



ONEIDA MOUNTAINEER

www.oneidaschool.org

A bi-monthly newsletter of Oneida Baptist Institute

November/December 2024

Celebrating 125 years of Education for Time and Eternity

2024 KHSAA State Semi-Finalist



Photo of the OBI Boys' Soccer team after winning the KHSAA 49th District Championship. The team included 14 dormitory students from nine countries and six day students.

The OBI Boys' Soccer team had a record-breaking 19-5 season winning the KHSAA 13th Region championship and advancing to the state tournament and "Final Four" of high school soccer. This is the first time in school history that an OBI soccer team has won a KHSAA regional championship.

Defeated by North Laurel 5-1 in the regular season, OBI came back to score a 3-0 victory over North in the District Tournament. The teams met again in the regional championship game where OBI won 2-1.



OBI staff and students lined Mulberry Street for a team send-off to the final four.

OBI senior and goalie **Jason Fan** (pictured above holding the trophy), junior **Hero Khajohnsupawatchara** and junior **Amadeus Martin** were named to the regional All Tournament Team, and senior **Noah Jeon** was named the tournament MVP. OBI president **Larry A. Gritton, Jr.** ('93) stated, "These young men have given glory to God all season, are extremely dedicated to the game and we could not be prouder of them."

On October 21st, OBI defeated Lawrence County 4-0 in a first round game of the state tournament. Moving on to the state quarterfinal, the team faced Powell County. Their 5-0 win included a "Hat Trick" by junior **Enrique Gabardo**.

The entire school celebrated the team as they headed to the state semi final game where they played eventual state champion, Henry Clay High School to a 4-0 defeat.

OBI Soccer Coach **Cory Steltenpohl** reflected, "I believe what

(Soccer State Semi-Finalist cont. p. 2)

Homecoming 2024



Celebrating 50 years! The Class of 1974 L-R: Margaret Davidson, Ali Mohammadione, Don Rogers, Pam Allen Asher, Marti Allen



Richard Burns and **Betty Jean Hensley Hibbard** ('54) after the Hymn Sing. Burns taught band

and choir from 1985-1991 and is the great-great nephew of OBI founder J.A. Burns. It has been a tradition for over two decades that Richard leads and Betty Jean accompanies the Homecoming Hymn Sing!

Representing the Class of 2004: **Veronica Bowling Gay** and **Cliff Godbold**



(Homecoming cont. p. 3)

To view more Homecoming photos, scan the QR code which is linked to the Homecoming 2024 album on the OBI Facebook page.



Tennis is more than just a career for this Hall of Fame inductee



President **Larry A. Gritton, Jr.** presented a plaque to OBI's latest Hall of Fame inductee, **Choopat Suvimolste-an**, accompanied by his wife **Janelle** and son **Cody**.

Choopat "Kaikai" Suvimolste-an, Class of 2017, was inducted into the OBI Athletic Hall of Fame. His portrait will join 72 others on display.

While at OBI, Choopat was a state quarterfinalist three years in a row, never lost a match in the regular season and was the region singles champion four years in a row. He played two years of soccer and one year of basketball. He was named OBI's 2017 OBI Male Athlete of the Year.

A member of the tennis team at Asbury University, Choopat became the 2021 River States Conference Player of the Year.

His best OBI memory is also his testimony. He shared, "I met Jesus in the Sparks gymnasium." Choopat was having a particularly bad day during his sophomore year. He had made his first bad grade in a class, did not make the varsity team and was in the gym running stairs as self-punishment for not performing well at basketball practice that day. Feeling lonely and desperate, Choopat recounted, "I fell down and felt something I never felt before and knew it was God. ... God had been knocking on the door of my heart since my freshman year, but I had been refusing Him because of my pride. ... I decided to accept God,

admit I needed Him. I prayed for the first time, and life has never been the same since then, in a good way."

He credits Coach **Ed Lowden-back** for being a mentor and for sharing a scripture that impacted his life—Psalm 118:24 which says, "This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it."

In May 2021, Choopat married his college sweetheart, Janelle, a member of Asbury's women's soccer team. Shortly after their honeymoon, the couple came to OBI to volunteer—Choopat as the guest clinician for our varsity tennis camp and Janelle as an assistant with the middle school soccer camp.

After college, Choopat worked as a tennis coach in clubs in Kentucky and Pennsylvania. Last year, he and a partner started a coaching business, "Apex Tennis Corps." He said, "Since I left OBI, I had a very blessed college life and tennis career. With starting my own business, I see it not just as a job, but I have felt like it is a call from God as a way to mentor these players in more than tennis."

Choopat's son, Cody, turned one in the summer. He said, "I have been blessed with this beautiful little family. ... I can see how God led and provided for me ever since I came to Oneida." □



Choopat arrived two days ahead of Homecoming to conduct a tennis clinic for beginners in the 4th and 5th grade during their elective time and varsity tennis players after school.

(Soccer State Semi-Finalist continued)



Posing with OBI Soccer's first regional championship trophy! L-R: Assistant Coach **Tyler Preston**, Athletic Director **Tony Hall**, Head Coach **Cory Steltenpohl**

made this team special was that they put God first. He was at the center of everything we did. He took a bunch of boys, some of whom had never played together before and he did something amazing with them. No matter the challenge, the team stayed true to each other and true to God. It is hard to believe all the things this team was able to accomplish. Whether they were the top goal scorer or the manager, each one played a pivotal role in the success of this team. I am so proud of all of these boys." □



Varsity players celebrating OBI's first district title since 2015.

Would you like to contact us?
telephone: 606-847-4111
email:
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Thank You for Investing in Our Students



Our flourishing middle school has benefited from the renovation of six classrooms with new carpeting, lighting, paint and desks. Each classroom was also equipped with state-of-the-art interactive laser display projectors which turn a wall into a smart board, allowing teachers to incorporate a variety of digital tools into their lessons. All of this was made possible by donor support. □

In September, donor gifts enabled the Lower School to acquire a valuable resource for elementary music instruction—a classroom set of “Orff” instruments.

The Orff method incorporates a variety of percussion instruments to facilitate learning. Key instruments include xylophones, metallophones, glockenspiels, and various unpitched percussion instruments. These instruments are designed to be easy to play, allowing children to focus on rhythm and melody without the complexity of more advanced instruments.

Each grade in the Lower School meets for music class one day a week. Music teacher **Tim Cochran** was thankful for the opportunity to obtain enough instruments to allow every child in one class period to play music “without having to wait impatiently for a turn.” He added, “Incorporating instrumental instruction in addition to singing increases overall interest in music and cognitive benefit for the younger students. Plus, it’s fun!” □



The Lower School Library recently shelved 566 new books plus some literacy teaching resources thanks to a generous gift—\$4200—from the children who attended the Vacation Bible School last summer at Lifehouse Church in Lebanon, Ohio.

Our Lower School Library had a need not just for books, but specific books. Lower School Principal **Tammy Mason** explained, “In choosing books, we wanted to make sure we were offering our students a variety of

books in all genres. I know from my previous experience working in elementary schools that students like different types of books—some like specific authors or series, some prefer non-fiction, and many love reading biographies. I wanted to make sure we had a large variety, as well as books that would incorporate diversity. I also wanted to ensure that we had enough selections for all grade levels and interests.”

Mason added, “The kids are really excited about getting to check out books! We are planning a lot of activities to focus on reading and literacy this year.” One such activity was the Family Reading Picnic in September. Lower School students’ families were invited to join their student for lunch on campus. We had earned enough “points” with the library purchase to provide a free book for each student to keep and read with their guests. Over 100 guests attended! □

(Homecoming cont.)



The largest class in attendance this year, Class of 1979, celebrating 45 years L-R: **Colson Frost, Donald Joe Burns, Pat Sandlin, Mark Rowe, Lois Delong, Terry Lanham, Lorna Hubbard Collett, Donna Lanham**

Class of 1954

L-R: **Harold ‘Frosty’ Hubbard, Betty Jean Hensley Hibbard, Ed Morgan**



Class of 1994 L-R: **Ethan Allen, Kelly Dillon Anderson, Jeremy Ballard**

Alabama Campers on Mission



It was another great year with our long-time friends, the Alabama Campers on Mission. The group stayed for two weeks and worked on renovating the old farm house, landscaping around campus and making tote bags to share with visitors to the OBI booth at the Kentucky Baptist Convention. Thank you to all of them for their help and hard work!



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Views on Athletics in 1925



*Last known photo
of James A.
Burns c. 1945*

Excerpts from an article by OBI Founder James A. Burns

The place of athletics in our educational institutions is a debatable question. A tendency in many schools to over-estimate their value has justly called forth criticism. This criticism has been of value in causing the heads of institutions to investigate the field of athletics as to what good is being done the individual, the student body, and the institution.

No one will minimize the value of physical development. This should be attained by both work and play. But there is more to be gained from athletics than mere physical development. A general regulation is that all participants shall maintain a high scholastic standing. The larger part of the athlete's training is mind training. He must learn to think without confusion, clearly, and to do it in a hurry.

Greater perhaps than all the other benefits is the fact that successful athletic competition everywhere demands clean living—no cigarettes, no strong drink, no late hours, no dissipation of any kind. Here you have a foundation for the making of a man.

No activity of life offers a greater opportunity for inculcating in young men the elements of character and the essentials of success. With proper coaching just about every boy will learn to play the game fair and play it hard and accept the outcome like a man. Such a lesson learned will not be forgotten. How the world needs men who will play the game of life that way! □



*Team Captain John
Gilbert attended OBI
1922-1926.*

Merry Christmas from OBI!



John 1:4-5



In Memoriam

Stella Davidson Steely

Class of 1948

Valencia Sinkhorn Bass

Class of 1975

Winston Kilgore

Basketball Coach

Carol Cole

Long-term Volunteer

Deb Moore

OBI kitchen staff for 15 years

Deana Leuschke

Former Staff