



ONEIDA MOUNTAINEER

www.oneidaschool.org

A bi-monthly newsletter of Oneida Baptist Institute

September/October 2023

OBI HOMECOMING OCTOBER 21, 2023

It's not too late to make plans to join us!

11 AM - Hymn Sing at OBC
12 PM - Lunch in Underwood Hall
1 PM - Alumni Recognition
2 PM - Soccer Scrimmage on the New Field

Walker Athletic Complex Dedication



"My grandfather dedicated his life to Christian education through OBI. I'm sure his heart is right here with us in Oneida." —Bob Walker

The dedication ceremony for the **Susan and Bob Walker Athletic Complex** was held on August 21, 2023 ahead of the first home soccer game played on the new synthetic turf field. The first major project of the planned Athletic Complex, the new track and field was made possible by the Walkers' generous donation in 2020. They are pictured above with their son, **Owen Walker**, and OBI president **Larry** (OBI '93) and **Angie** (OBI '91) **Gritton**.

President Gritton shared the story of Bob Walker's historic family ties to OBI. His grandfather, John Henry Walker, was OBI's first college-educated teacher and an answer to prayer for OBI's founder, James A. Burns. Walker married the daughter of Martha Coldiron Hogg who donated the land upon which the school was built. Gritton described the project development, including the impact that the record-breaking February 2021 flood had on the planned elevation of the track and field. As he introduced the Walkers, Gritton stated, "OBI is grateful for your family's long history with OBI, and we are grateful for your generosity, friendship and partnership."



The OBI soccer team played and won their first game on the new field. Fans enjoyed the new seating, concessions and parking!

Meet our Principal



Joseph Scull, III is the OBI principal for 2023-2024. "Joe" and his wife, **Beverly**, taught at OBI from 2003-2018. Their youngest of two children, Suze, graduated with OBI's Class of 2007. Their son, Joseph, IV, followed his parents to Oneida and served for a year as a houseparent at OBI.

The Sculls first came to OBI from Illinois. Joe commented, "The Lord led us here, and there was never a dull moment!" While Beverly taught grades K-2, Joe served in several roles including history and Bible teacher, campus security, Campus Minister and the Dean of Boys.

It was during this time that Mr. Scull completed a Master of Arts in Religion from Liberty University and

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(*Scull cont.*)

a Master of Arts in Educational Leadership at Eastern Kentucky University. He obtained Secondary Principal certification with the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI).

Then, the Sculls were led away from OBI to serve in two other Christian schools—one in Pennsylvania and another in North Carolina. Mr. Scull was a Bible teacher and campus pastor at one school and principal at the other school. Mrs. Scull became a tutor, substitute teacher, fourth grade teacher and K-3 Bible teacher.

In February, 2023, the Sculls were visiting their son who lives in the area, and decided to stop by OBI to see the campus. After greeting former co-workers and touring the campus, they unexpectedly ended up in a meeting with the OBI president, who asked Mr. Scull to consider the position of principal. Mrs. Scull would meet a need for a tutor in the lower school.

Believing the Lord confirmed their decision to return, the Sculls finished the school year at their old school and moved to Oneida. Mr. Scull said, "This really is God's doing. The last four years gave me the skills I needed to come back and do this job. We've just had that overwhelming feeling that we're home." As someone who once struggled with learning, Mrs. Scull is grateful to use her experience and skills to help younger children, especially in the area of reading. "I am good at laying the ground work and getting kids to learn what they need in order to continue on. Everything I do, I do with the Lord's help," she stated.

Mr. Scull plans to promote the OBI mission of *Education for Time and Eternity* by equipping teachers. He said, "In everything that we do—English, math, science and sports—we will promote a biblical worldview." □

KBC-funded courtyard blessed from start to finish

The multi-purpose courtyard located between the boys' and girls' dormitories was completed in time for the 2023-2024 school year thanks to a generous grant two years in a row from the Kentucky Baptist Convention. **Angie Gritton**, Assistant to the President, has overseen the process of designing and developing the courtyard. Her vision for the space began about five years ago when it became evident that the positions of the three new buildings—the dormitories and cafeteria—would naturally form a courtyard space. Gritton explained, "The students really needed a place to lounge after school and to be able to sit outside. My vision was to see a kid out there playing a guitar by the firepit, or friends sitting at a table doing homework together. I wanted it to be a calming area where kids could sit and unwind and have a retreat from the day."

The new courtyard creates community by providing a place of fellowship where staff, day students and dormitory residents can spend time together. The beautiful landscaping with features like solar lights, water fountains and rock walls make it an ideal place for special events and group meetings. The wood burning fireplace has a gas starter and offers year-round enjoyment.

God's provision for this space was evident in the KBC funding as well as donations of specific items along the way. We even saw God's hand in the design of the space with rock walls that form the shape of an *Icthus*, the well-known Greek symbol of Christianity. We know this space will be a blessing for the OBI community for many years.



Rock walls define the space between the dormitories and offer a place to sit and catch up with friends.

Students have a beautiful view of the mountains as they relax in front of the fireplace.



Plenty of outdoor furniture makes the courtyard a great place where students can gather and enjoy the outdoors.

Would you like to contact us?
 telephone: 606-847-4111
 email:
president@oneidaschool.org

Back-to-School for 2023-24



The most important meal—all OBI students are offered a nutritious breakfast free of charge.



We bus over 100 students to and from campus each day.

Reflecting on 10 years as president of OBI



It is hard for me to believe this year marks ten years as OBI president. I have learned some valuable leadership lessons along the way. Some lessons were very easily learned and others were learned the hard way.

I have also witnessed miracles and seen the hand of God continue to advance the work of OBI using the gifts, service and sacrifice of His people as He has for the last 124 years. OBI stands today, even through recent calamities like historic floods and a pandemic.

The Lord certainly blessed me abundantly when he brought Angie Berry Gritton into my life. She has served alongside me for the last 10 years and helped to lead in various ways on campus.

Change is necessary for any ministry to continue to thrive. Through both large and small gifts, God has made it clear that it is time for OBI to grow into a ministry that reaches today's young people for His kingdom.

I look forward to all that God has in store for OBI in the 2023-24 school year and beyond!

Larry A. Gritton, Jr.
OBI President

Grades 6-12 attend a daily chapel service after their morning classes. Grades K-5 attend their own chapel service one day each week.



High schoolers who are enrolled in dual-credit or online classes dove into learning on day one!

Honoring those who serve at OBI



Rev. Ken Bolin (right), pastor at Manchester Baptist Church, spoke at the annual faculty and staff worship service in August. OBI president Larry Gritton, Jr. presented Bolin with a plaque to honor his 30 years of being a friend and supporter of OBI. Bolin has served on the OBI Board of Directors in seven four-year terms, including one term as Chairman. He has brought guests and volunteers to our campus and has led Manchester Baptist Church to be one of our greatest supporting churches in monthly giving.

John and Jennifer Monday were recognized during our faculty and staff worship service for their 10 years of service at OBI. John serves as the IT Director, Grounds Supervisor, bus driver and teacher. Jennifer is OBI's School Counselor and Admissions Director. Three of their children are OBI graduates, and their youngest is a junior this year.



Do you feel called to serve in Christian education?

Visit the *Employment Opportunities* page on the OBI website at: <https://www.oneidaschool.org/about/join-our-team.cfm>



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Demolition of James A. Burns Hall



Constructed in 1960, James A. Burns Hall was the home of the former girls' dormitory, kitchen and dining hall and the campus grill.

In July, we made a post on the OBI Facebook page with photos of the Burns Hall demolition. Many alumni and former students shared their thoughts and memories. Here are a few of their comments:

Mary Schuck (OBI '88)

The best of friendships and memories were made in and around that building. Those will always remain! New friends and

memories will be made in the next season, too. May they be as richly blessed as the generations before!

Aya Embury (2004-2007)

My dorm!! I'll never forget this building. Lots of beautiful memories filled with joy, laughter, tears and so many more emotions. I'll never forget waving goodbye to my Mom right in front of that building ...

and how can you forget hanging out at the grill with Mrs. Debbie Winters!?!

Serena Dawson Cassidy

Great memories made there, but I'm happy to see the school improving the infrastructure for the next generations.

Amy James (OBI '86)

Sad to see the old girl go, but I know it's time. She stood as a home to girls for many generations and forged thousands of friendships and memories that last to this day.



View more photos at: <https://www.facebook.com/OBI.KY>



In Memoriam

- | | |
|---|---|
| Kenneth Shepherd
Class of 1948 | Herman Sheldon
Hensley, Jr.
Class of 1968 |
| Faye Burns Robinson
Class of 1953 | Pamela Burns Harms
Class of 1981 |
| Darrell Shepherd
Class of 1955 | Former Staff:
Rosemary Celichowski
Ken Martin |
| Martha Davidson
Sears - Student 1950's | |