

THE LOTUS LAMP

September 29, 2003

Volume 7, Issue 1

Festival Time At Lotus



As is its custom, the Lotus Academy got into the new school year with another fantastic Seasonal Celebration.

The performers and the spectators took in all of the sights and sounds and headed for the feast afterwards.

"If we don't know ourselves, not only are we a puzzle to ourselves; other people are also a puzzle to us as well."

AMOS N. WILSON

The “Pearl” Anniversary Is Here !

One of the achievements that everyone associated with the Lotus Academy and the E.L.C. should be extremely proud of is the fact that we are about to celebrate our *30th* anniversary of quality academic and cultural education in an institution that is founded upon African-centered principles and that has been in continuous existence since 1974. We have been told that one’s thirtieth anniversary is symbolized traditionally by the unique gem that is known as a “pearl” and we plan to make use of that symbolism while we promote our anniversary.

Our longevity surely allows the Lotus Academy to qualify as a true “institution”, and we are very much aware that this achievement would not be possible without a tremendous amount of sacrifice from an endless list of staff, parents, and selfless supporters.

All of our special events, beginning with the Oratorical Contest in February of 2004 and ending with our Family Day in June of 2004, will be used to highlight our many achievements over the last thirty years. The big events for our 30th year celebration purposes will be the African-Centered Educational Conference (May 21-22) and the Awards Banquet (May 27th). We will get out to our parents and supporters plenty of advance notice and information about all of the events so that you can join with us in making them even more special.

Lotus Parent Partnership Corporation Membership

Enclosed in the envelope in which this *Lotus Lamp* was mailed is vital information about the Parent Partnership Program that applies to all of our K-8 parents. It should answer any questions about the program, but if it does not, please call the office to get any clarification. Because this material is being mailed at the end of September, the hourly requirement for the first trimester (only) has been reduced from eight (8) hours to six (6) hours for each K-8 family. Please take the time to read over this enclosed material care-

Lotus Academy Advisory Council

The Lotus Academy Advisory Council will have its first meeting of the school year on Thursday, October 9th, at 6:00 p.m. (the meetings will be the second Thursday of each month thereafter). As always, we invite *all* of our parents to come out and share your ideas and enthusiasm with us and learn more about your child’s school.

The Advisory Council is *the* parents’ group at the Lotus Academy, and is the first and best vehicle for feedback, communications, and participation for all interested parents. There are many committees that you can join to make a contribution and make your voice heard at Lotus. Come out and be a part of the group that truly makes things happen!

One of the initiatives that took place during this summer was the first ever “membership drive” for the Lotus Academy. The school is operated by a non-profit corporation, Lotus Academy, Inc., and the corporation is entitled to have members who can be an important part of its process of administration.

There are five different categories of membership: Student, Alumni, Honorary, Active, and Lifetime. Each category has a specific set of privileges and responsibilities, but they all allow for active participation and collaboration in planning for the future of Lotus. One of the most important aspects of membership is the opportunity to inform those who are interested about what is taking place at the school. Through the use of the Internet, the *Lotus Lamp*, and periodic meetings, members will be served with a steady diet of news, announcements and special event notices regardless of their geographical location or circumstances.

Information about how to go about becoming a member will be sent out to all parents next month. The procedure is simple and the costs are minimal. More important, the rewards (to you and the Lotus Academy) are considerable and will allow us to build an even more effective body of supporters.

All parents should be reminded that the Lotus Academy (K-8th) will be OPEN as usual on Monday, October 13th, though the Early Learning Center will be CLOSED on that date. On October 20th, the Lotus Academy (K-8th) will be closed, but the Early Learning Center will be open on that Monday with its usual hours.

Help For Black Liberia Olive

The Lotus Academy is assisting the Committee To Restore Liberia with a donation drive to aid the children of Liberia. We are asking for donations of school supplies, books, and teaching aids. As you know, the country of Liberia has been ravaged by war in recent years and the education of the children there has suffered badly.

As an African-centered institution, is it our responsibility to support the needs of African people throughout the world whenever and however we can. Please join us in making this donation drive a success. Donations can be dropped off in the "donation barrel" located at the main entrance of the Lotus Academy. These donations will be shipped by the Committee to Restore Liberia and distributed to the needy by the University of Liberia.

Whole Life Institute

The Whole Life Institute, Inc., the parent body of the Lotus Academy just finished the New Parent Seminars, and would like to thank those new parents who participated in them. We had two lively sessions that hopefully gave those in attendance some insight into the philosophy and methodology behind the unique educational and cultural program at the Lotus Academy. The Institute also hosted a social outing for the teaching staff on Saturday. It was well attended and represented an excellent opportunity for Lotus staff and supporters to dine, relax and show their appreciation for the dedication and commitment of the Lotus teachers.

The Lotus Academy has secured a location in the Mt. Airy section of Philadelphia (7122 Germantown Avenue) that it is in the process of renovating and remodeling to convert it into a full-service restaurant. The name of the restaurant will be the "Black Olive", and it will feature vegetarian appetizers and entrees as well as a variety of drinks and desserts.

The Black Olive will be a place where you can sit down at an elegant table and place setting and be waited on by personable and knowledgeable "wait" staff. The atmosphere will be upscale and enhanced by a decorative touch that is distinctly ethnic.

The Black Olive will be open for lunch and dinner on Tuesday through Sunday, with a special lineup of events surrounding the over-the-top Sunday "brunch". The grand opening of the restaurant will take place in December and feature entertainment and free samples of our entire menu.

A special mailing list is being compiled to send out advance information about the grand opening and the opportunity to purchase attractively priced gift certificates for future dining. You can keep up with the progress of the restaurant by checking in on its website located at www.blackoliverestaurant.com.

High School Preparation

One of the most important times for a student during his time at Lotus is when he or she is about to graduate and go on to high school. There are a number of considerations that go into determining the school of their choice, figuring out the best way to ensure acceptance, and laying the groundwork for a successful high school career.

Our seventh and eighth graders will be helped in this process this year with a special admissions orientation session that will be held at the school on Monday, October 13th, at 12:30 p.m. It will focus on answering all of the questions that surround this whole process and is open to parents as well as students. There will also be follow-up sessions to assist the seventh-grade students who have to take the citywide exam in April in order to be admitted into any of the Philadelphia public "magnet" high schools. More informa-

Lotus Board Of Directors

The next meeting of the Board of Directors of the Lotus Academy is set for Thursday, October 23rd, at 5:45 pm at the school. There are a number of items left over from the previous school year that will be at the top of the agenda. They include plans for our thirtieth-year celebration, membership in the Lotus Academy corporation, major renovations to the building, and our endowment fund. E-mail us at board@lotusacademy.org for more information about Board issues.

New Faces At The Lotus Early Learning Center

Mothura Serquurr Heru-t (pictured below) took over the direction and day-to-day operations of the Early Learning Center in August, and has begun to build upon the solid foundation that Mothura Barbara has established during her time in that post. We have big plans for our youngest children at the E.L.C. and have quite a few projects on the drawing board now ready to spring into action.

Mothura Eashia continues to be a steady presence as she looks after and instructs our four-year old Shana II boys and girls. Another new addition to the

E.L.C. staff is Mothura Debbie who is the instructor and chief “care giver” for the three-year old Shana I students. Our after-school staff rounds out the team that works so hard to prepare our pre-kindergarten students for the social and intellectual demands of a full time academic program.

One of the works that is in progress at the E.L.C. is a brochure and a handbook. The brochure will touch upon the highlights of the program whereas the handbook will go into great detail about the inner workings of the E.L.C. program and philosophy. Both of these publications will be completed by the end of October, and will be distributed to all parents as well as being available on the Internet.

That brings us to another topic. The E.L.C. will have its own website as of October 27th. It will be written by and for the parents (and students!) at the E.L.C., and will include those notices, information, news, and announcements that are of particular importance to those at the E.L.C. The URL or Internet “address” for the new site will be www.LotusAcademyELC.com and e-mail will be able to be directed to Serquurr, Eashia, and Debbie at:

Serq@LotusAcademyELC.com
Eashia@LotusAcademyELC.com,
Debbie@LotusAcademyELC.com

Parents will be given information by the end of October as to how to add their input to the website, as well as offer suggestions about it.

The E.L.C. is also very excited about getting our “mini computer lab” up and running for the students there. We have contracted to get the electrical work done that will allow us to have all of the computers in operation. Once that is completed, the next step will be to get some of those computers “on line” so that they can also have limited access to the Internet. Of course, all of this computer time for our E.L.C. students will be planned and monitored closely so that we can ensure that we accomplish exactly what is best for the children at this age.

Another important area of activity that is being planned for is music and art instruction for our E.L.C. students. Last year featured weekly dance instruction, and we intend to duplicate that this year in addition to introducing more artwork into the daily curriculum. As we all know, young people learn best when there is a balance between academic and creative work. More important, this balance goes a long way towards ensuring that the child’s learning experience will be both energizing and enlightening.

Finally, we would like to extend our appreciation to the very supportive group of parents that we have at the E.L.C. The questions, suggestions, and constructive criticism that was offered at the first E.L.C. monthly parents’ meeting were very helpful. These parents have already organized their first fund raiser, a sale of dinners that took place last Friday and Saturday. We look forward to working with them to make the E.L.C. the best place it can be.



“Do not have evildoers for friends, do not have blameworthy people for friends, have for friends the best of men.”

BUDDHA