



## THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ODYSSEY

*This team's story echoes challenges that many teams go through — and rise above — in order to solve a problem. As is often the case, the journey of solving the problem can lead to as much or more growth than placing first or going to World Finals. So as the competition year comes to a close, remember how much each participant has changed and grown through the journey of solving an Odyssey of the Mind problem. Thanks to all volunteers, coaches and teams for being part of the Odyssey family!*

We have family involved in OotM, but never fully understood what is involved until last year when my daughter, then a fourth grader, came home with an invite to be a participant. We were thrilled she was even considered to be on a team. She was put on team of fifth graders with one other girl her age.

They went on to spend countless hours on *The Email Must Go Through*. I took her to all the meetings, workshops, and countless early morning gatherings to hear them practice lines, hammer with nails, and learn their way around a workshop.

Although she was with girls she did not know and were older than her, I was so happy to see the older girls take the younger ones under their wings and fly with them. I watched my daughter grow in confidence and maturity as they worked together so diligently to reach a specific goal.

We made it to regionals, not even thinking of going further, just wanting to get through the day. The girls did their skit and got through spontaneous. They enjoyed every minute of it and it turns out their hard work paid off. They sat in the crowd listening to others get awards, never expecting they would be next.

Their team was called for first place and they just sat there, unable to speak, and then suddenly let out a cry of excitement — making the crowd laugh. They went up the wrong way to get their awards, still shrieking with excitement and tears. In their wildest dreams they never thought they would make it. They were doing this just for the experience and learning to work with others.

So then it was off to States—back to work fixing errors and deciding what they could do better without changing anything. They put in many hours and were prepared for whatever they may encounter.

On tournament day, we met up to find that the other fourth grader was ill with the stomach flu. But she pulled herself together and rode 2½ hours to the meet with us just so she didn't let down her team.

When it came time to go on, she mustered all her strength and gave a great performance. This dedication paid off — they placed fifth!

Although they were sad not to make it to Worlds, much to the relief of parents, I might add — they came out of this thrilled with each other and what they accomplished under so much pressure.

I myself was amazed at how well these girls worked as a team,

never letting each other down, always there to help one another — they really seemed to bond. It was a wonderful ending to a memorable experience in not only my daughter's life, but that of her family as well.

So here we are again, OotM — this year the two girls are now in fifth grade and are the veterans sharing their knowledge with new team members. Only time will tell how they will do. If nothing else comes from it but good work ethics, increased knowledge, thinking outside the box, and new friendships — that is all we can ask for.

New experiences feed the mind and keeps it going strong. The combination of imagination, science, math, English, and new social interactions makes this a wonderful program to be involved in. I thank you all that developed this program and all the volunteers that put so many hours into producing what ends up being a spectrum of knowledge and talent.

~Judy Cummings, Auburn, NY

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### Also in this issue...

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## MAX MANSFIELD AWARD WINNER ANNOUNCED

Arizona is this year's winning Association for membership growth. It has steadily increased its memberships over the past couple of years and has broken through to its highest level this year.

Association Director Deanna Day and her volunteers have worked hard to increase memberships because they believe in Odyssey of the Mind's educational value. "I believe it is important to grow what Odyssey represents through creative problem-solving. Memberships are simply the vehicle for reaching more participants," said Deanna.

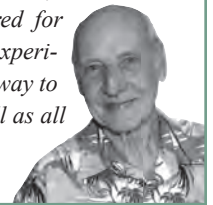
One of the ways Arizona volunteers have increased their numbers is by learning what schools in the area need and showing them the many ways that OotM fulfills those needs, "We focused on Odyssey as a supplemental opportunity that supports STEM, Common Core, etc. that is provided through the school curriculum," said Deanna.

Of course, once a school becomes part of Odyssey, the mem-

bers usually help spread the word even more and this type of customer service is also something Arizona focuses on. She continued, "Happy, successful Omers are the best as they give us testimonials all the time!"

Deanna recognizes that, the same way participants must utilize teamwork, those running the program must rely on that skill as well, "We are very excited to win the award as it recognizes the tremendous volunteer network of the State Association that makes this wonderful program available for students. We are thrilled to be a part of what is positive and productive in education."

*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

Seeing is Believing...Or is it?

Harry Houdini (1874 – 1926)

Harry Houdini not only revolutionized the art of magic performance, but his name became synonymous with the art of escape or the ability to get out of impossible situations. He worked his way to fame in the magic world and still continues to influence it today.

Houdini was born **Erich Weiss** in 1874 in Budapest, Hungary. He was four years old when his family moved to America in 1878. His family lived in Wisconsin early in his life, and then eventually settled in New York City.

His early magic career did not go very well. He tried many forms of magic, from card manipulations as the "King of Cards" to illusions and more. By 1896 he considered giving up magic and attempted to sell his secrets for \$20 in a newspaper ad. Fortunately, there were no takers.

As he continued to work he found some success as "Handcuff Harry" where he challenged police officers to handcuff him and escape in front of an audience. Soon crowds began to grow tired of the trick. All of that changed when Houdini saw a straightjacket while visiting a psychiatrist friend. Most would want nothing to do with

such an item—but he was intrigued and inspired to create a new act around it. He decided he would escape from the straightjacket while hanging upside down from his ankles—it was a hit!

He capitalized on this success and went on to escape from jail cells, from handcuffed bridge jumps, from padlocked crates underwater, from locked canvas mailbags- even from a giant paper bag, without ripping it apart!

This evolved his practice into the infamous escape act he is known for and that still influences today's magic acts. He also realized that his act was more captivating if the audience could actually watch him perform the escape instead of being hidden inside of something. With its success came the development of the spectacular escapes that would make Houdini a legend.

His skill at publicizing these events also helped to grow his fame—allowing him and his family, which included five brothers and a sister, to live a more comfortable life.

Aside from being credited with the invention of some of the most important illusions and escape acts, he was also the president of the **Society of American Magicians** for several years until his death in 1926—the only person to hold the title for more than one year.

Houdini also appeared in movies, performing his own dangerous stunts, and was awarded a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. His interests even varied to flight—he was the first man to fly in Australia; and invention—he holds several patents for improved construction of diving suits of the time.

Houdini was a unique, motivated magician that intrigued fans around the world. His creative magic acts combined with his ability to promote them have led to his continued fame and influence—even over 85 years later.

# 2014-15 Long-Term Problem Synopses\*

*Tentative as of April 8, 2014. All problems have an 8-minute time limit.*

## Problem 1: Runaway ‘Train’

The team’s problem is to design, build and operate one or more vehicles that will travel on tracks and make stops at different stations without touching the floor. While traveling between stations, the vehicles must overcome obstacles —moving uphill, towing something, and more. The theme of the performance will explain the vehicle’s difficulties on the track and will include a ‘conductor’ character. Once the vehicle reaches its final destination it will display a flag or banner during a victory lap!

*DIVISIONS I, II & III. Cost limit: \$145 USD.*

## Problem 2: Experiencing Technical Difficulties

The problem is to design, build, and demonstrate various devices that complete specific tasks. The team will create a theme where technical failures must be resolved through completing the tasks. There will be a list of tasks to choose from including ring a bell, change the wording on something, sound an alarm, move an object, etc. There will also be a mysterious engineer character. Of course, there’s a twist — all of the devices must be powered by rubber bands!

*DIVISIONS I, II, III & IV. Cost limit: \$145 USD.*

## Problem 3: Classics... Pandora’s Box

In this classics problem, teams will put a video game spin on the story of Pandora’s Box. A gamer character will take on this multi-level game inspired by the Greek myth. The game will include a prologue that depicts the original story of Pandora’s Box, three characters representing different evils that escaped the box, and a power meter that represents the gamer character’s health. To beat the game, the player will advance to the final level where it will release hope into the world.

*DIVISIONS I, II, III & IV. Cost limit: \$125 USD.*

## Problem 4: Lose Your Marbles

This problem requires teams to design, build, and test a structure, made only of balsa wood and glue, that will balance and support as much weight as possible. The structure will also hold five marbles that will be released during weight placement as a result of a team-created device removing a piece of the structure. After the crusher board and one additional weight are placed on top of the structure, the first marble will be released. After the next weight is supported, the team will use its device to release another marble, and so on. The team will incorporate weight placement and “losing your marbles” into the theme of the performance.

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

## Problem 5: Silent Movie

Lights, camera...action! In this problem teams will create and present a performance depicting a Director character that produces and presents a silent movie featuring a humorous villain character that commits three silly acts of “villainy”. Characters that are in the movie may not speak as part of the presentation of the movie. Instead, like classic silent films, the team will use music played on a team-created instrument and creatively displayed subtitles to convey its story to the audience and judges. Also, teams will use a signal to indicate when the movie begins and ends.

*DIVISIONS I, II, III & IV. Cost limit: \$125 USD.*

## Primary: Wacky Weather Warning

Teams will create and present a humorous performance where a meteorologist makes three predictions of “wacky weather”. The meteorologist will speak in rhymes and use a team-created forecasting device and a backdrop that serves as a weather map. The community will “tune in” to get the weather report in any creative way the team wishes.

*Cost limit: \$125 USD.*

*All problems copyright Creative Competitions, Inc. — 2014*

# Random RACES

## COACHES & OFFICIALS PROBLEM

### 2014

#### WORLD OF THE MIND ODYSSEY OF THE MIND FINALS

### A. THE PROBLEM

Your problem is to design, build, and operate a device that will launch tennis balls towards a target in order to move it down a course and across a finish line in a race. Entries will be teamed together to race two targets down the course and compete in advancing rounds.

### B. LIMITATIONS

1. The Device:
  - a. must be original, however, it may include commercially produced parts.
  - b. may be operated by as many people as you wish, but remember, everyone assisting with a particular device constitutes one entry. That is, each device is considered an entry no matter how many people assist with the device.
  - c. is allowed launch tennis balls in any way except through the use of AC current. Each entry will have the opportunity to launch three standard tennis balls. Launched balls cannot be retrieved until the end of the round. Entries must provide 3 standard tennis balls. The tennis balls:
    - (1) must not be altered to change their properties, such as making them heavier, larger, smaller, etc. Each tennis ball should be marked so it is easily retrieved and returned.
    - (2) may have materials added/attached to them provided they do not alter the properties of the tennis ball. If materials are added they must not be used or designed to alter the level of impact the device has on the target. For example, an item that bursts on impact is not allowed but a string attached is allowed.
  - d. must fit through a standard doorway.
  - e. must be safe in its design. If it is judged to pose potential harm to anyone or the competition site, it will be prohibited. See the *2013-14 Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide*.
2. The Targets:
  - a. will be 4' x 4' wheeled objects provided by the tournament director. These will be approximately 3" above the floor.
  - b. must be moved only by tennis balls launched from the devices.

- c. will race to cross the finish line first. If neither target crosses the finish line the one that travels farthest from its starting line will be the winner and the devices on that team will advance.
3. The competition site:
  - a. will have two setups – one for each team of devices. Each side will have a target approximately 19' away from its Launch Line.
  - b. Each team will start out with five entries on each side. The teams will be RANDOMLY selected for each round.
  - c. All devices and the team members assisting with them must remain behind the launch line when attempting to move the target.

### C. THE COMPETITION

1. You will be assigned a number when you register at the competition site.
2. When your number is announced you must move to your assigned Launch Line with your device and any people who are assisting with the device.
3. A judge will blow a whistle to indicate that it's time to launch and again when it is time to stop.
4. Whatever side pushes the target across the Finish Line first will advance to the next round. To cross the Finish Line the target must break the plane of the line. If neither target crosses the Finish Line see B2c.
5. Qualifying rounds will run as needed, with finalists advancing at each stage. Teams will be regrouped and re-assigned between rounds.
6. Each round will last 60 seconds or until a Target crosses the Finish Line. If time ends when the target is still moving, it will be judged wherever it stops; however, when time ends, you must stop launching tennis balls.

### D. AWARDS

1. Trophies will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place.
2. A trophy will be awarded to the team with the most outstanding STYLE. In this problem, Style will be awarded to the entry that has the most creative/popular visual effect when it launches one or more of its tennis balls. Every contestant is eligible, even those who place 1st, 2nd, or 3rd.



# ODYSSEY OF THE MIND 2014-15 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Questions? Email [info@odysseyofthemind.com](mailto: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 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 per division 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 correspondence) \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_  
 Daytime phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_

*\*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**, and more!*

- \_\_\_\_\_ **Individual 2014-15 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 (must register 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 @ \$9.95 *Odyssey of the Mind promotional DVD* .....
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*\* Lots of Problems. . . And Tips to Make You More Creative @ \$17 *Tips on problem-solving* .....
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*\* Creative Interaction @ \$17 *Discusses the importance of interaction between students* .....
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*\* Applying Your Creativity @ \$15 *Discusses different types of human creativity* .....
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Spirit of Creativity @ \$15 *Anecdotes about OotM written by Dr. Sam* .....
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*\* Spontaneous Combustion @ \$7.50 *Booklet of spontaneous problems and tips* .....
- \_\_\_\_\_ Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide @ \$7.50 (one is automatically included with membership) .....
- \_\_\_\_\_ Coaches Training Video @ \$20 *DVD with tips and techniques for coaches* .....
- \_\_\_\_\_ packs of Balsa Wood (premium grade AAA 36" x 1/8" x 1/8") @ \$20 per bundle (50 pieces) .....

**Spend \$40 or more and get free Shipping & Handling!** Contact CCI for international S&H.

Orders under \$40 add \$7.50 for S&H. There is no S&H charge for membership packets.

\*\* These are books with a collection of long-term and/or spontaneous problems from past years.

Subtotal \_\_\_\_\_

S&H \_\_\_\_\_

**Total** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Payment Methods (Sorry we do not accept phone orders.)

- **U.S. Mail:** Send this completed form along with a check 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 credit card information and fax to (856) 256.2798.
- **Online:** Pay by credit card at [www.odysseyofthemind.com](http://www.odysseyofthemind.com).

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## Odyssey of the Mind

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Hey Teams,  
It's time to renew! Be among the first  
to receive next year's Long-Term  
problems.

Your friend,  
**OMER**

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

## COU... CO—YOU!

*By Fern Brown, Maine AD & COU Board Member Secretary*

Throughout the year, and especially around World Finals time, you are apt to hear the initials “COU,” but you may not know all that the organization does.

Creative Opportunities Unlimited, or COU, is active in supporting teams and associations involved with Odyssey of the Mind. For teams, this involvement is most obvious in the forms of scholarships and World Finals housing grants. Since 2000, COU has given out almost \$200,000 in college scholarships to over 250 Odyssey of the Mind team members. Money earned through raffle sales of pin collections and quilts at World Finals goes directly into the fund to support our many worthy scholarship applicants.

COU also provides housing grants to World Finals teams. Last year alone, the value of these coveted grants was about \$60,000! These grants help teams from the U.S. and abroad.

We hope you will support the efforts of COU to help Odyssey teams, because YOU are the real U in COU!

For more info visit: [www.creativeopportunities.org](http://www.creativeopportunities.org).

## Call for Submissions

If you enjoyed the article on page one from Judy Cummings and have a story of your own to tell about Odyssey of the Mind feel free to email it to: [pressroom@odysseyofthemind.com](mailto:pressroom@odysseyofthemind.com) for consideration.

We love hearing everyone's Odyssey story, those are often the most compelling. It can be a testimonial, college application essay, team story, or anything you think would inspire others! We look forward to hearing from you.

