must travel beyond the far edge of the ramp. It cannot touch the floor until it crosses above the barrier.
 - d. Nothing may help guide, steer or stop your vehicle once it has been released. It must travel on its own.
 - e. The part of the vehicle that comes to rest closest to its target will be used for measuring.
 - f. If your vehicle hits the backstop behind the targets it will be eliminated.

C. The Competition

1. You will be assigned a number when you register at the competition site. No one may help you during the competition.
2. When your number is announced you must bring your vehicle to the Start Line. You will be instructed where to place it and shown your target.
3. The vehicle that comes closest to its target without hitting it will win. Winners will advance in the competition and continue to run their vehicles.

D. Awards

1. Trophies will be awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place in both divisions (Coaches and Officials).
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.



COMPETITION SITE SETUP



ODYSSEY OF THE MIND®

2005-2006 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 2005-2006 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

- **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).....
- A Creative Experience @ \$9.95** Odyssey of the Mind promotional DVD.....
- 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**.....

S & H is \$4 for the first item, \$1 for each additional item. 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 _____



Odyssey of the Mind

c/o Creative Competitions, Inc.

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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. Editor: Carol Ann DeSimine; Assistant; Jennifer Veale.



Dr. Sam Micklus attended the New York Association Finals to help celebrate the state's 25th anniversary in Odyssey of the Mind. Also on-hand for the celebration were the OotM mascot, OMER, and SNYPS, the NY mascot. SNYPS is an acronym for "Super New York Problem Solvers."

ODYSSEY AROUND THE WORLD

- Congratulations **New York State OM Association, Inc.** for winning the Max Mansfield Memorial Association Membership Award. The association won "for its exemplary membership in the Odyssey of the Mind program." Creative Competitions, Inc. established the award in memory of Max Mansfield to recognize the association that shows the largest growth in a program year. Since this is the first year for this award, we thought it appropriate to recognize New York, our largest association.
- This year marks the 25th anniversary for **Pennsylvania Odyssey of the Mind**. The association has recently been active in getting the program into the **Philadelphia** School District.

OotM[®] Video for Sale!

Creative Competitions, Inc. is offering its new promotional DVD, *A Creative Experience*, for sale to the public. The program is 10 minutes in length and features testimony from teachers, parents, coaches, and team members who talk about the benefits and rewards of participation. It shows lots of great problem footage filmed at past World Finals. It's a great way to introduce Odyssey of the Mind to others. *A Creative Experience* can be purchased for \$9.95 per copy, which includes bonus animation. (To order, see page 5.)

WORLD FINALS HEADED FOR MICHIGAN

It's not too early to be thinking of future World Finals competitions. We're heading back to Iowa State University in 2006, and we're happy to announce an addition to the rotation of our WF sites: Michigan State University has agreed to host the event in 2007 for the very first time!

Although it is difficult to find a school large enough to host World Finals, MSU has all the facilities we need. The campus is set on 5200 acres with 660 buildings. It boasts the largest residence hall system in the country with 23 undergraduate halls, one graduate hall, and three apartment villages

MSU is located in Lansing, the state capital. Its 44,836 students come from all 50 states and about 125 other countries, so there's a diverse international presence. Its 15 academic colleges "attract scholars worldwide who are interested in combining education with practical problem solving."

Sounds like a perfect match, doesn't it?