



JUGHEADS

JOURNAL

Monthly news of JUGHEADS Youth Juggling Company, LLC • Edina, Minnesota • April/May 2014

Juggle Jam 16 Final (Hard Copy) Memo

Logistics enclosed for three-week countdown

The annual **Final Memo and Checklist** for all JH families regarding JJ16 logistics and etiquette is enclosed with this *Journal*. Four key dates that should be memorized: May 6 & 14; 16 & 17. Remember that student-created/borrowed/purchased costumes enhance all routines. Every Jughead should know the basic contents of the Final Memo to minimize long meetings at rehearsals.

Specialty Acts, Skits & Seniors

Distinguished Jugheads of JJ16

JJ16 “specialty act” auditions were held on April 8 in the Wooddale-Edina gym. Seven acts were chosen: four solos, two duets, and a quartet. We also have a good variety of skits. Ten (10) Jugheads completing their senior year active in the company will be featured according to their seniority/club involvement/leadership (five each night), joining the 55 graduates since 2006.

Officer Voice: Sydney P.

I’ve recently discovered just how difficult it is to describe Jugheads (JH) to people completely unfamiliar with it. Just today I was chatting with my future roommate and I realized it’s practically impossible to give a good description of JH because it’s so incredibly unique. That’s one aspect I really love about this program: it’s so unlike anything else communities around the state—or the world for that matter—have to offer. But what makes JH particularly special to me is not the juggling, but everything else it teaches.

It sounds cliché and cheesy, but I truly don’t know what I would’ve done without JH. It’s been such a huge part of my youth and without it, I wouldn’t be the person I am today. Unlike me, what many kids don’t seem to fully appreciate about JH is the life lessons. Personally, nothing has taught me how to be a better human being than JH has. This program has taught me the value of teamwork, leadership, and patience more effectively than any sports team or church group I’ve been a part of over the years. I’ve learned that compassion is not only important beyond measure, but that even the smallest gesture can brighten someone’s day. I’ve learned that acceptance means taking someone for exactly who they are, flaws and all, and that no one is perfect or above anyone else. JH has instilled in me so many of these lessons, and I witness them being instilled in others every day.



Looking towards college and the unforeseeable future, I know I’m really going to miss JH. Although most of my friends have either gone before me or will depart alongside me, it still brings me a pang of sadness to think of leaving. But all good things must come to an end. However, this end will bring a new beginning, one I feel prepared for thanks to this company. So I thank JH for all the friendships and lessons over the years, and for shaping me into who I am today. I don’t know what lies ahead, but thanks to JH, I feel ready for anything—and for that I am eternally thankful. —*Sydney P.: 6-year Jughead, Adv. Club Assistant, Officer, Elite Club Captain & Ultimate Club Member*

CLUB SPOTLIGHT: Ultimate

“Varsity club” puts spirits to the test

Much has been publicly written and spoken about Ultimate Club (U.C.) in our newsletters, banquets, and Juggle Jams over the years. How much more has U.C. been privately discussed among the members and coaches! Founded in 1998 requiring two days of JH membership and a vision to be our varsity-level juggling club with an intense focus on team juggling and the highest standards in the company (both technical and personal character), U.C. continues its tradition of small rosters (max: 20), a long build-up to Juggle Jam, and often the most touch-and-go regarding being/feeling prepared to take the stage each May. As a club, U.C. best epitomizes Gloria Estefan’s lyrics in our annual finale: “...I’ve tried my very best; put my spirit to the test. If I could reach...” Putting one’s spirit to the test in a group setting can be daunting, especially with high-school-aged peers in a unique activity. But that seems to be a large part of the appeal of training for, making, and maximizing U.C. membership.

Last year marked the first time in six attempts (spanning 2002-2013) that U.C. didn’t pass the audition process for the IJA Teams Championships. Disappointing, yes, but the members’ spirits were put to the test, and they *did* pass with flying colors as good sports who learned that even one’s *best* (collectively as well as individually) may not match someone *else’s* standards (something that anyone older than high school has, or no doubt will/should, learn many times in life). Looking ahead to next year, roster projections put U.C. as *possibly* staying around 16 members, but *likely* being reduced. If we were primarily in the business of IJA medals and maxed-out rosters, “setbacks” such as an audition rejection and a period of a waning roster would disappoint. On the contrary, we’re in the *youth development* business. As for U.C. leadership, Paul quickly realized that he couldn’t lead this club alone, so he’s hired specialists and coaches every year but one since 1999.



Combining our co-captains **Reid J. & Evan P.** with coaches **Jon O'Connor & Kelvin Ying**, U.C. is truly a team effort for a truly unique team.

Look forward to seeing U.C. perform their JJ16 routine set to the big band music of "Big Bad Voodoo Daddy."

JUGHEADS Community News

—**SENIORS:** The deadline to submit Senior Presentation photos is 5/4. JJ16 program bios are due 5/11 (look for an email w/ details).

—**SUMMER JUGGLING CAMP** forms are printed and online. Reminders: 1) Coupons expire 5/23; 2) punchcards are a popular option; 3) kids can bag-lunch-it if juggling all day; 4) SLP Parade is 6/14; 5) Edina Parade is 7/4; 6) EYJA Juggling Meet is 7/12 or 7/19; 7) U.C. "Boot-Shop" is July 14-18 during regular afternoon camps.

—**THE FALL 2014 REG. FORM** and the post-JJ16/Summer 2014 newsletter will arrive at the homes of all current Jugheads on 5/23 at which time fall roster spots will be open for current members (with director approval for non-Rec. clubs). Returning member discounts last through 6/7, then Rec. Club spots will be offered to new rookies starting on 6/9. Whether to secure a spot or simply save \$25 per club, plan now to register for fall from May 23-June 7!

—**CONDOLENCES** to the **Rynders** family at the passing of **Grandpa Henry "Hank" Nykamp**, Dawn's father, on 4/18. The Rynders are in the midst of *many* trials; check out Dawn's blog if you want to read about her faith amidst much pain: <http://athomemomatwork.blogspot.com/>.

Paul's Platform: "Average-Age Parents"

This spring, Wendy & I both turn 45. That means that we're already halfway through our 40's! While it wasn't God's will for us to have children of our own, we have vicariously experienced certain aspects of parenthood from our relationships with many nieces, nephews, Wise Guys, Jugheads, and friends' kids over the years. With my own homespun statistics, I deem that Wendy & I are now at about the average age of a Jughead parent. Frankly, it has surprised me over the last few years that *any* Jughead parents are actually *younger* than us; as a rookie Wise Guys manager in 1992, I was even younger than all my staff! But logically, if a typical couple in our metro area started having kids in their late 20's, and we have a mix of birth orders among our 10-year Jughead age range, the average parent here is probably about 45.

Why does this matter? Well, from my perspective, it matters because although our programming, Juggle Jam traditions, juggling techniques, and events change relatively little year to year, *I* change. One of my rare colleagues (who has worked career-long with youth jugglers) is Art Thomas of St. Ignatius Circus Co. in Ohio. He commented to me at a recent festival: "When we started out coaching, we were like the cool older brother. Then, we became more of a father figure. Now, in my case, I'm a grandfather figure." His insights are appreciated, as it reminds me that our strengths and weaknesses in relating to and leading the kids change over the years. Even my own favorite relational reality and analogy, being an uncle, changes as the kids & I age.

Just like all parents (and aunts & uncles) have to go through metamorphoses in learning to care for and mentor infants, toddlers, pre-schoolers, elementary/middle/high schoolers, college-age, and adult children, I'm learning how to change while my students' ages stay the same (while "juggling" each student's individual changes, like a real parent). Meanwhile, if the Lord wills for Wendy and/or me to live long enough to be the age of an "average" grandparent, we hope to actively mentor, love, and be supplementary family figures to as many young(°) people as possible. May all parents, kin, and mentors out there strive to not just be *average*, but *extraordinary* in the lives of the youth under our influence. No matter what our age.

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