

# Odyssey Oracle

Year 9 #15 April 18, 2012

## Dreams

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### I have a dream that ten years from now . . .

I will have obtained a degree in alternative medicine or social work. I love working with people who are hurting and sick. I will be somewhere in Africa helping people, especially kids. I will have a big garden full of herbs and will hold workshops to teach healthy living, using whatever resources one can get.

(Tatenda Bvindi)



All my six children and grandchildren will not only know God but have a personal relationship with Him. I have a dream that my daughter will be completely healed from M.S., fibromyalgia, cancer of the jaw, and glaucoma. I have a dream that my gift from God will blossom and I will have a ministry for women to help encourage, motivate, and share wisdom.

(Lorraine Garrett)

My company will transcend the boundaries I have placed in my life due to poor choices of my past and current situations beyond my control to reach out and assist college students and any person who chooses to make their lives more positive, productive, and proactive. The future I envision is one of great opportunity. I believe that we all have special gifts and abilities which are yearning to be free and shared with the world to enjoy. I will take the kindness given to me and share it uninhibitedly throughout all of my encounters and experiences.

(Keith Johnson)



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I will be stable in my own home, hopefully having a godly gentleman who has helped me grow more into the woman I want to become. Or I myself will have learned to become the woman I intend to be: a social worker helping young women love themselves and their children.

Most of all, I'll have a smile on my face at all times, loving myself. **(Nkechi Johnson)**



I will be a prison chaplain and will have reached a million inmates with the gospel of Jesus Christ. That million will reach 100 million and reduce the inmate population in prison so that at least ten prisons will close down.

**(Eugene Smalls)**



*Dreams of Exile* By Romare Bearden



I will be overlooking the Tokyo skyline from my apartment high rise in Shibuya. I will be head director of my own studio that produces anime and manga. I will spend long nights in the busy streets of Tokyo with friends and family, enjoying all that life has to offer.

**(Brandon McCarey)**



I will have accomplished many of the dreams and goals I have for myself, replacing those with many more! I will have changed careers based on my education and dreams. I will be wholeheartedly involved in animal rights activism along with education. I will be helping those involved with hardships with

their animal "fur babies." I want to help empower others just as I have been empowered! I will have my law degree, specializing in animal treatment.

**(Michele Withers)**



I will be a man at peace, happy with the fact that I am a man learning so much, and content that I still know so little. I will have gone back to school and gotten my Master Electrician degree. I will still be in school learning a new trade. I want to be giving back to

my fellow man, showing him the path I took while he finds his own. I hope to be still in touch with Odyssey.

**(Run Barlow)**



I will be a translator and helping low-income families find the help they need in my community. I would also like to get a B.A. or M.A. in Human Resources. Hopefully I will be at my middle child's graduation. I also will be involved in the Odyssey Program

in some way. **(Samantha East)**



I will be living someplace warm and sunny, with a garden and a home that I can transform into my own world. I will have the luxury to travel at whim and visit with friends far and wide. I will continue to be involved in social justice issues and will be more confident in my beliefs and ability to speak my mind. My children will be successful in whatever they have chosen to pursue and will continue to love each other and express it. My grandson will be in high school defying statistics, and we will have a closer bond. I will have found a mate to spend quiet time with who appreciates and enjoys me without strings attached or judgment. **(Hedi Rudd)**



I will own a house with my husband, with at least two children, a boy and a girl. I will be taking care of my parents and will have a decent job, which is being a doctor or a nurse. My house will be huge, beautiful, and white, with a large lawn. I will have a garden full of flowers, vegetables, and fruit. **(Linda Thao)**



I will have my own home, have graduated, and be working as a nurse. I will be doing yearly short mission trips to foreign countries... **(Yetta Harris)**



I will have accomplished everything I want to achieve, which is growing with God spiritually, physically, and mentally. I want to be everything He wants me to be. I would like to have received my Associates Degree, an LPN, and be a better woman, mother, grandmother, and daughter of the most high God. I would like to have accomplished goals here on earth, but my main goal is heaven bound. All of my possibilities can become realities. **(Marilyn Johnson)**



The world will be a better place. We won't be like crabs pulling each other down into the barrel. The violence of black-on-black will be done, with no more killing our own kind. Ten years from now, cars will not be run with gas but maybe with grease or electric plugs—who knows? I will have reached my goals and have thought of more things to achieve. My son will be 13 years old, loving life and having all the opportunities like the rest. Also ten years from now I might have another child. Who knows what the world will turn to ten years from now? **(Shaquida Johnson)**



I will be a scientist working with food. My oldest daughter, Diamond, will have graduated from college—UW Madison, of course. I hope to be married and maybe have another child. I would like to invent healthy foods for people who have health problems. Hopefully I will have a grandchild to come help me plant a garden. I enjoy telling people about God, so maybe I will have some kind of ministry dealing with women who are hurting. **(Kenya Moses)**

I will grow into a strong, successful man. In ten years I will lead by example. In ten years I will become stronger, wiser, and definitely smarter. I will live with great expectations of how life should be lived. I will be great and special in every way.



Old lifestyles will turn into new beginnings into life. I will have determination. In ten years my life will be complete. I will not have an empty soul. I will have meaning in life. When I reach my goal, I will be happy and full of experiences I never dreamed of in all my years of living on earth. I will have control of my destiny.  
(**Jesse Hamilton**)



I will be working as a bilingual translator or working as an ESL teacher. I would like to help a lot of people who need this assistance—parents, children, families, and others.  
(**Beatriz Mairena-Kellman**)



I'd like to be a certified social worker, helping in a domestic abuse center or home for children. I would like to teach a class to young women about the many forms of abuse and set up a center to aid in the awareness of survival. I will complete my education with a Master's degree in Social Work.  
(**Phyllis Anderson**)



I will be a college graduate. My son will also have completed a good chunk of his education. I dream that I will be fortunate enough to spend a lot of time outdoors and traveling around this and other countries. I dream that my life will be set up exactly the way that I want it, and I will be capable of handling anything hard that comes my way. I dream that my life will be full of children, animals, and old people and that we will laugh a lot.  
(**Billie Kelsey**)

My first born, Jude, will be driving his car, having just obtained his license. The car was a gift from me. It isn't much, it isn't new, but it'll get him to school and back. Maybe he'll even give his little



sister a ride every once in a while. Lucy will have just become a teenager, and most of my time with her will be spent trying to keep her focus away from boys and back onto school. We'll still be living in our Habitat for Humanity house, but having stayed the ten year minimum, we'll be shopping around for a different house, preferably in the Willy Street neighborhood. The bakery that I own will be in that neighborhood, so it'll be nice to be close by.  
(**Katie Pruitt**)



I will have graduated from college with a degree in education. I possibly will be married with at least one child. I also hope that my younger sister will have graduated from college and will start her career while I am teaching. I have a dream that ten years from now my family will have overcome so many issues that keep us from seeing each other and that keep us torn apart.  
(**Tai'Kiah Phillips**)



My goal of becoming a community activist will be a part of a movement that will secure African Americans a positive position in every endeavor of a good quality life. My name will be associated with many struggles that will elevate communities across the country to create a peaceful and healthy condition for our people. We will also become leaders in the political arena.  
(**Abraham Thomas**)



I will be working in the Communications field. I will be seen on the big movie screen acting in a movie. I will be writing my second novel. If I am blessed, in ten years I will be enjoying my retirement. I will travel the U.S. and abroad. In ten years, I will be



sitting on my front porch, rocking in my rocking chair and eating cold watermelon while I listen to classic and old school R&B.

**(Marcia Brown)**



I'll be able to look back at my life and be happy with the decisions I made. I hope that I'll be able to know that somebody has been helped through something I said or something I did.

**(Yolanda Cunningham)**



I will be attending my now-16-year-old's college graduation. I will have become an inspired chef. My home will be in Texas. My son James will have come home so he and I will attend his son's graduation from upper middle school. I look forward to this time so that I too, as well

as my children, can capture what the future will be—technology, scenery, and the tastes of the land.

**(Arnell Royal)**



I will be soaring high above the clouds, like wonderful birds that give us all our morning blessing of a song. I will overshadow everybody and everything that denied, put me down, or left me for the next predator's early dinner. On a road of never ending clouds of success

with a smile on my face, I will put away the downers and the misery.

**(Bradley Barner)**



I'll be coaching or helping coach a youth football team or a high school football team, or maybe a college team. I will also be playing or producing music that speaks for the good and about the real struggles of life. There are

a lot of things that I will be doing better.

**(Donta Starr)**



I will be just one piece of the massive jigsaw puzzle of the Odyssey graduate fraternity. I will be the founder and operator of a non-profit organization . . . that will provide services to adults 18 and older who have been incarcerated to help them

gain education, vocations, AODA help, and skills training for the purpose of successful reintegration into society.

**(Juba Moten)**



I will have graduated from college and also have opened up a non-profit. I would like to give back to my community. Madison, Wisconsin, is amazing. It offers its citizens a wonderful, beautiful experience daily. Also I want to invest in information and technology to fight diabetes. My mother has this illness, and she is

doing just fine. Also I want to be married. Mostly, I want to be still in touch with my Odyssey family and to donate tons of money to Odyssey so it can withstand long and strong. Mostly I want to be able to take Emily and my fellow students out to eat so we can reminisce. **(Terry Hart)**



## More Odyssey Poems



### **This Odyssey** **By Arnella Royal**

This Odyssey is for me!  
This Odyssey can be for you  
Had I'd known how much I'd have grown  
I would've surely flown

My daughter Jammie and Mary Rouse  
Saw far more than I could've ever seen  
They told me "Hop on Board,  
Get all the wisdom you'll ever need  
To set that path for a wondrous dream."

### **Odyssey is Home** **By Hedi Rudd**

Walking into a room full of strangers  
The first day of class  
I didn't know that I was the stranger  
I didn't know my true self  
Only my past  
Through books, excursions, projects and debates  
A new lens emerged  
To see myself anew  
I didn't know what I did not know  
I didn't know how much I knew  
Now the end of the journey is here  
The last chapter, last project, last debate  
Yet the excursion starts now  
The end is the beginning  
I didn't know I would never want to leave  
I didn't know that I would never have to  
Odyssey is no longer a room full of  
strangers  
Odyssey is home



### **Odyssey** **By Juba Moten**

Home run, the winning one at that,  
That's how I feel whenever I am at bat.  
And it's all because of my newfound family,  
The people of Odyssey who created a new man in me.  
And because of that I'm no longer afraid  
To swing, for even a base hit is capable of a good grade.  
God is good, and Odyssey is too,  
So I'd like to recommend this awesome program to you.



# Litter Bug

By Yolanda Cunningham



I walked to the store to get a bag of potato chips. Exiting the store, I started eating my chips and then was about to throw the bag on the ground as usual. A lady was walking toward me, and a garbage can was between us. She looked at me; I looked at her. I put the bag in the garbage can. Inside the can was a piece of paper. I reached in and picked it up. It read “Odyssey Project.” Wow! What an Odyssey. One man’s junk is another man’s treasure. Thank you, mystery lady. Thank you, whoever threw away an opportunity; I found it. I entered the Odyssey Project. Inside was a chair with my name on it. I sat down in the chair, and before me stood seven shining lights. There were names in the lights, and all the lights had significance.

**O** In the first light was the name Marshall. In this light was neon whispering alphabets, pencils, and pens, skipping and humming “time to write, time to write, time to write.” Above the light was the letter O.

**D** In the second light was the name Craig. In this light were rocking stars. All the stars were worlds: worlds yet to come, worlds that never existed, worlds that had been. So many stars, so many worlds of heritage. Above this light was the letter D.

**Y** In the third light was the name Jean F. In this light were faces: some of the eyes were closed; some of the eyes were open. There were trees, stems, bushes, branches. The roots were the ballet of the eyes. Above this light was the letter Y.

**S** In the fourth light was the name Emily. In this light were lullabies and multitudes of children. They were silent as all their hearts merged into waterfalls to the tune of love. Above this light was the letter S.

**S** In the fifth light was the name Kegan. In this light were dancing puddles and drums. Leaping puddles, victory puddles, joyful puddles, pretty puddles; the beats of the drums were hope. Above this light was the letter S.

**E** In the sixth light was the name Diane. In this light were harps, flutes, rainbows, and smiling bells. Harps, flutes, rainbows, and singing bells; they rang “Assurance.” Above this light was the letter E.

**Y** In the seventh light was the name Gene. In this light were ribbons; ribbons of gifts, ribbons of rhyme, ribbons of notes, ribbons of art. Ribbons of all kinds; their wave was memory. Above this light was the letter Y.

Above spelled ODYSSEY, as seven lights waited to guide me to my dream. I was swallowed up in a rare radiance. In the midst of all the lights appeared 30 musical chairs of colors. All the chairs had wings, and everyone who sat in these chairs had a song that only their hearts could sing. Blossoming with eloquence, harmony, and unity, their language was laughter. It was beauty at its finest; classic. I found an abundance of fountains: fountains of courage, of perseverance, and of self-esteem; fountains of choices, of love, and of prosperity. There is even a paradise. It’s a river flowing with immeasurable wisdom; enough to maintain, too much to contain. Inside the river are singing keys. I stepped into the river and picked up one of the keys. Out of nowhere appeared a humungous mountain. As I looked up, I was lifted to the top of the mountain.

I have the key in my hand, and I have no fear. I see the road, and it is endless. There is candy all over the road. I smile. This is sweet! I notice the candy sparkling and beaming from the light; it was me! I was shining! Yes, I’ve been all over the world inside ODYSSEY. What a lost and found opportunity! Odyssey gave me back myself; Odyssey gave me back my name. This is what I found in the garbage can. There are lots of things thrown away in the garbage; does this mean they are no good? I am Odyssey. I am good. And I am no longer a litter bug.

## More Memorable Moments



### **Rhinestone Hat By Jesse Hamilton**

When I was living in Chicago, I loved it when a new trend or fashion came out. During my childhood, I kept up with every new shoe, hat, jacket, etc. I was maybe 10 or 11 years old when Rhinestone basketball, baseball, and football hats were popular. Living in the neighborhood I lived in, it was not okay to wear something new or you would be robbed, shot, or killed for that item. So I asked my mother to buy me a Lakers Rhinestone hat. She thought about it for about a week. Finally she gave in and bought this shining and flashy style of hat.

Just imagine looking at diamonds inside the letters of the team. When the sun hits the rhinestones, it blings and sparkles like real diamonds. My mother told me, “If you go outside with this hat on and somebody takes it, don’t come back home because I’m going to kill you. I paid too much money for that hat, so you better not let anything happen to it.” So, me being me, I stuffed my hat in my book bag so I could wear it when I got to school.

As my school day ran out, I did not put the hat back in my book bag but kept it on after school. My grandmother’s house was maybe two blocks away from my school. As I was walking home from school, I felt some cold steel in the back of my head. I heard, “Don’t move! Give me that hat now or I’ll shoot!” I begged the shooter, “Please don’t take my hat because if I go home without it I’m dead anyway, so please can I have my hat back?” The guy thought about it for a second, dropped my hat, and ran. I ran the opposite direction. I stuffed the hat in my book bag and ran home. This was the worst day of my life.



### **Childhood Freedom in Peru By Beatriz Mairena-Kellman**

In Peru when I was a child from age five to eleven, I used to live in a small, safe, rural town. I had a very good time playing soccer outside with my five brothers and my brothers’ friends. We played in the dirt in the middle of the road. We would have to move when the cars would come. At that time there were supposed to be roads but nobody used them, so we would play there. Now there is traffic, so the next generation can’t play as we did. When I would play, I didn’t have to worry about money, about wearing shoes, or getting dirty. I was happy and worried about nothing. This is an important memory because I can see and feel the freedom of my life as a child.

I was the second oldest child among my five brothers. When I was five years old, I started playing outside. We played different types of things like marbles, tops, volleyball, and soccer. Playing soccer was fun and was one of my favorite sports. Sometimes there would be arguments and I would referee. I would keep the peace and get their emotions to calm down. I was the only girl in the boys’ group. My brothers and their friends didn’t want me to be in the group. They were afraid to hurt me while we were playing. My father told me, “Don’t play with boys, and do not wear pants.” In my house I wore dresses and helped my mother with home duties. When I went to play outside, I put on my pants.

We made our soccer ball with a nylon stocking filled tightly with other rags. I was part of my brothers’ team. We played barefoot in the dirt. We set up our limits using rocks, wood, clothes, etc. We ran back and forth for 45 minutes. I was running like a rabbit, kicking the ball ahead to the goal. When I fell down, my knee was bleeding but I didn’t give up. We had a ten minute break and then were back to play the second 45 minutes. When we were thirsty and hot, we had to walk one block to the only community faucet. We drank and put water all over our head, arms, and legs to feel fresh. I played until my mother called me back home.

In Peru when I was a child I had special and profound happy memories living in a small rural town playing with my brothers and their friends. Then I felt freedom, like I didn’t have any worries in my life. I was only thinking about home and getting to play. It was a great time in my childhood.



# All White, All Right:

## A Gospel Gathering

By Juba Moten

It was all white, all right on Friday, March 16, 2012, at the Knights of Columbus on Madison's southwest side where several African American clergymen and women united to organize an event for followers of Christ, believers who have strayed away from Christ, as well as non-believers. It was an event where all could meet on neutral ground and partake in the hair-raising and spiritual, goose-bumping performances such as praise dancing, soloists, and saxophonists. In addition, there was homemade flavorful food for the soul as approximately 98% of the attendees dressed in beautiful all-white attire.

All-white parties are events or parties that almost always request or require attendees to dress in all or close to all-white attire. These all-white parties and events became particularly popular toward the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century throughout the U.S. and even in parts of Canada. An all-white party usually includes R&B, Blues, Jazz, Rock & Roll, and often Hip Hop. Some critics even rate C.E.O. of Bad Boy label Sean "P.Diddy" Combs's all-white party in 2009 as being the best ever. But I have to stand strong and proclaim to all that no all-white party could compare thus far to Friday night's event in Madison. Truly the Spirit of God was alive all around and aware of all in attendance that night. God was prepared to exculpate any and every person overwhelmed by it, myself admittedly being one of them. I partied at this all-white event and became engulfed by a spiritual high that has yet to

disintegrate. To be honest, I am not sure it ever will, nor do I want it to.

After participating in rehearsals for holy and spiritual praise dance with fellow Odyssey classmates and sisters in Christ Lorraine Garrett and Kenya Moses, I can sincerely attest to the tremendous progression of spiritual energy from the near beginning rehearsals to the actual performance. Oh, what an evolution in such a short period of just a few weeks. For some of the team it was their first time, but for Toneisha, Kenya, and choreographer Lorraine it was their unique and talented experience that lifted and led the team into a very powerful, forever embracing, and surely appreciated performance. Full of artistic, colorful, flag-waving choreographic and solo work by Toneisha, Kenya, and Lorraine, the performance captivated the entire audience, bringing them to their feet in a standing ovation. What a moment as they all entered the throne room and bowed before our heavenly father!

Hebrew 4:16 of the King James Version states, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to

help in time of need." And as this glorious team performed, it was the one and only scripture I could think about. Ever since this performance, I look forward to the next all-white gospel gathering of Madison and think what entertainment it will bring.



# Madison Symphony Orchestra Review

## By Yolanda Cunningham

On Sunday, April 1, a guest and I attended a performance by the Madison Symphony Orchestra at the Overture Center. I must say it brought back memories of the Lawrence Welk afternoon. The audience was silent, and it was time to let the show begin. Conductor John DeMain graced the stage with his remarkable showmanship.

This gala event began with an astounding piece by Kevin Puts called "Inspiring Beethoven." DeMain's unique gift in announcing the symphony was above excellent. As all the players shared their solos and souls through their instruments, the unity and unison equaled a standing ovation. This was very nice.



Also gracing the stage was concertmaster violinist Naha Greenholtz, who took us around the world in a piece by Richard Strauss called "Ein Heldenleben," or "A Hero's Life." She mastered her solos in the piece. Bravo would be my applause for her. I've never been to many places the physical way but have only seen snapshots and videos of other parts of the world. In her presence on Sunday, her violin took me to Greece, Italy, and Austria. I enjoyed this every much. It will be a memorable moment every time I hear this piece.

Last but not least, Mr. Three Times Bowing Philippe Bianconi performed. This man can be classified as an entertainer. He was very enjoyable. At one point in the show, John DeMain looked at Mr. Gianconi as flowing melodies were unfolding. Mr. Bianconi lifted his arms as if he were in the form of a swan, with his fingers lowering toward the piano

keys. He brought to the audience contentment and beauty.

My favorite part of the show was the two harp players. They had the most beautiful part of the piece. Five stars to you two! You made my day as I reflected back at the close of my Sunday.

I had a wonderful time. Thank you, Madison Symphony Orchestra and guests, and thank you, donor Carroll Heideman and the Odyssey Project!

