

The Jaguar's Roar

Message from the Principal

Paul said; "In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" (Acts 20:35 NIV).

During this holiday season, people are more prone to show kindness with the excitement and anticipation this time of year brings. Just recently, as I was going through the drive-thru to pick up a morning meal, the person in front of me, whom I shall never meet, paid for my meal! Although I was prepared to render payment in the amount of \$8.43, it gave me great joy to receive this generous gift from a stranger.

OJA is a school where students are encouraged to show kindness in their everyday interactions with each other. They are taught to include each other in play and to speak up for their peers who are timid and withdrawn. Students are taught about the power of words, and they practice using phrases that are uplifting and positive and learn that anything else is not acceptable. A recent conversation was overheard by a parent between a teacher and student. The student was trying to excuse his inappropriate and unkind behavior, and the teacher patiently insisted that higher expectations were held of him and that his words and behaviors were not accepted at OJA. The parent later expressed appreciation in the persistence of that teacher in leaving no room for negotiation and for lifting up the child to a higher level of expectations.

Orlando Junior Academy works hard to allow students the opportunities to practice kind gestures and deeds by helping out with various projects in the local communities in an effort to instill sympathy and empathy in our students. This year we have adopted the Orlando Union Rescue Mission as our extended family. It is our hope that each student experiences the heartfelt joy that comes from giving.

Homelessness can be a difficult time for adults, but the situation becomes even more heartbreaking when children are involved. O.U.R. Mission Home is a 178-bed transitional housing facility accommodating single women, single mothers with children and married couples with children. The facility's clean, home-like atmosphere provides residents private and semi-private rooms and bathrooms at no charge. Homeless women, children and families live in the Home until they are able to regain their footing and live a self-sufficient lifestyle once again.

Orlando Junior Academy staff and students are teaming up this holiday season to give some very deserving children the opportunity to pick out gifts for their mothers, wrap them and present them for Christmas. We have asked all of our OJA students to go with their parents and choose a gift between \$10-\$15 and bring it in as a donation to share with the children at the Orlando Union Rescue Mission. Thank you for helping your child act out the words of our dear Friend Jesus, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

In His service,
Ms. Agbonkhese

Fall Festival by the Numbers

With tickets and food cards in hand, families went off to discover what treats were in store for them at the Annual OJA Fall Festival. No one was disappointed. There was something for each family member to participate in. Some of the highlights included:

- 45** cars were washed by the 8th Graders and their parents.
- 196** squares were painted in the sunflower painting that sold at our first Live Art Auction.
- 24** feet were conquered by several brave people who scaled to the top of the climbing wall.
- 200+** hotdogs/burgers were consumed.
- 3** times the Jailer and his guards managed to put our fearless leader, Ms. A. in jail.
- 2** attempts were made to put Mr. Stacye Hill in jail. He still remains at large!
- >100** beautiful OJA student faces were painted.

Plan now to be at the Fall Festival next year! You won't want to miss out on all the fun.



Art In The Garden

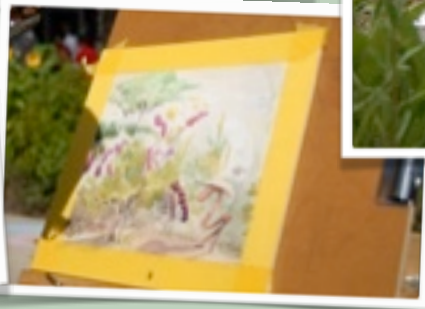
“Look, the garden has come to life!” exclaimed an excited young OJA student as he watched a stilt-walker whose height, colors, and costume portrayed the beauty of a tree in full autumn foliage. Indeed, the garden did come to life on November 1 at OJA. Artists of all kinds, new and returning, favored OJA students with their time and talents.

Mrs. Lynnsey Adams and Mr. Frank Selvage shared their love of nature through photography. Such beauty, and so close-up! Handbells sang their melodies in the cool morning breezes as the older OJA students captivated their younger peers’ attention.

Mr. Sondag captured the pride and joy of OJA, our diverse and beautiful children, in his coveted painting. An earthworm, sketched in caricature-style, wiggled onto Mr. Casterline’s water-color pad, while Mrs. Casterline filled her canvas with stems and leaves and flowers and trees.

Students looked on in wonder as Jordan Jones, an OJA alumnus, captured the essence of the violin in her performance. Pastor Hickam and his friend, Sebastian Zaldibar, shared their garden-inspired compositions on the bongos and guitar.

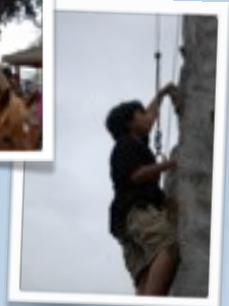
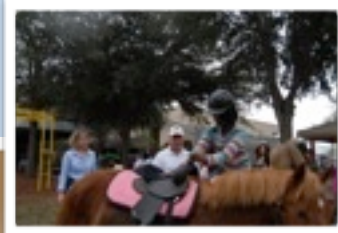
Once again, OJA students basked in the warmth of creativity’s powerful rays. Thanks to the incredible support of community friends and guests, OJA students are truly learning to appreciate and recognize the tug that nature has on our human senses and emotions. ■



Thank you

The Fall Festival Organizing Committee would like to thank the following businesses for their donation of goods, services, and/or sponsorship. Their willing generosity helped make the Festival a success.

- Sam Snead’s Oak Grill & Tavern
- Universal Studios (via Jennifer French)
- Disney Quest (via Christine Hohf)
- Sweat Gym of College Park (via Laura Allen & Azurdee Ramasar)
- Orlando Science Center
- Forest Lake Academy



Why I teach at OJA

Lori Hudak, Kindergarten Teacher

For each issue this year The Jaguar's Roar is asking an OJA teacher to share what motivates him/her each day and why he/she teaches at OJA. Following is the story of Lori Hudak, OJA's kindergarten teacher for the past 15 years:

"Why do I teach at OJA?" That is a loaded question! I mean, where do I begin?

I guess I will begin with where I first taught. For my first 12 years of teaching, I taught in a multi-grade SDA school on Florida's Gulf Coast. Some years I taught grades 1-4, other years I taught grades 1-8, and other years I taught grades K-2. Needless to say, those were interesting years!

During this time our two children (Joshua and Jessica) were born, and we began to think about what we would do when they reached 9th grade. We didn't want to put them into public school, but we also didn't want to send them away to boarding academy at the young age of 13 or 14. As it turned out, God had that all worked out for us. In 1996 I began an interview process that led me to OJA. I



immediately fell in love with the school board, the staff that I met, and Mr. Mathi, the principal at the time. So, I was thrilled when OJA chose me from amongst the various candidates for the open teaching position. Plus, my children would now be able to attend Forest Lake Academy (FLA) when the time came!

There are so many things I like about teaching at OJA. First, OJA's staff is truly dedicated to Christian education and is committed to making a difference in the lives of its students. I also love teaching at OJA because of its diversity in ethnicity and culture. It reminds me of what heaven will be like.

Speaking of heaven, that is one of our favorite topics in the kindergarten classroom! The children love to imagine what it will be like and what they will do when they see Jesus for the first time. Recently, we made a class book entitled, *We Can Only Imagine*, and in this book

the children illustrated what they imagined heaven to be like. How exciting! Singing praises to our Maker, praying to our Best Friend, and reading Bible stories that help us learn how to be more like Him--I absolutely LOVE the fact that I can begin each day at OJA in this way.

Finally, over the years, I have worked with so many amazing students, parents, and teachers. It's all about building relationships, genuinely caring for one another, and putting all our trust in God. In the end, our two children attended and graduated from OJA, FLA, and are now at Florida Hospital College. God answered our prayers for giving an SDA Christian education to our own two children, and in the process, He gave me the blessing of working in His school--Orlando Junior Academy. I can't think of any place I'd rather be teaching! ■



An OJA Family Worship

by Leanne Andino

On Thursday, December 1, the entire school body of Orlando Junior Academy met in the Schmidt Auditorium of Forest Lake Academy to rehearse for the Annual Christmas Program. As is the daily habit for OJA, the day began with a short worship time. Following is a lucky parent's observations:

I sat there . . . taking it all in. A line of navy and khaki dressed eighth grade students were on the stage before me confidently leading the entire school body in song. "We are soldiers in the army." A teacher was lovingly greeting a late arriving student and helping her find a seat. "We have to fight, although we have to die." The principal was on stage smiling, singing, and swaying (just a little). "We have to hold up the blood stained

banner." The son of a good friend was waving "hello" from the row in front of me. "We have to hold it up until we die."

The singing continued, "Now the fifth grade, they were soldiers." It seemed that every teacher and student in the building was now singing. "They had their hand on the gospel plow." Even the "tough", upper grade boys behind me were singing. "One day they got old, they couldn't fight anymore, they said." And now my son's entire class was jumping to their feet and shouting as loudly as they could, "Stand up and fight anyhow!"

The song was fun. The singing was loud. There was harmony. There was clapping. There was electrifying exuberance. But, as the song continued and each grade was asked to stand up and "fight (for Jesus)," I looked again at those eighth graders on that stage in front of me, and, suddenly, my heart was full, and my eyes were wet.

The tears came not because it was the Class of 2012 that I saw so

comfortably standing before their school, but because I envisioned my son's own class, the Class of 2015, leading out instead. The tears came because I knew that in the few short years between now and then, my son would experience countless moments like I had just witnessed--moments when he would be given opportunities to lead; moments when a teacher would show him kindness; moments when his principal would be fun and loving to him; moments when he would be encouraged to share his love for Jesus with his friends. The tears came because I knew these moments would be ingrained in him. The tears came because I felt the excitement, the joy, the warmth, the acceptance that one only feels when they are a part of a family, a family like OJA.

I thought I had come that morning to drop my children off to rehearse for a Christmas event that I would attend the following night. Instead, I witnessed the REAL Christmas event a day early, and I was blessed! ■

Who will BEE OJA's Top Spellers?

On Wednesday, January 11, OJA will learn the answer to that question when 27 OJA students will compete in the Second Annual OJA Spelling Bee to be held at Florida Hospital Church, beginning at 9:00 a.m. At the end of the day, the winners of the grades 1 - 3 and the grades 4 - 8 competitions will go home with \$50 and \$100 in cash, respectively.

The finalists were determined as the last three standing at the end of a spelling bee held in each classroom on November 10. Since then, they have been encouraged to attend after school study sessions at which spelling strategies and bee rules are explained and mock competitions are practiced.

Because the Spelling Bee is a school-wide event coordinated in an effort to stimulate all students about the importance of good spelling, students are encouraged to leave their blue and red uniforms at home that day and wear yellow and black attire instead. Parents are also invited to come and watch how exciting academic competition can be. ■

Congratulations "Top Bees"

First Grade: Samuel Sebastian Seth	Jeneice Morgan
Second Grade (Mrs. Lowry): Ethan Danielle Jonathan	Fifth Grade: Christopher Kaylie Gabriel
Second Grade (Mr. Eakins): Shelby Bryce Daniel	Sixth Grade: Mavrick Camila Nicole
Third Grade: Taylor Adonna Jacob	Seventh Grade: Kyle Noah Ohimai
Fourth Grade: Nicholas	Eighth Grade: Andrea Faith Areana

First Quarter Honor Roll

Principal's List

Students in grades 6-8 must exemplify good citizenship, attendance and have all A's on quarterly report card in all subjects.

8th-
Jacqueline
Andrea
Daniella
Taelor

7th-
Ohimai

6th-
Michael
Nicole
Vanessa

Honor Roll

Students in grades 3-8 must exemplify good citizenship, attendance and have only A's and B's on quarterly report card in all subjects.

8th-
Kevin
Jonah
Areanna
Wilson
Michelle
Faith

7th-
Jacob
Noah
Azhante
Joshua
Kyle

6th-
Camila
Lyndon

5th-
Caleb
Christopher
Briane
Kaylie
Christian
Tai
Ayana
Rachel
Maurie

4th-
Jeneice
Noelys
Soleil
Damara
Lauren
Breanna
Morgan
Kristoffer
Rachel

3rd-
Isaiah
Daniel

Ryan
Christian
Taylor
Lawryn
Justin
Jazlynn
Xavier
Spencer
Alex
Elsea
R' Jeann
Adonna
Jared

Honorable Mention

Students who earn A's and B's but receive one C on quarterly report card will be placed on honorable mention.

8th
Victoria
Delanie
Juan

7th-
Jonathan
Gabriella

6th-
Airyannah
Konnor

5th-
John-Dalton
Jaela

Jared

4th-
John

3rd-
Joshua
Jacob

Perfect Attendance

Students who receive zero tardies or absent marks daily for the entire quarter. Students will enjoy a refreshing treat with the principal.

Danielle
Christian
Skyler
Alecia
Lawryn
Kristoffer
Damara
John
Ayana
Kaylie
Briane
Eric
Emerria
Nicole
Ohimai
Kyle
Azhante
Jacob
Wilson
Jacqueline
Daniella