



# ONEIDA MOUNTAINEER

www.oneidaschool.org

A bi-monthly newsletter of Oneida Baptist Institute

December 2023

## Homecoming 2023—Time to Build

### Anniversary Classes Honored

A beautiful fall day greeted OBI Homecoming attendees on October 21, 2023. Anniversary classes were honored at the afternoon recognition ceremony.

Contact your OBI friends and classmates and make plans to join us for Homecoming 2024!



**50th Class of 1973** represented by Susan Loriot Parker and Will Rogers.



**70th Class of 1953** (left to right): Robert Halcomb, Wanda Byrd Staggs, Imogene Sparks, J.L. Burns



**40th Class of 1983**

In far left photo (left to right): Jim Wasson ('82), Connie Potter, Steve Graham, Lucinda Downer, Larry Downer.



In photo left (left to right): Eddie Embry, Wayne Crask ('82), Keith Gross



**35th Class of 1988** (left to right): Emily DeRossett, Bonnie Couch



**Oldest alum in attendance** (left): Rosie Davidson Combs ('51) pictured with her daughter, Debora Whaley.

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**More Homecoming Snapshots . . .**



**Betty Gene Hensley Bowling Hibbard** ('54) accompanied the Hymn Sing. This makes about 20 years that she has been playing for Homecoming. In high school, Hibbard accompanied the choir, and her father was the choir director.



*Left-Right: Will Rogers ('73) and Eddie Roberts ('68) enjoyed lunch in Underwood Hall.*

**“When I came here, it was a new beginning. Those years [at OBI] really molded me into the person I am today.”**

**Connie Potter Class of '83**



**Steven “Frog” Saylor** ('77) admires the new track and field. He was a part of OBI's first cross country and soccer teams but his fondest memories come from basketball and Coach Larry Gritton, Sr. “He gave me a chance. He was a good mentor, not just in basketball, but in life,” Saylor said.



*Left-Right: Earl Burns ('85), John Vallencourt ('86), Cindy Lawson ('85), Elechia Dillar ('84), Gina Carmony ('84), DeeDee Mitchell ('83)*



**Eleanor Casey Odle** ('75)



**Connie Potter** ('83)

**“OBI was a lot different [than public school]. All of us were good students. All of us had to take Bible class.”**

**Jimmy Gay Class of '71**



*Left photo (left-right): Ibbie Gay ('78), Darlene Martin Gay ('72), Jimmy Gay ('71)*

*Right photo (left-right): Irvine “Hero” Weidner ('60) and Dot Major ('60).*

*Below (left-right): Jeff Pence ('94, former houseparent) and Michael Geib ('08)*



*Left-Right: David Dewar ('91), Johnathan Elam ('92)*

**“OBI changed my life and shaped me up. Working with Mr. J., the farm, plus drama and choir kept my mind off of the nonsense.”**

**Michael Geib Class of '08**



*Left-Right: Rex Boblett ('97), Michael Gibson ('90), Mary Thoe ('92)*

## Alabama Campers on Mission at OBI



*The Alabama Campers on Mission made their annual two-week missions trip to Oneida in October. The group is standing in front of a fence they built to both secure and conceal a generator and transformer. The group also worked on staff housing renovations, cleaned gutters, tidied flower beds, completed sewing and carpentry projects, installed lettering on two buildings, made electrical repairs and more!*

### Spotlight on a few of the ALCOM volunteers



**Ken and Judy Conaway** have been volunteering at OBI since 2006. They serve about 15 weeks each year on missions projects, mostly in Alabama, but they have traveled to 14 different states, including Alaska and Hawaii. Ken added, "OBI is a way we can do affordable foreign missions. We can see that many students are Muslim. We know that many profess Jesus while they're here and some of them will continue following Jesus when they go back home."

**Buzz Brewer** and his wife, Marinar, served at OBI each year from 2007 until 2019, when health issues prevented their travel. They learned about the ALCOM when a group came to renovate a church in their town. The group coordinator at the time, Jake Carroll, invited the Brewers to join them on an upcoming trip to OBI. After his wife's passing last spring, Buzz was determined, despite his own health issues, to make it back to OBI one more time. He said, "We had a wonderful 12 years at OBI meeting all of these people and these kids. We just enjoyed helping."



**Diane Dahl** (right in photo) and **Joan Clemons** worked together on painting a staff apartment. This was Diane and her husband, Klaus' third trip to OBI. The Dahls got involved with missions in 2019 after meeting a member of the ALCOM in their local Walmart. Diane said, "We retired 13 years ago. We're blessed, so why not do something useful!" Joan and her husband, Randy, have been serving with the ALCOM since 2004. They enjoy the annual trip to OBI because, "We can impact people from all over the world here!" Joan said.

## We are Thankful

"I am thankful for playing and eating and learning and everything!"

—Gage, 4th grade



"I'm thankful for the food and also how the school has helped me become closer to God."

—Alli, 6th grade



"I am thankful for the staff that will help me through my journey at OBI."

—Ryan, 7th grade



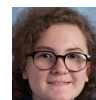
"I am thankful for the teachers and the people who drive buses ... they spend a lot of time to take people home."

—Hayley, 8th grade



"I am thankful for the friends I have made at OBI."

—Reggie, 9th grade



"OBI gave me the opportunity to study here and to chat with people from other countries."

—Debao, 10th grade



**Blue & White Night** was a great kick-off to basketball season on November 10th. Follow the OBI teams' schedule and score board at: <https://khsaa.org/private/master-scoreboard/>

**Would you like to contact us?**  
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## Winning Season for MS Basketball



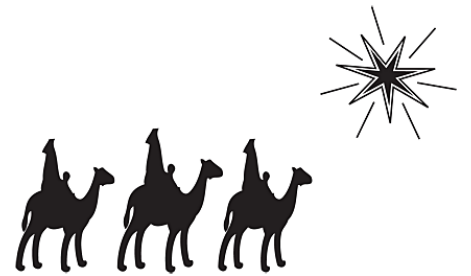
*The OBI Middle School basketball team celebrated the eighth grade players at the last home game. Left to right: Isaac Bayes, Mason Lockhart, Jacob Rogers, Skyler Roberts, Ryder Salmons, Carson Mitchell, Coach Larry Gritton, Jr.*

The OBI Middle School basketball team had a strong start to their season with wins over bigger schools at the South Laurel Showcase on November 4th. Their team goals included being ranked first in the All A 13th region and winning 20 regular season games. The team met both of these goals.

Coach Larry Gritton, Jr. cited the players' willingness to work, love of the game and their friendships on and off the court as contributing factors to the team's success. Gritton added, "A family atmosphere and community support at the games plus opportunities to 'play up' at the high school level in prior seasons has helped them develop. They honor the Lord with the talents He has given them, and I believe He in turn has blessed their efforts."

The team's 67-37 home court win over Williamsburg on November 21st wrapped up their regular season with a 22-1 record. They won the 13th Region 'All A' Conference Tournament on December 9th and will play in the 13th Region Tournament in London, Kentucky on January 13, 2024.

Merry Christmas from OBI!



Isaiah 7:14



### In Memoriam

- Ruth Revis, Class of 1943
- Charles Barnes, Class of 1953
- Brenda Burns, Class of 1960
- Kimber Woods, Class of 1962  
Valedictorian
- Victor Arnett, Class of 1965
- Betty Jo Burns, Class of 65
- Seldon Hensley, Class of 1968
  - Great-great grandson of Big Henry Hensley
- Ashlee Landrum, Attended in '97