

JANUARY 2025



NEWSLETTER

Jeff's Jots

Joy: The Elixir

"Will this elixir cure my gout?"

This was the one line my best friend, Stevie, had in our school play. I don't remember mine. I remember Stevie's because I didn't know what an elixir was, nor did he. We looked it up and found it meant something that was a "Cure-All;" we liked that. Maybe a bit ironically a few months later, at the tender age of 13, Stevie died. He had cystic fibrosis, which I knew but did not know it was incurable and a death sentence. I used to go over to his house and sit with him while he hooked himself up to a machine that would suck out his lungs - we called it "the Sucker." I'm not sure Stevie knew he was going to die; back then parents did not tell kids stuff like that. When he did pass, I was in shock for quite some time. And of course, I never forgot the line he said in the play.

There are many purported elixirs these days. So many that we often feel guilty for not taking every one of them - but we'd then spend the day swallowing umpteen pills and following so many regimens, our lives would be consumed with only our own well-being.

For me, my elixir has been the JOY that family and Jordan Glen have brought me. My wife, Robin, for almost 56 years, my children, grandchildren, and your children. I have never stopped feeling the joy of seeing children happy. I think the Jordan Glen children are extraordinary in this way. I thank the Universe almost every day, and sometimes many times each day, for the ability to have been able to bring this idea to fruition. There have been so many who have made this happen along with me, and the whole undertaking has been the journey of a Lifetime. Yet the overriding sense of Joy in seeing our children smiling is more than fair compensation for everything else. I have tremendous respect and faith in the COJG (children of JG). They will go where we will not and evolve in ways we cannot clearly see - yet I trust it is how it should be, because I see into their hearts. Their heads may be in the stars, but their feet are literally firmly planted on the ground (often bare footed!) Their connection to the earth is daily nourished.

As we move to 2025, I want to thank all the JGers past and present. Not only students but their families as well. They have entrusted us with their most precious, and we are honored. To Stevie, I have never forgotten you, nor the lesson your early death taught me: That our time here can be short, but our impacts on others long. To JGers everywhere, as I said, the elixir of Joy can never be underestimated. Hopefully, it will guide you toward making this world a better place.



Jeremy's Eternal Journal

There's a lesson in everything.

In my opinion, one of the most important elements of Jordan Glen is that philosophy; that there is a lesson in everything. Some of these lessons are intentional, but many others are simply a byproduct of the culture that Jeff & all of the teachers at Jordan Glen have built over 50 years. I'm not referring to the actual academic lessons which the kids learn, and which are more than impressive in their own right. What I am referring to is the intangibles that Jordan Glen kids learn, and which will serve them well throughout their lives, long after they leave the safe confines of JG.

It all starts at Morning Meeting, where every child -- from the most extroverted to the shyest child - takes turns "leading" morning meeting. This small act of quieting down a group of wound-up students in the morning and commanding their attention for a few minutes goes a long way toward empowering them and giving them the foundation to eventually have the self-confidence to one day command the attention of an entire auditorium of guests.

Requiring all students, from PreK on up, to participate in our school plays is an invaluable lesson for our children; not only are they learning to overcome their fears of public speaking and being on stage (which by itself is worth the payoff), but they are learning the important lesson that doing the hard and tedious work, even on days when they may be dreading play practice, is what is required to produce what they will eventually be extremely proud of. We teachers hold the students to a high level, especially as they enter the senior class play rehearsals, and if any student is "mauling it in", they will be told so. Producing the quality of play that we've come to expect from our students is not easy; but the smiles, pride, and adrenaline rush while taking that curtain call makes it all worth it.

Sports at JG carries more lessons than I can do justice here, but there is a reason why Dave Porter has commented that "the most competitive high school kids he has seen" have come from Jordan Glen. You need thick skin sometimes while playing sports at JG; we have some talented and competitive kids (and teachers!) that raise everyone's level. Do lines sometimes get crossed, from good-natured trash talk to mean-natured trash talk? Yes. Will a young 2nd grader sometimes get frustrated when the "bigger kids" aren't passing to him? Sure. (As will the "bigger kids" when the much bigger alumni kids return to relive their JG glory days). Will an all-world athlete get criticized for not being a team player by passing up an easy pass for personal glory? Absolutely. But all of these instances contain lessons that - while maybe not always fun in the moment - make all the sense in the world when these children look back one day.

Perhaps the sweetest and most endearing JG lessons come from watching our older students interact with our younger students. In most schools, students only know the kids in their grade. For our JG lifers, the idea of not knowing the rest of their schoolmates would seem preposterous (and is such a missed opportunity). Some of my greatest JG thrills are watching our 7th and 8th graders be "reading buddies" to the K1 class; or watching how happy the younger students are when the "big kids" put on the Halloween and Valentine Day festivals for them; or the most poignant example - when our older kids are entrusted to teach an elective for younger students. I don't know who gets more out of these interactions; the older students or the younger students. But I do know it provides a memorable experience for all parties, and when, a few years down the road the "younger" student is now the "older" student, the cycle is complete and the lesson makes even more sense.

I can go on & on with the countless lessons I witness on a daily basis: But perhaps the greatest lesson I have to come to realize comes during the all-important 8th grade year. As Jeff counsels the 8thies, their 8th grade year is all about them, which means, *it is no longer about them at all*. This is the year when the expectations and obligations on them are the highest....and the rewards and sense of achievement follow suit. The 8th graders are our school leaders and the face of the school; parents of younger students look to them to get a glimpse of what lies ahead for their own children; high school teachers will soon look at them to get a glimpse of what Jordan Glen students bring to the table; and younger classmates look to them in adoration and as examples of what lies ahead for themselves. It's hard to properly articulate what the concluding year of JG represents, but seeing the sense of pride after completing their last Senior Class play, the sense of excitement and wistfulness of their final Senior Class Trip, and their sense of gratitude and nostalgia as they recite their graduation speech (commanding the attention of their JG peers one last time) is a remarkable experience. It's not uncommon for a rising 8th grader to start looking around and wondering "what else" is out there and with some trepidation feeling "ready" to get out of their safe JG bubble and enter the larger social scenes where there may be less work, less expectations and more temptations. But those who elect to finish their journey never regret it. In fact, the 8th grade year at Jordan Glen is typically what graduates look back at most fondly when remembering their time at Jordan Glen. Of the myriad of lessons a JG student receives over the course of their years here, completing their journey and moving on prepared and confident for the next chapter of their lives is the most important.

This year's 8th grade class is a perfect example of what JG personifies; many of these students have spent the better part of their lives with each other, and as they approach the last half of their last year at JG, they recognize even more clearly that this magical time of their life is soon ending. There are a lot of varying emotions with this realization, but the appreciation and pride they have for what they've accomplished, mixed with the excitement and confidence of what is to come is something that I wish every child could experience.

Here's to a great second half of the school year!



Kim's Kaleidoscope

Fridays at Jordan Glen are magical. We get pizza & lemonade, and we get to swim. Once you reach 2nd grade, add Gatorball. And if you make it to the Sr. Class, you finally get to play College Bowl. I LOVE COLLEGE BOWL. Remember how excited Will Ferrell was when he heard Santa was coming? Well, that is how excited I get when Jeff lets me play. Last time I played, I overheard Jeff tell Jeremy, "Kim is reliving her childhood in the Sr. Class." And it's true. I love this place and so would have loved to have been a student in Jeff's class; anyone who gets to come to school here is living a charmed life. Even though I missed out on attending Jordan Glen as a student, as an adult, this school has given me the opportunity to grow and become the best version of myself.

To get the full JG experience, you will need to push yourself outside of your comfort zone, but rest assured, that is where the real fun and growth happens. You will be forced into uncomfortable situations that require public speaking and performances. You will learn the importance of discipline and even if you aren't an athlete, you will be encouraged to play sports like Zennis, Gatorball, and Phat Ballz. You will learn to live the philosophy, "You give a little love, and it all comes back to you. You're gonna be remembered for the things you say and do", an ideal that will serve you well for the rest of your life. And rest assured, if your student makes it to the Sr. Class, your child will be pushed to become the best version of themselves!

Top Ten Memories your student will have while being a part of the Sr. Class:

1. Being a Thanksgiving Server
2. Performing in "A Christmas Carol"
3. Leading a Group Project
4. Participating in Tuesday Play Practice
5. Playing Zennis
6. Being a Mentor
7. Swimming with Manatees
8. Being a Reading Buddy
9. Playing College Bowl & Winning J-bucks
10. SCT (What happens on SCT, stays on SCT.)

Thank you, Jeff, for creating a place where I get to relive my childhood and find my home away from home.

Love from, Lil' Kim

Notes from Nicole & Gowri (2nd – 4th)



Every child deserves a champion – an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be.

- Rita Pierson

Greetings for the New Year! Hope everyone had a great winter break and is ready to take on 2025!

Thank you to all the chaperones who drove students to The Nutcracker ballet where we saw JG students Kailani and Emma Grace dance beautifully in it and to Skate station last year. We appreciate all your help.

We will also need chaperones for our upcoming field trip on February 27 to the Phillips Center for Performing Arts to hear the Gainesville Childrens' Orchestra perform, at 10:15am. It will be a fun experience where the children will also get an opportunity to walk through the orchestra, while it is playing.

The third graders have begun their reading logs. They are to read 20 minutes four nights a week and record it in their logs. It is due every Friday. Second graders are also reminded to read 15 minutes a day at least 5 times a week. Reading logs with the due dates are in their binder.

Here are some reminders since we are halfway through the year. Please take the time to look over your child's Friday Folder, sign it, and return it to school on Monday, and please take the time to look over your child's planner each week to see what is due that week and any events that are upcoming. Please remember that 2nd graders need help organizing and keeping track of their homework and when it's due.

In Jr. Great we recommend that 2nd and 3rd graders get their story read to them at home before the quiz. 4th graders are going to be moving to a story a week. Their vocab and sentences will now be due every Tuesday and their notes, quiz, and why questions due every Thursday. Please help your child keep track of this change.

The second and third grade math groups have finished the units on money and time. The second-grade math group will be moving on to double digit addition and subtraction. The third-grade math group has finished 3-digit addition and subtraction and will be starting on the multiplication and division unit very soon. Both math groups are doing so well. The fourth-grade math group is finishing their double-digit multiplication unit and are moving on to long division. The fifth-grade math group is finishing their triple-digit multiplication unit and double-digit division. The last unit of the year for both groups will be fractions.

In March, the third and fourth graders will begin the Iowa Basic Skills Test. They will be testing on March 6th and March 11th – 13th (No testing on Mondays and Fridays.) It is important that the students get a good night's sleep and eat a healthy breakfast. We appreciate having the students present during this testing period if they are feeling well enough.

In Science the 4th graders are preparing for their science test on rocks and minerals. Their test will be on Tuesday, January 21st. Their next unit will be earthquakes and volcanoes. The 2nd and 3rd graders are finishing their unit on Rocks and Minerals and will have their test in February. Our last unit in science is the planets and the moon. We will be planning our last field trip to the planetarium and the rock garden at Santa Fe College sometime in April. Additional details will be shared soon.

This school year in Social Sciences we are studying American History. We have taken these last few months to learn about our various Native American/Indigenous tribes, the millions of people who formed complex communities and who originally settled the land that is now the U.S. Ask your children about the Navajo, Seminole, Nez Perce, Inuit, Maidu, Tlingit, and Sioux tribes. Where did they live, how did they live, and where are most of them now?

Finally, please remember to mark your calendars for our 2-4 play, The Enchanted Bookshop, which will be staged on Wednesday, May 14 (for the school) and Friday, May 16 (for parents and relatives). The children are looking forward to sharing their singing, dancing, and acting talent with you. See you all then.

With love from, K1



The K1 students have accomplished so much since we came together in August of 2024. We started the school year as friends, and now we feel much more like a family. The pool has been a favorite elective for many, and we look forward to it opening again after Spring Break. In the meantime, we are taking the extra time for STEAM projects and studying the seven continents. We spent several months in Africa and have recently moved on to Asia. I hope your student(s) shared stories of Anansi the Spider and flying to Senegal. We delighted in our holiday fun, had a nice break, and are happy to be together again in 2025. Everyone loved learning about Los Colores with Miguel and reading with their new reading buddies. The first graders are eager to get their thousand rolls, and the kindergarteners are flying through their rod books and unlocking their reading and writing abilities. We are also just starting to talk about our K1 play, which we will be performing on April 29th and May 1st. We are excited to see what the rest of 2025 brings!



Happy New Year from PreK!



The PreK had a wonderful first half of the year making new friendships, building community, tending to the garden (and cooking with our home-grown veggies!), practicing weekly yoga, learning new Zumba and ballet dances, and making music together!

We are looking forward to our spring concert where we will be dancing, singing and even rapping!

The PreK welcomes anyone who would like to come and read stories to us or make a craft with us! Feel free to reach out to Sue any time if you're interested.

