



Odyssey of the Mind®

Newsletter

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OOTM — ALWAYS A SOUND INVESTMENT

When faced with seemingly impossible obstacles — whether it's a souring economy, a machine malfunction in space, or a missing ingredient in a recipe — we turn to creative problem solving for solutions.

The opportunity to hone these creative problem-solving skills is an important one. Students should feel confident in this ability and know that there's always more than one solution to a problem. They are the next economists, scientists, and policymakers and should have an arena available to them that encourages creative thinking, imagination, and problem solving. This is why Odyssey of the Mind strives to keep the program affordable and available for all. According to Edith Lloyd, membership coordinator, "We always try to spend responsibly by utilizing technology and by working closely with our members to be sure they get a great experience."

While other companies raise their prices, OotM is keeping the cost of membership the same. In fact, the price of membership has been the same since 1993! Rest assured, there are no plans for an increase in the coming years.

The cost of a stamp in 1993 was 29¢ - it has increased almost 50% to 42¢. Around the same time, the Census Bureau lists the average price of eggs in the U.S. as .87¢ a dozen and .50¢ for bread. According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics \$135 in 1993 had the same buying power as \$197 today.

What other service do you use that has not raised its price in 16 years? Odyssey has always placed more importance on creative problem solving than compensation. "As a program, we do not charge what we think we can get, we charge what we absolutely need to run the company," said Program Director Sam Micklus.

Odyssey of the Mind gives students an invaluable opportunity to explore their creative side as well as learn new things. Plus, they get to be around like-minded peers. In

his book, *The Spirit of Creativity*, Founder Dr. Sam says, "In everyday life, we like to be with others who have similar interests, so it is common sense to have creative kids interact with other creative kids. Interaction helps creative children become more motivated, interested, and appreciated. It helps them to understand their talents and recognize that they are not alone in facing what can otherwise be a difficult, unsympathetic world to them."

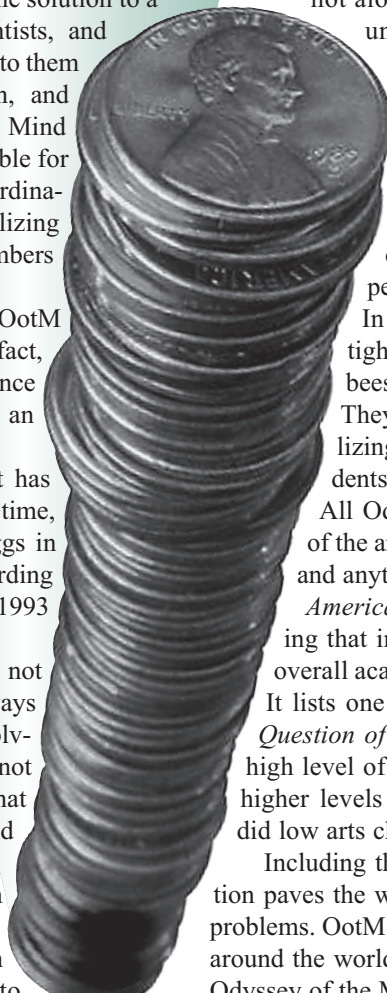
Also, all problems have a cost that teams cannot exceed. This encourages students to budget, recycle, bargain shop, and manage their money responsibly. Also, schools from all areas and backgrounds are on the same "playing field" financially. A budget pushes participants to think creatively and find ways to make solutions happen without spending a lot of money, if any at all.

In a time when many schools are cutting funds and tightening budgets, the arts, science fairs, spelling bees, and similar activities are usually the first to go.

They can continue to live in school activities by utilizing OotM — an affordable program that allows students to incorporate any endeavor into their solutions. All Odyssey problems allow for and reward inclusion of the arts such as painting, singing, music, performance, and anything else a student can think of.

Americans for the Arts has gathered many studies showing that inclusion of the arts in education improves kids' overall academic performance, including higher test scores. It lists one study, *Learning In and Through the Arts: The Question of Transfer* that said, "... students who reported a high level of instruction and participation in the arts showed higher levels of confidence about their own academics than did low arts children."

Including the arts and creative problem solving into education paves the way for our future leaders' ability to solve world problems. OotM is a fun and easy way to do this. As many people around the world have already realized — a small investment in Odyssey of the Mind is a priceless investment in our future.



Also in this issue . . . 2. MAX MANSFIELD AWARD * GREAT MINDS * 3. 2009-2010 PROBLEM SYNOPSIS
4. WORLD FINALS COACHES PROBLEM * 5. 2009-2010 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION * 6. 30TH ANNIVERSARY/WF FACTS

Max Mansfield Memorial Award Winner Announced

Florida receives the Max Mansfield award this year with a 10% increase from last year. The association should also be commended for its continual growth over the past few years, with a 30% increase since 2006 and 89 brand-new schools participating in Odyssey of the Mind.

Kathy Wilhelm, AD, is thankful for the hard work of her Regional Directors that continually give awareness sessions throughout the state. She believes that it is because of the dramatic increase of these sessions that the program continually grows.

“Once people get all the facts about Odyssey, the program sells itself,” she said.

Aside from successfully expanding Odyssey of the Mind, Florida has another reason to celebrate — this year marks the **25th anniversary of its first State Finals tournament.**

Kathy believes everyone on the state and regional boards, as well as the rest of Odyssey volunteers, work hard

because they believe in the many benefits of creative problem-solving education.

“Odyssey is such a great experience for everyone. We think it’s important to give as many kids the opportunity to participate as possible.”

Creative Competitions, Inc. created this award in honor of Max Mansfield and rewards membership growth.

Max will always be remembered as someone who selflessly volunteered for Odyssey so that as many people as possible could experience creative problem solving. This award is CCI’s way to honor his years of dedication and hard work as well as all Odyssey associations attempting to do the same.



Great Minds

OPERA SENDS SHOCKWAVES THROUGH THE AGES

Through the desire to recapture the grandeur of classic Greek tragedies, another classic art form was born. Italian composer and singer **Jacop Peri** believed that contemporary art was inferior to Greek tragedies. He was part of a group of like-minded artists that wanted to revive them.

In order to mirror the Greek “choruses” he decided to have the action of the play sung instead of spoken. **Peri** composed the music for what is now considered the first opera and asked poet **Ottavio Rinuccini** to supply the text for it. *Daphne* was their creation and it was performed privately in 1597 in the Palazzo Corsi at Florence. Unfortunately, *Daphne* has been lost through the ages, but a later work by Peri, *Euridice*, written in 1600 has survived. It is occasionally still performed in honor of the composers. Opera has changed over time, but still has its roots in honoring Greek dramas.

Another Great Mind of opera – **Richard Wagner** – greatly influenced modern opera. He brought ‘big’ to the art form.

When we think of opera today, we think of big voices often sending shockwaves of sound into the audience. We also think of dramatic musical scores. The strong operatic voices of today evolved because Wagner added more emphasis to the instru-

ments used in the orchestra — therefore he demanded vocalists with much stronger voices.

Perhaps he brought so much ‘big’ to opera because he was a man of big ideas. After only six months of formal music education Wagner wrote two well-received symphonies and began work on an opera. Meanwhile, he took various conducting posts with small companies as he built his style that eventually led to his revered musical dramas such as *Tristan and Isolde*.

Wagner literally became a starving artist as he worked to achieve his artistic vision. He envisioned artists from different genres working as a team to create the perfect opera. Wagner coined the term **gesamtkunstwerk**, which is a German term for “total art.”

This “total art” included music, poetry, and dance or mime, and the physical arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture. He intended gesamtkunstwerk to take the sincerity and importance of the folk tale and instill it with nationalist ideas of his time. Wagner wanted to bring all of the art forms together in meaningful and beautiful productions.

The culmination of his ideals was his opera *The Ring*. Wagner dedicated the final years of his life to the completion of this huge project that included what he believed to be the finest forms of physical art, innovative melody, ambitious orchestration, creative instrumentation, drama, and intriguing sets. Like opera’s Peri, his concept hearkened back to ancient Greek themes: an orchestral, vocal, and theatrical portrayal of the struggle between mythological gods and humans for control of earth.

This recreation of ancient Greek ideas took much more than eight minutes – the drama was presented over three consecutive days as a series of four operas. He even decided to build what he considered the best operatic theater for its performance.

Wagner believed so deeply in his creative vision and in attempting to do so, influenced an entire art form. He aptly said, “Imagination creates reality.”

2009-10 Long-Term Problem Synopses*

**Tentative as of March 25, 2009. All problems have an 8-minute time limit.*

Problem 1: Nature Trail'R

This problem requires teams to design, build and drive a human-powered vehicle and camper that will go on a camping trip. When the vehicle arrives at the Campground, the camper will be disconnected and the vehicle will travel on a team-created Nature Trail. On the Nature Trail, the vehicle will overcome an obstacle, clean up the environment, encounter wildlife, and undergo a repair. The performance will include a character that is in or near the camper that explains the experience as part of its role. *Sponsored by NASA.*

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

Problem 2: Return to The Gift of Flight

Teams will make and operate a series of aircraft that will complete a variety of flight plans. The flight plans include flying straight, making a target spin, traveling slowly, dropping something into a target, touching down and taking off, and a mass launch of multiple aircraft. The aircraft in the solution will be made of a variety of materials and will have a variety of power sources. The testing of the aircraft will be presented in a team-created performance that will include a character that serves as a creative "air traffic controller."

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

Problem 3: Classics . . . Discovered Treasures

Teams will create and present an original performance that includes the portrayal of the discovery of two archaeological treasures. One portrayal will be a team-created version of the discovery of an actual historical treasure. The other portrayal will be the team's depiction of a modern sculpture or structure that exists today but is discovered in the future. The performance will include an artistic representation of the two discovered treasures and characters that are part of the discovery teams.

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

Problem 4: Column Structure

The problem is to design and build balsa wood columns that will function together to balance and support as much weight as possible. The columns must not be connected to each other in any way. The team will test its Column Structure by placing weights onto it. The team will add weight until its Column Structure breaks or time ends. Bonus score will be awarded for the number of columns used. The team will incorporate the testing of its columns in an original team-created performance.

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

Problem 5: Food Court

The problem is to create and present a humorous performance where a food item is accused of being unhealthy and must defend itself among its food peers. All characters are food items and will include "the accused," "the accuser," a jury that is not portrayed by team members, and additional team-created characters. The jury will reveal its decision to the audience.

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

Primary: Surprise Party

The team is to create and present a humorous performance that includes a Surprise Party for a team-created character. The theme of the party is a surprise because it is being given for something that is not normally celebrated. Partygoers will give three gifts that help symbolize the theme of the party. The performance will also include an original party "noisemaker" that makes an unusual sound instead of a loud sound.

Grades K-2. Cost limit: \$125.

COACHES & OFFICIALS PROBLEM

REVERSABILITY

A. The Problem

Your problem is to design, create, and wear a reversible costume. The costume will have a different appearance when it is worn in reverse.

B. Limitations

1. The costume must:
 - a. be original, however, it may include commercially produced parts.
 - b. not include components that are supported by the floor or something resting on the floor. The costume may touch the floor as long as the floor is not supporting it.
 - c. be worn in both versions. You may add or remove components when you make your change. (Tiebreakers will be determined by how little is added or removed.)
 - d. must be one costume worn by the competitor. Other people (and only people!), including team members, co-coaches, officials, etc. may wear the costume along with the competitor. If more than one person is wearing the costume, it must be connected by costume materials.
 - e. be safe in its design. For example, your costume isn't allowed to have AC power. If it is judged to pose potential harm to anyone or the competition site, it will be prohibited. See *2008-09 Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide* pages 40-41.
2. Everything counts toward the appearance of the costume including cosmetics, apparel, eyewear, etc., and the entire costume will be judged for creativity.
3. You will reverse your costume in front of an audience so you must make sure your appearance is never inappropriate. Reversing a costume is not literal. Any change will be accepted, but the creativity of the reversal is considered in scoring.

C. The Competition

1. You will be assigned a number when you register at the competition site.
2. When your number is announced you move to the Wait Line in costume.
3. A judge will blow a whistle to start that round.

4. Demonstrating the Costume:

- a. Competitors will walk one at a time from behind the **Wait Line** down the **Runway Line** and across the **Showcase Line**. The Runway Line is a guide and not a boundary.
- b. When every competitor in that group is across the Showcase Line a judge will send you, one at a time, back across the Runway Line to the Wait Line.
- c. While walking to the Wait Line you will reverse your costume. You must not stop moving toward the Wait Line. Remember when designing your costume that you will be moving while reversing your costume and it should be able to be changed safely.

5. Qualifying rounds will run as needed, with finalists advancing at each stage.

D. Awards

1. Your costume will be rated by how creative it looks in each version, the impact of the reversal, and the creativity of the way it is reversed. Scoring will be determined as follows:
 - a. Crowd response = 50% (We recommend you bring your cheering section!)
 - b. Trio of Judges = 50% (Cannot be bribed at any price. Please, don't test this!)
2. Trophies will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place.
3. A trophy will be awarded to the person with the most outstanding STYLE. In this problem, Style will be how well you make yourself stand out from the rest. Every contestant is eligible, even those who place 1st, 2nd, or 3rd.





ODYSSEY OF THE MIND®

2009-10 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Questions? Email info@odysseyofthemind.com or call 856.256.2797.

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 2009-2010 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.....
- **The Spirit of Creativity @ \$20** Anecdotes about OotM written by Dr. Sam.....
- Spontaneous Combustion @ \$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, 406 Ganttown Road, Sewell, NJ, 08080**
- **FAX:** Send this form along with a copy of your purchase order, or include your credit card information and fax to **856.256.2798**
- **On-line:** If paying by credit card, go to **www.odysseyofthemind.com**
 VISA MasterCard American Express Discover
 Acct. no. _____
 Exp. _____ CVV (security) Code _____
 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.

406 Ganttown Road • Sewell, NJ, 08080

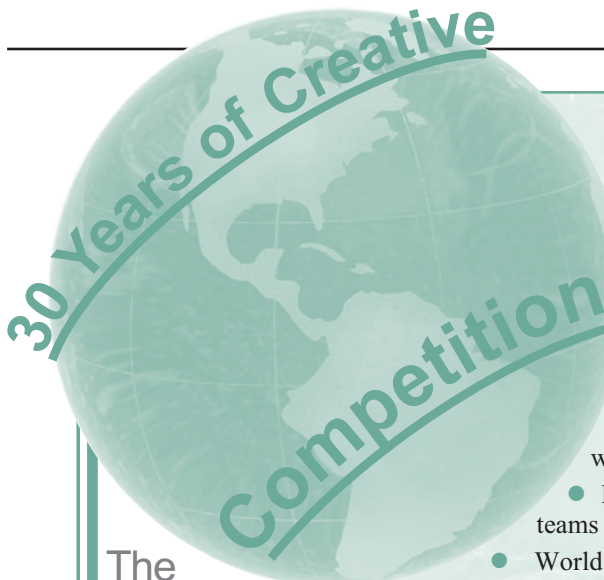
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Hey Teams,
It's that time again! Renew your membership now and be one of the first to get next year's long-term problems.

Your friend,
OMER



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

The
greatest
virtue of man
is perhaps
curiosity.

~ Anatole France
French poet &
Nobel Prize
Winner

From teaching in front of a small industrial design class in New Jersey to standing in front of over 18,000 excited, diverse, creative-thinking individuals at World Finals, Dr. Sam has proven that kids can be passionate about learning if given the opportunity. The fact that Odyssey of the Mind is celebrating its 30th World Finals is proof. Over the years, Odyssey of the Mind has stayed true to Dr. Sam's belief that creativity can be taught, nurtured, and used as a tool. Below, find some fun World Finals facts from years past:

- **The Golden Knights U.S. Army** elite parachute team once jumped from 10,500 feet into World Finals activities taking place at the University of Knoxville. Over 7,500 people watched in awe as the parachutists passed a baton between them as they jumped and carried each participating state/countries flag with them to the ground.
- **Pin trading** is wildly popular today. How did it get its start? It evolved from a few teams trading tee shirts and buttons in the early 80's to the pastime it has become.
- World Finals **graduation** started at the request of participant **Michael Hughes** from South Carolina. He asked Dr. Sam if he could have a ceremony since he was missing his graduation. It has since grown into an important part of World Finals.
- Various **U.S. presidents** have supported Odyssey of the Mind and World Finals. Ronald Regan, George and Barbara Bush, and Bill Clinton have all sent greetings or representatives to attend World Finals on their behalf. **President George Bush** even joked in a televised speech at the Awards Ceremony, "Knowing the problems Sam Micklus had you solve, maybe you'd be willing to try your hand or your minds on cutting the federal deficit."
- The first international team to participate in World Finals was **Canada** — Ontario has been involved since the second World Finals. The first overseas team came from the **Philippines** a few years later.
- A Glassboro, N.J. student inspired the coveted **Ranatra Fusca Award** in one of Dr. Sam's industrial design classes. The student built a device that strode across the water. It reminded Dr. Sam of a **water bug** and was named after a classification of water scorpions. This particular type of scorpion lives underwater, which is where the student ended up the first time he tried to cross the lake on his "floatation device!" After a few adjustments the student was successful, but it was the creative-thinking and risk-taking that impressed Dr. Sam.
- **Fast facts:** The first **Creativity Festival** was held during the first Iowa WF in 1990. **OMER's** first WF appearance was at the University of Maryland in 1988. The first **senior citizen** WF team made its debut in 2005. The **Creativity Award** used to be called the **Lipper Foundation Award**.