



# 2012-13 Odyssey of the Mind

Information

Newsletter

## COMMITMENT DATES FOR ALL TEAM MEMBERS:

Sat. Dec. 8, 2012	12:30
Sat. Feb. 16, 2013	all day
Sat. April 6, 2013	all day
Wednesdays 3:50 -	5:30

## What IS Odyssey of the Mind?

This is a great opportunity for your student to have a creative adventure! Founded in 1978, Odyssey of the Mind (OotM) is an international, creative problem-solving program for students in kindergarten through college. Today, hundreds of thousands of students in all of the fifty states and over **thirty countries** participate in the annual programs!

Teams of 5 – 7 students will pool their diverse talents and find innovative solutions to the “long-term problem” they choose (from a selection of 5 possible choices). Problems may involve building mechanical devices such as spring-driven cars or giving their own

portrayals of classical literature. Teams will develop and practice their solution, which will be presented in 8 minutes or less at the regional competition **Saturday, FEBRUARY 16<sup>th</sup>**. They will also be judged on a “spontaneous problem” the day of the tournament. Each team is given limited time to solve the “spontaneous problem” and no one knows what the problem will be – it’s completely spontaneous!

While the coach might help guide the teams, outside assistance is strictly prohibited. Everything must be thought of by the team, created by the

team, assembled, performed, and disassembled by the team.

Odyssey of the Mind encourages teamwork, stresses the value of diverse talents, and rewards creativity.



*Totally amazing “recycled” costume made entirely from trash! Bonus points!*

## 2012-13 Long-Term Problem Synopses

- **Pet Project:** design, build and run 3 vehicles that will deliver parts to an assembly
- **The Email Must Go Through:** performance representing messages being sent by email, including return receipt, a SPAM filter and more
- **ARTchitecture: The Musical:** performance including a replica of an architectural structure built 1000AD—1600AD and 2 songs with choreographed movement
- **Tumble-wood:** Balsa wood structure that must support weight after rolling down a ramp
- **It’s How You Look at It:** humorous performance with 2 very odd characters

## A few notes on helping:

Successful Odyssey of the Mind teams have **support**. Each member of the team will need to commit to the dates listed and at least one of the following:

- ◇ Selling a \$25 ad for the competition program guide
- ◇ An adult (over 16) to

help work or judge on the day of the competition

- ◇ An adult (over 16) to co-coach and help with after school meetings (once per month)
- ◇ Snacks for the meetings (once per month)

When it comes to working

on their problem solution, however, no one but team members can contribute ideas, suggestions, or even answers to questions! Teams lose points every year due to “outside assistance” so talk to your student about how you can (and can’t) help!

## More details on “OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE”

There is a story told of an elementary student who was in costume for her OotM performance and needed to go to the bathroom. Grandma was there to help and cheer her on, and took her to the restroom minutes before their team was to begin. She helped the girl get out of, and back into her costume, and while the little girl was at the sink washing her hands grandma took out a bobby pin and pulled back a stray curl that had fallen loose.

The judge who happened to have been in the restroom at the same time didn't take off points for the grandmother helping the little girl go potty—getting out of the cos-

tume and back in again was an age-appropriate, legitimate need. However, when grandma pinned back her hair, that was outside assistance.

It all comes back to what the judges see, hear, and observe during the performance. It all has to be initiated, created, built, glued, hammered, sawn, clipped, sewed... by students.

When grandma put the bobby pin in the little girl's hair she changed the girls costume, her

appearance in front of the judges, when she performed. That is one of many issues that constitutes the evil, dreaded, OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE.



## A Parent's Promise

I agree, in the proper spirit of Odyssey of the Mind, not to interfere with the team's solution. All creations, inventions, decorations, ideas, must come from the team members.

I agree to make every effort to have my child attend each meeting. If there is a con-

flict, my child or I

will notify the coach. I understand that they have a commitment to their team.

I realize that my child's coach will be contributing a significant amount to time and efforts to provide a rewarding experience. I will

try to be as cooperative and helpful as possible.

I understand the Odyssey of the Mind philosophy doesn't measure team success with scores but by the learning experience and accomplishment that team members feel from solving the problem. I promise to help my child concentrate on having a positive experience.

**This will be an experience you and your child will always remember!**

## Contacting the Coach—Kelly Larrow



You can reach me by email [kelly.larrow@polk-fl.net](mailto:kelly.larrow@polk-fl.net) or phone (863) 701-1066 extension 252 if you have any questions or concerns.

I look forward to an awesome year with Odyssey of the Mind!