

THE LOTUS LAMP

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“Where Does He Get It From?”



We are proud of all of our students who participated in the Oratorical Contest finals. One of our first-place winners, Idris Fullard, has a story that puts his achievements in an interesting context.

In the 1997 Oratorical Contest finals, Idris won both of the third-place trophies for original and non-original poetry. He chose not to enter in 1998. However, by the end of the year, he told his mother he was going to try again in 1999. He made it to the finals again in the “original” category, and the rest, as they say, is history.

He may not be aware of it, but “he got it honest”. Idris’ mother, Janice Fullard, has been one of “preliminary” judges for two years with more than a passing interest in the Oratorical Contest. Poetry is more than just a hobby for her. Ms. Fullard has had her original works published, and

received a plaque from “The National Library of Poetry” on February 12, 1999. Janice found out that she received “The Award of Recognition” for outstanding achievement in poetry, to be published with the “The Famous Poets Society”, with her engraved trophy on the way. Ms. Fullard feels that believing in “yourself” is the key. Winning is a passing phase, but honest effort is a lifelong “soul satisfaction”.

Celebrating The Coming Spring

The Lotus Academy enjoyed yet another day of food, festivities, and fun as students, staff, and many supportive parents took in the Seasonal Celebration last Friday. As always, the acknowledgment of the many birthdays during the winter season was coupled with a look ahead to the next season. The advent of spring is always a reason for celebration even with a winter as mild as that which we enjoyed this year.

The entertainment was outstanding, and much of it was supplied by our very own Lotus students. The Women’s Sekere Ensemble also performed, and they energized everyone with their spirited performance.



“The one thing oppression does to a people is to kill in them the mind and the will to assume responsibility.”
JOHN HENRIK CLARKE

The Lotus Academy Fashion Show

Tickets are still available for our first-ever fashion show at the North American Motor Inn on Saturday, April 10th, from 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. The ticket price of thirty-five dollars includes the buffet luncheon and the drawings for valuable prizes.

The fashions will cover the entire spectrum from traditional to cultural, vintage to modern, and young to old. There will be something for everyone.

Upcoming Special Events

In addition to the Fashion Show, Skating Party, and Lotus Science Expo in April, there is much more on our calendar as we move through our silver anniversary celebration year.

Friday and Saturday, May 21st and May 22nd, is the time for Lotus' first African-Centered Education Conference. We have already confirmed most of the speakers, presenters, and workshop coordinators. This event will spotlight those educational issues that will define and determine the success of our students into the next century and millennium, and should not be missed. This event is **free** to all Lotus parents and students for both the Friday and Saturday sessions!

The Educational Achievement Awards Banquet at the Pennsylvania Convention Center is Thursday, May 27th. Though every family is required to purchase one ticket, it is hoped that our parents plan to sell tickets to friends and relative who want to share this historic evening with us.

Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee has been meeting, and has worked hard to take a fresh look at the overall curriculum with an eye towards making significant changes over the next few years. All of the recommendations and revisions will be presented to the parent body at a special meeting to be held before the end of the school year. In the meanwhile, a written curriculum outline and guide for all subjects, from Early Learning Center to eighth grade, is being prepared.

One of the concepts that has been decided upon is that the curriculum will revolve around five subject areas: Science, Math, Language Arts, "Foreign" Language, and Lotus Way. This structure will begin in the Early Learning Center and will remain consistent until graduation from the eighth grade. The science component will include a greater emphasis on computer science. Math will be designed around problem solving. Language arts will be built on a "back to basics" approach to grammar and spelling, with a focus on writing and composition skills. French and Kiswahili instruction will be greatly increased for all grades. Lotus Way will be expanded to include not only African history and culture, but also world and American history.

Lotus Science Expo

The 1999 Lotus Academy Science Expo will take place on Wednesday, April 21st, in the school auditorium. The upper school students have been researching their topics over the past four months, and will be prepared to articulate their research on the day of the Science Expo. A panel of independent judges will interview the Upper School students starting at 9:30 a.m. The students will have a typewritten research paper, a one-page abstract, and a display board depicting the scientific protocol that was followed. They will also have either a model, collection, experiment, or performance of some type of demonstrative activity which explains the research topic.

The students are working extremely hard, and we would like to see every parent attend the evening phase of the Science Expo at 7:00 p.m. The students will be there until 9:00 p.m. to explicate their projects. The Vishna Age Group has chosen to complete projects dealing with ancient Egypt. Their theme is "KEMET...The Cradle of Civilization". They have been conducting research at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Sullivan Hall (which houses Charles Blockson's collection on Temple University's campus), and the Franklin Institute. They have also conducted interviews and viewed slides with Mothura Terri and Mothuri Badara, both of whom have extensive knowledge about Kemet (ancient "Egypt").

This is their first attempt at conducting research on different areas of the same topic. You need to come out and share the excitement of our young scientists, whether it be the group projects prepared by the Lower School students or the extensively researched topics of the Upper School students. They all need your encouragement and support. You will be more than pleasantly surprised at the results of staff and students committing themselves to true academic excellence.

The skating party for our Lotus youngsters and friends (and the young at heart) will be held on Saturday, April 17th, from 4:30-7:00 pm. It is **NOT** April 10th, as is incorrectly listed on the Lotus Academy school calendar.

News From The Lotus Way Class

Over the last trimester, Shava I and II have been studying the Afrikan Holocaust (Slavery) via a slide presentation, role playing, and a video presentation. Although the subject area can be an unpleasant and often disturbing part of Lotus Way (Afrikan History), the theme has reinforced the principles of strength and courage among our ancestors. Several poems have been selected for you to see how the Shava students have "entered into the spirit of the history of our people".

[Article and Selections by Mothuri Terri]

THE AFRICAN HOLOCAUST: SLAVERY by JULIUS INGRAM

Slavery was very, very hard.

Black people all over had to starve.

Slavery was really long.

Black folk survived and stayed strong.

Africans had to work in the fields all day.

You know that they ain't got no pay.

We were beaten and even lynched.

They would not wash us so we had a stench.

The men were separated from the women.

And you know that we missed our children.

We were packed in the ship like sardines.

Those white honkies were very mean.

I wish I could change the hand of time.

If I have Sankofa the future is mine.

THE HOLOCAUST

by DEVON A. JOHNSON

My story starts on the West Africa coast.

European ships arrived much like a ghost.

Africans accepted Europeans with open arms.

Because they thought Europeans could cause no harm.

Then the Europeans showed they were armed.

This is what made the Africans alarmed.

Africans panicked and fought trying to stay.

Knowing if they lost, the great price they would pay.

Now captured and locked in slave dungeons for a month or two.

Did I mention they were brainwashed too?

Boarding the slaveship going to this unfamiliar land.

Now they were in the Europeans' powerful hand.

Beaten and mistreated for a period of time.

Having nothing, not a cent nor even a dime.

Here in America in enslavement

Working so hard without any payment.

Working every day from dusk to dawn

With no time for fun and even time to yawn.

Given freedom but not quite yet

Because in their minds they were still in debt.

Slavery lasted for very long,

And to this day it still goes on and on and on.

THE POWER OF THE BLACK

by SPENCER LEAK

I come to you today to tell you about the Afrikan Holocaust or what happened in the past. Today we are still enslaved because our minds are trapped. Our minds need to be released. Together as Black people, the power of us all can break the chains.

We people need to make a change by stop letting the white man do things to us. We still have the power to free ourselves and try to restart our history, see the past, then go on to the future.

I think, my brothers and sisters, we can still do the unthinkable. We have created almost everything. Our power is over the white people. So as I end, remember my quote, "Do what is possible and free your mind."

OUR ANCESTORS

by CELESTE PRESTON

During the 1400-1800's our ancestors were in slavery,

And had a lot of bravery.

Our ancestors were beaten and even killed.

Our ancestors did not get a dime,

And really didn't do any crimes.

Our ancestors worked from sunup to sundown,

And were never given a crown.

Our ancestors worked so hard to be free and for their descendants to be free,

And they advised us to be all that we can be.

Our ancestors should be acknowledged daily,

And should be commended for all of their hard work.

The Shava students should be recognized for the creativity, power, and meaning expressed in their literature on the Afrikan Holocaust. Some of their messages may seem harsh at first glance, but they have done an excellent job of looking at an extremely stark subject and coming away with something positive and inspiring. More important, they seemed to have captured the intensity which our ancestors used to survive and persevere during these most trying of times. It should be a source of inspiration for all of them today.

Lotus Age Group Happenings

The Shana III-A and III-B students are very excited about their month's activities. Shana's first activity will include the continued study of the "Tree of Life" and how the foods we eat or don't eat affect our bodies and minds. Empress Kaya, one of our parents, has volunteered to come and share her extensive knowledge of health and nutrition. Our study will culminate with a visit to the Germantown Farmers Market. YUM YUM!

The second planned activity for the month of April will be this year's science project, "Hatching Chicks". As previous Shana parents and students can attest, this is one of our children's all time favorites. The chick incubator will be available for viewing in the Shana III-A classroom from 12-12:30 and 3:30-4:00 p.m. Please drop by to see us!

Mothura Pamela would like to congratulate Shavi I for a job well done. Samantha Scott did a wonderful job in the Oratorical Contest. Christian West, Tashira Moss, Sinjin Wright, and Daenelle Thorpe are getting those fractions under control. Clayton Tinson is attacking those handwriting skills. Aiyana Garland-Tyler is now spelling her way through third grade. Khadija Khalfani and Jasmine Ingram are being excellent leaders in Shavi I, and the rest of us are getting down to business.

Also a big "Asante Sana" goes out to the wonderful, supportive, cooperative parents of Shavi I. Congratulations to Pamela Moss, Vincenteen Ingram, and Hugh Clark for being voted (by the students) as Shavi I "parents of the week" thus far. Watch out, you may be next!!

Mothura Maureen and all of Lotus would like to applaud the Shava Age Group for the great job that they have done in taking over the "Pizza Package" sales on Friday. Their courteous and professional performance has allowed everything to run smoothly, and lets us know that they have a real future as young entrepreneurs if they choose to do so.

The Lotus Academy Teacher Of The Month

Mothura Tracey is our Teacher of the Month for this issue. Despite the fact that she is a “new” teacher, she has provided much in the way of leadership and stability at the Early Learning Center. Her willingness to take on whatever task necessary to get the job



done is one of her most endearing qualities.

Though she is not seen as much by other staff members as was the case before our youngest students moved to the new building, we still feel her positive presence nonetheless. As the Early Learning Center continues to grow, we look forward to even more contributions from her.

Early Learning Center At Seasonal Celebration

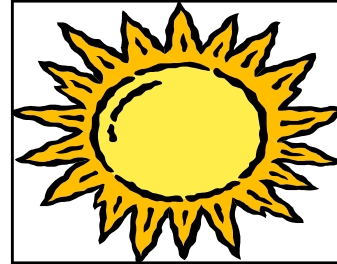
One of the true pleasures of this past week’s Seasonal Celebration was the presence of our Shana I and II students from the Early Learning



Center, and reuniting them with their Shana III age-group brothers and sisters. All of them enjoyed the festivities, and they did much to add to the excitement and energy that surrounded the entire event. We look forward to their joining us again to make the day that much more special.

Monthly Reminders

Early Learning Center



- Friday, April 2 – SCHOOL CLOSED
- Tue., Apr. 6 – Teachers’ Planning Session (ELC OPEN)
- Saturday, April 10 – LOTUS FASHION SHOW
- Saturday, April 17 – 4:30 pm – SKATING PARTY
- Wed., Apr. 21 – 7:00 pm – Students’ Science Expo

Lower & Upper Schools (Grades 1 to 8)



- March 29 – April 4: SCHOOL CLOSED
- Saturday, April 10 – LOTUS FASHION SHOW
- Monday, April 12 – SCHOOL CLOSED
- Saturday, April 17 – 4:30 pm – Skating Party
- Wed., Apr. 21 – 7:00 pm – Students’ Science Expo
- April 22-25 – CIBI NATIONAL SCIENCE EXPO

“No body of water separates Europe from Asia. It is separated by an invisible boundary drawn in order to establish the primacy of the continent [of Europe].”

DR. ANTHONY T. BROWDER