

# THE LOTUS LAMP

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## Lotus Relives The Past In Ghana

When the Lotus Academy staff traveled to Ghana in August, they visited one of the slave castles at Elmina. Mothura Serquurr was one of many who was deeply moved by the experience, and she has shared some of her feelings and thoughts with us.

“Imagine yourself in a scenario where there is no time nor place and the event of this period continues to live on forever. In one giant step it places you in the emotional whim of lives not of your time, but those lives had a connection to your past. This is the intense awareness that came over me when visiting the Elmina Castle in Ghana.

“The actual sight of the dungeon is grotesque, dark, small, and smelly. My mind began to visualize the inhumane conditions my ancestors endured by the forceful hands of their slavers. I was beside myself, engulfed in an emotional state over which I had little control. The tears soon followed. How could a person who considers himself or herself human create such an ungodly condition and continue to carry it out over centuries, not just days, weeks, but centuries?! My mind still has difficulty understanding this and



**“THE DUNGEON”**

“ ’Tis not my dwelling but a place I was taken.

I was taken not of free will but by force, as I am weak and shaken.

I want to go home, where faces are kind and adoring.

I want to go back and be with my loved ones forlorn.

But destiny awaits; for what did I do to deserve this? A true *Hell on Earth*, life cycle amiss.

The mentality in charge here, their thoughts such wickedness and evil, consciously plotting each step, aligning himself with the devil.

Inhumane conditions, urinate, defecate where I lay; tortured, abused, my body no longer my own and yearning death each coming day.

This is my future. The only path I now see; so what of life, hope, joy—

never more it appears, not for me.”

*[Mothura Serquurr Heru-t]*

**“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”**

**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**

## Colds And Flu

Unlike drugs that merely mask symptoms, botanicals work in concert with your body's natural defense sys-

It might start with a persistent cough, a stuffy nose or a scratchy throat. Somehow you know it won't stop there. One moment you're fine and the next, a full blown cold is upon you. Completely ignoring your busy schedule, a microscopic invader has once again bypassed your defenses and taken up residence in the dark, wet cavities of your upper respiratory tract. The vast majority of "acute" (meaning recent onset) respiratory infections are caused by viruses that don't respond to antibiotics. Yet, many doctors continue to prescribe them despite numerous articles in medical publications that discourage their use.

Not only are antibiotics ineffectual against viruses, they also kill off healthy intestinal bacteria, which can lead to diarrhea and promote the development of dangerous strains of bacteria – the so-called "super bugs" that are resistant to many powerful antibiotics. Some are even resistant to all antibiotics.

Other conventional medications your doctor might prescribe include cough suppressants, decongestants that shrink swollen nasal membranes and antihistamines that dry up mucus. These medications may help decrease symptoms, but they also cause side effects, such as drowsiness, anxiety and elevated blood pressure. These drugs do not assist the immune system in fighting off the virus.

Some practitioners of natural medicine suggest that colds are a normal event. From their perspective, all that extra mucus flowing from your nose may simply be a way for the body to periodically cleanse itself. When you take medicine to cover these symptoms, you interfere with the process. A better approach is to work along with the body's natural defense systems. Fortunately, a number of nutritional and herbal remedies can assist in this task – with few side effects. But first, let's look at why we sometimes fall prey to a virus.

## Tips For Healthy Living

Unless you are a hermit, it's hard to avoid exposure to viruses, especially during the colder months. The likelihood of contagion is reduced with these minor life-style modifications:

1. **Wash your hands.** Medical studies have clearly shown that frequent hand washing (especially after being around sick people) interrupts the primary route viruses use to invade our systems: from the hands to the nose and eyes.
2. **Drink lots of fluids.** Dry, irritated sinus passages are an open invitation to viruses. Liquids help maintain healthy mucus production, keeping nasal membranes moist. Drink natural spring water, herbal teas and fresh-squeezed citrus juices. Avoid coffee, black tea and alcohol, all of which can stimulate the kidneys, causing fluid loss and dehydration.
3. **Irrigate your nose.** Gently irrigating the nose with a prepared diluted-salt solution or using the formula below\* once or twice daily helps flush out viruses before they can take hold.

\*To 4 ounces of warm water, add 1/4 teaspoon of salt and 1/8 teaspoon of baking soda. Use a bulb syringe or Neti pot to flush the sinuses twice daily throughout the winter season.

### ENHANCE YOUR IMMUNITY

Having good genes is only one part of the equation. Perhaps the best preventive is keeping your immune system in tip-top shape. Here are four simple things you can do to boost your immunity:

1. **Move that body.** Even moderate exertion sufficient to increase your heart rate for at least 30 minutes, several times a week, has been shown to have beneficial effects on overall immune function.
2. **Chill out.** Engage in a structured activity to relieve stress on a daily basis, if possible. Meditation, Tai Chi, yoga, gardening, and dancing all fit the bill.
3. **Get your ZZZ's.** Don't forget to get adequate sleep, which allows your body to prepare for another day of work by eliminating toxins and repairing damaged tissue.
4. **Eat right.** Excessive starch or carbohydrates – especially refined sugar and products made from white flour – can interfere with immune functions. Minimize saturated fats and fried foods. Instead, eat several servings daily of fresh, colorful fruits and vegetables. The pigments in these foods contain carotenoids and bioflavonoids, naturally occurring plant chemicals that are potent antioxidants and immune enhancers.

"Parents need to serve as role models for children and to instill in them the fact that exercise, like healthy eating, should be a lifelong habit."

FLORENCE GRIFFITH JOYNER

## Lotus Age Group Happenings

The big news at Lotus is the imminent launching of our 21st century computer lab. The renovations to the room are nearly complete, the furniture has arrived, and the twenty-four workstations and server (the central computer) have been ordered from the Dell Computer Co. If their estimates are accurate, we should have all of the computers in by next week. Mothuri Darryl and Mothura Cynthia have already begun to lay the groundwork for a computer science program that will grow and expand to be second to none. There will be a big "open house" to celebrate the opening of the lab, so stay tuned for the notice about the particulars.

Mothura Evelyn and Shavi II have started the new school year with their positive vibe in full effect. They have set a goal to read at least one book per week. As the "elders" (at least they are for the Lower School) they will be setting an example, and illustrating the importance of reading as one of the most effective uses of one's mind. Shavi II, as is the case with so many of the other classes, is very excited about the exchange program with our sister schools on the Continent. Now, it centers around the exchange of letters, but everyone is looking forward to that time when we are exchanging students, teachers, and even parents! As Mothura Evelyn says, "It is a tremendous opportunity to go for self—African style. WATCH OUT! SHAVI II IS TRULY ON THE MOVE.

Many thanks and much gratitude to our Upper School students who work so hard to make the Lotus lunch program a success. Our "hot dog day" on Monday and "pizza day" on Friday would not be possible without these students, ably supervised by Mothuras Cynthia and Marcia, pitching in to make certain that everything gets done.

## Black Books Review: *Yesterday I Cried*, by Iyanla Vanzant

[Review Contributed by Mothura Terri]

I read the above book by Iyanla Vanzant, thought it was inspirational, and wanted to share my thoughts with you.

I am an avid reader of Iyanla's work. I think her writing is both spiritual and practical. This particular book is autobiographical. However, it is written in the third person, centered around what she used to be like as "Rhonda", her name before she was given her present name, "Iyanla", which means "Great Mother".

This book was written in a humble, yet awe inspiring manner, as she descriptively writes about the many achievements in her life, and issues to be dealt with. I found this encouraging, knowing that somebody as successful as Iyanla is willing and able to share her inner and most private thoughts to enable other Black women to recognize their true greatness.

I would recommend that you read this book, as it is truly empowering.

## Lotus Academy Book Store

On September 7, 1999, Lotus Academy opened its bookstore where fine books are sold along with school supplies. It is located on the first floor just behind the main office. The purpose is simple: we want all of our students, and their families, to increase the amount of time they spend reading. The bookstore is small now, but it will grow if we get the support of our entire Lotus family. Suggestions about titles or reading activities are always welcome. Please come and visit us.

## C.L.A.S. Is On The Move At Lotus

The candy sale that C.L.A.S. runs every year is in its final stages. All the orders have been placed, the money has been collected, and the candy will be delivered to Lotus on Thursday, November 11th. Parents will be at the school to prepare for the final distribution of the various orders. C.L.A.S. extends its thanks for those who supported this very important fund raiser. It provides a large portion of the C.L.A.S. budget which is generously shared on various projects throughout the school.

All parents should mark their calendars for Saturday, December 4th. On that afternoon, C.L.A.S. will hold its annual pre-Kwanzaa celebration at Lotus. As always, it will feature live entertainment, food, activities for the children, and a variety of vendors. It is a perfect time to get a head start on your holiday shopping, and to find bargains on quality items—African centered, as well as those traditional in nature.

Make it your business to attend, and bring out your whole family. It will be a fun day for all who attend.

## Whole Life Institute Investment Club

The Fortune Investment Club will be holding its second organizational meeting on Tuesday, November 9th, at 6:00 p.m. The club is open to anyone who wants to pool their money, know-how, and experience to invest in stocks of their choice. It is an excellent way to collaborate with others to earn money by making wise choice about the stock market. Don't be discouraged if you know little about investment, or if you are a beginner. The whole point of our Club is for everyone to learn and profit together. If you have any questions, call Mothura Marcia at the school.,

## Former Staff Member Pursues Her Dream

For those of you who have been wondering what Mothura Lizz has been up to, she is working her way through the vast world of entertainment. Two major agencies represent Lizz as an actress and send her on commercial and movie auditions.



In addition to her weekly auditions, she is a member of Conflict Resolution Theatre, where she teaches conflict resolution through creative role playing and lots of engaging games. Lizz is also pursuing her ultimate dream by singing, and spending much of her time writing material and looking for that opportunity to record.

As those who know her are aware, Lizz loves to perform. Sometimes it takes talent to perform, but most often, it takes confidence! Lizz is sure she has the ability to sing and act and attributes some of her confidence to the children of Lotus Academy. She adds; "When reading in front of the class or doing a math problem by yourself on the board, you are showing confidence and courage." Lizz concluded by saying that it is the children who inspire and motivate her and that she misses everyone and will keep all us at Lotus *up to date* with her continued success.

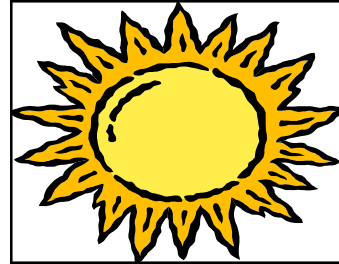
## Early Learning Center Guest

The E.L.C. had a surprise visitor who made himself at home with some help. A garden snake who was named *Slivery Jarule* found his way in and has been a part of the family for about four weeks. Everyone enjoys watching and feeding him. Our thanks go out to Niara's family for supplying us with a tank, and also to Majuel's family for the meal worms. Our joint effort has made our first pet feel very welcome.

# Monthly Reminders

## Early Learning Center

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- Thu, Nov. 4 – Ghana 2000 Trip Meeting (7:00 p.m.)**
- Tue, Nov. 9 – Fortune Investment Club Meeting**
- Wed, Nov. 24 – Spotlight on Young Artists**
- Thursday & Friday, Nov. 25 & 26 –SCHOOL CLOSED**
- Sat, Dec. 4 – C.L.A.S. Pre-Kwanzaa Celebration**
- Sat, Dec. 11 – Lotus Academy Skating Party**

## Lower & Upper Schools (Grades K to 8)



- Thu, Nov. 4 – Ghana 2000 Trip Meeting (7:00 p.m.)**
- Tue, Nov. 9 – Fortune Investment Club Meeting**
- Wed, Nov. 24 – Spotlight on Young Artists**
- Thursday & Friday, Nov. 25 & 26 –SCHOOL CLOSED**
- Sat, Dec. 4 – C.L.A.S. Pre-Kwanzaa Celebration**
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“You can’t have what you want until you want what you have.”

HORACE HARRIS