



# Alumni Newsletter

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**SAINT PATRICK'S ALUMNI NEWSLETTER**

**AUG/SEPT 2021**

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Dear Alumni,

I hope this letter finds you all well and safe as we progress into Phase 5 of “return to normal” from the Coronavirus pandemic. We were very fortunate to have in-person learning for our students for much of the school year. The Diocese did ask schools to move to remote learning briefly before Christmas break. Our school had a minimal number of students quarantined due to a family member with COVID or being exposed to someone who tested positive. We also saw fewer flu and cold absences than we normally would have seen during the winter months.

St. Pat's was able to end the school year with a number of events that it was unable to have the previous school year. Our 8<sup>th</sup> graders graduated on schedule with a beautiful Mass followed by an abbreviated Academic/Athletic Awards ceremony as a part of their graduation. This was not possible last year until the end of July for the Class of 2020.

All grade levels had their usual end-of-year class picnics and field days. Activities were reorganized, so that all students could stay in their assigned cohorts and could enjoy a fun-filled day while being safe.

Now, as we move forward in planning for a new school year, we look forward to a more “normal” or rather a “new” normal school year. St. Pat's plans to be in-person learning only and back to a full day schedule.

In spite of the many challenges that we faced, there were good things that came from the pandemic. There were a number of regulations put in place to keep everyone safe and classes separated. We plan to continue some of these in the upcoming school year such as the hand sanitizing, the three lunch periods versus two, and how students are dropped off and picked up for school. We do hope we can go back to All School Mass without having to livestream the Mass into classrooms in order to maintain required social distancing in the church. We also hope to have Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament again.

All in all it was a great school year. The students loved being back with their friends and their teachers even if they were required to wear a mask. Being back in school was so much better than being “sheltered in place” and remote learning as we did the last quarter of the 2019-2020 school year. I have to applaud the tremendous amount of work the faculty and staff did to make in-person learning work, and I appreciate their support throughout a time in our lives we could never have imagined happening.

Peace and Blessings to all in our parish, school, and alumni!  
Doreen M. Shipman, Principal

Please keep in your prayers those who have recently died: Mrs. Susan Mackoway, Mrs. Gloria Chiras, Mrs. Doris Higgins, Mrs. Esther Sue Barnes Hall, Mrs. Harriet Venzon, Mr. Les Novy, Mrs. Rosemary Kloet, Mrs. Rose Raher, Mrs. Lillian Schierer, Mr. Derrell Jones, Dr. N.A. Antony, Mr. Randy Gabbert, and alumni Bill Goebel (1957), Stan Maxheimer (1973), Jake Harris (2002), Keith Smith (1965), Pat McCann (1959), John Kevin Yeagle (1962), and Dennis Baker (1962). Also remember Stacy Buck, daughter of Ed Buckingham (1961) and Fred Ripper, husband of Rosa Lee Certalic-Ripper (1967) who passed away. We lost some of our religious recently as well: Sister Dorothy Bertsch, Sister Rose Therese Sevigny and Sister Eloise Marie Pulskamp. Mrs. Lorraine Workman, formerly Sister Mary Benedict, passed away earlier this summer. She was one of first three nuns that came to start St. Patrick's in 1951. May they and their families find peace in God's grace.

# WHO'S WHERE, DOING WHAT NOW?

## Don Kelly - 1955

Fondest Memories: the great classmates and wonderful teacher Sister James Joseph.

I am retired after 40 years in education at the Quincy Public Schools. I was a teacher, counselor, and a coach for basketball and golf at Quincy Sr. High School. My wife Nancy is a registered nurse. I enjoy my time with our five grandkids, golfing, and hunting.

My parents were John (died 1981) and Mary Rose Kelly (died 2017). My brother Tom graduated in 1958 from St. Pat's He passed away in 2008. My wife and I have two sons. John is married to Lindsey, and they have a 4 year-old boy named Nolan and a 2 year-old girl named Lydia Rose. Ryan is married to Lindsay and have girls Lauryn (9) and Lila (6) and boy Levi Patrick (5).

My email is jdonkelly@yahoo.com.

## Kathryn Pfister-Stoeckel - 1963

Fondest Memories: I lived directly across the street from the little white church and only two houses away from the school. I loved helping the nuns. I remember covering books for the next year, and participating in racing with the sisters' chairs down the hallways.....safely, of course. In the summer time, I remember singing at the daily Masses. Those were the good old days which I will remember always.

What I am doing now: I am working at Price Chopper a grocery store in House Springs, Missouri. I have been there almost 35 years. I will be retiring in January of 2022. I belong to Our Lady Queen of Peace Church in House Springs. I am a member of the choir which has finally allowed us to sing as a choir again after the Covid 19 restrictions were lifted. Our first Mass with the choir was a memorial service for a parishioner who passed away last August. It was such an uplifting moment for the whole choir.

My husband Bill of 45 years passed away on February 7, 2016.

My next phase hopefully will be to travel overseas to Bern, Switzerland, where my father's family is from and to Northern Italy, Ireland, and possibly Scotland (once the traveling restrictions are lifted.)

I hope everyone at St. Pat's is in good health. God's Blessings to All.

## Steve Jones - 1980

I have many fond memories of my 8 years at St. Pat's from playing basketball and track to PE (racing on the rolling board on the gym floor). My mom was the secretary (Mrs. Jones) for most of my time there, so I knew I'd better behave or I'd be walking past her office on my way to see Sister Mary Ann. There were so many great teachers, sisters and priests who had such a positive impact on my character development. I am so grateful.

I have been living in San Diego, CA, for the past 31 years and worked for the County of San Diego in Behavioral Health Services in Quality Management for the past 18 years. I am starting a new adventure and moving to Sausalito, CA, as of January 2021 to work for Marin County as their Director of Quality Management for Behavioral Health Services. I have three of the cutest dogs (Brutus, BooBoo, and Gabby) who keep me company. I have traveled to many places in the world over the past 25 years with my travel buddy Joanne. We have been on over 25 cruises together.

Time sure passes by fast, so it's important to live every day and make it count! Looking forward to retirement soon and traveling as much as possible. Blessings to all.

Steve's sisters include Lisa (1975) and Lynn & Lori (1979). Their mom, Mrs. Marian Jones, worked as the school secretary for 27 years from 1974-2000.

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## *Did you know...*

St. Patrick Parish held a special event this past December called "St. Pat's Nativity Story Adventure Trail". People from all over loaded up the family vehicle and arrived at their first stop (St. Patrick's church parking lot) to receive a map and program to guide them around town and view live scenes from the Advent Story. Scenes included The Annunciation, The Visitation, The Nativity, The Shepherds and the Angel, The Visit of the Magi, and The Presentation at the Temple. The drive around town took about 30 minutes and was a huge success!

U.S. Army Soldier and St. Patrick alum Robert Riedel (2009) was recognized for his heroic actions in Germany this past February. He and his crew provided aid to a local German citizen involved in a car accident. As they were flying over a ridge in a rural area, Rob & the 4 other crew members, saw a cloud of white smoke and a car roll over two or three times. Landing their helicopter quickly, they provided first aid and stabilized the situation and the injured man.

There were many notable anniversaries recently. Monsignor James Swaner (former St. Pat's Pastor 1993-2003) celebrated 60 years of religious life. He is now retired and living in Utica, IL. Sister Debra Berry (St. Pat's alum 1962) celebrated 50 + 1 years in her religious order the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation. She taught at St. Patrick's 1st grade for 3 years 1982-1985. Mrs. Kathy (Opsomer) Schlack, a 1971 graduate and 3rd grade teacher at St. Pat's, celebrated 40 years of teaching. Mrs. Doreen Shipman, St. Pat's principal since 2013 celebrated 30 years of parochial teaching. Mrs. Kim Berquist celebrated 20 years at St. Patrick School.

St. Patrick Confirmation class of 2021 was held at the Cathedral of St. Mary in Peoria this past March. There were 42 Confirmations.

St. Patrick graduation class of 2021 was held in May. There were 28 students graduating with 22 going to Washington Community High School and 6 going to Peoria Notre Dame. The American Legion Scholastic Student Award went to Hogan Johannsen; Crowning Mary was Andrea McMurray with attendants Emersyn Hughes & Anna Volk (daughter to Nick, 1987); The Clarence Linsley Knights of Columbus Good Christian Award went to Isaac Deiters, Emersyn Hughes, Andrea McMurray, and Anna Volk; Class Spirit Award and Band Director's Award went to Andrew Rademacher; American Legion Athlete Award went to Andrea McMurray and Dylan McGinnis; Mark Burroughs Sportsmanship Award was given to Thomas Mickels (son of Theresa Biagini-Mickels, 1980); Josephine Goebel Sportsmanship Award went to Emersyn Hughes and Anna Volk; Angela Linsley Volleyball Award was given to Ella Gonia; Evan Knoblauch Track Award went to Giovanna Greene.

Girls basketball has a new assistant coach. Jerry Lee (1973) has been helping out the girl's team the last of couple years. He is a grandparent volunteer and loves it! He's been stepping up to the plate and doing a great job with his time, talent and treasure for our school. It is much appreciated.

Celebrating her 100th birthday this past February was Sister Eloise Marie. She taught at St. Pat's from 1969-1982. She also recently celebrated 80 years in her order. Sadly, she passed away in May of this year. On March 25, 1941, she professed her vows as a Sister of Mary of the Presentation. Following is an excerpt of a Valley City, ND, newspaper article about 7 nuns and novices that were POW's in France including Sister Eloise.

From 1942 to 1944, they were prisoners of the German Army occupying France, trapped in Europe after World War II began Sept. 1, 1939. Sr. Corinne Yepson, Sr. Loretta Bernier, Sr. Eloise Marie Pulskamp, Sr. Alexandra Turcotte, Sr. Annetta Lebeau, and two others who have left the order were still in their teens and 20's. The Sisters of Mary of the Presentation, a French order, required novices to go to the motherhouse in Broons for religious education. When the North Dakota novices arrived they were immersed in intensive French language instruction. News of the war seldom penetrated their remote motherhouse. After brief resistance, France surrendered on June 25, 1940. By July, the sisters' link with America through letters stopped. Attempts to return to the United States failed. The Americans continued studying in Broons and waiting for the inevitable.

"The Germans finally came to get us," Sr. Corinne said. It happened on Sept. 24, 1942, after the European war had been in progress for three years. "It was 4 in the afternoon," Sr. Corinne remembered. A German officer arrived and told a superior to the order that the soldiers would come for the American sisters in the morning. The seven sisters packed their possessions in cloth-covered parcels bound with rope. At Rennes, the depot just beyond Broons, the seven North Dakotans were joined by 22 Sisters of the Holy Spirit. They spent the first night in what the French called "barraques," described as a stark room with wooden beds and thin mattresses. The sisters learned their destination was Vittel, a resort city in the northeast corner of France. They remembered being put into a single third-class coach hitched to a train carrying ammunition. The car had no lights, no beds and no water; only wooden benches. The soldiers locked them in for three days on the train. They traveled by night mainly, spending days still in freight yards. Sr. Alexandra remembered the train slowly circling Paris. Rain poured down. The roof leaked, so one of the guards chewed some coarse black bread and squeezed it in the cracks. When that failed, the sisters opened umbrellas and huddled under them. They were counted regularly by their German guards.

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The resort town of Vittel had several hotels clustered in one area, which had been commandeered by the Germans as an international internment camp. Some 3,000 foreign nationals representing many nations were incarcerated there.

The camp commandant assigned the seven Americans to rooms on the fifth floor of the Continental Hotel. They found themselves part of what they called the Congregation of Congregations, with sisters representing many different orders. In her account, Sr. Annetta wrote that the Continental Hotel was often called "Camp Convent."

Life settled into something resembling normal patterns. Priests interned at Vittel celebrated Mass daily in the hotel dining room. "We even had retreats and classes," Sr. Loretta said. The sisters soon began to receive weekly boxes from the American Red Cross, with canned foods, coffee, cheese and packs of cigarettes. The Germans seldom interfered with daily life in Camp Convent, except for occasional inspections. "They started on the first floor," Sr. Corinne said. "Someone from that floor would get word to the upper floors that an inspection was under way. We had time to hide things." One thing they always hid was a toaster they had somehow acquired. The best hiding place was the wide window ledge. Out went the toaster, and anything else the Germans might find objectionable.

The war never came their way. Except for the planes overhead, Camp Convent might as well have been on the moon. Stuck there, Sr. Loretta remembered feeling a peculiar, hard-to-describe sense of abandonment. "We felt neglected, out of the picture." That feeling ended in February of 1944, when the North Dakota sisters and English-speaking Sisters of the Holy Spirit were selected as part of a group of internees to exchange for German prisoners detained in the United States. Early on Feb. 29, 1944, the sisters, carrying their parcels, filed out of Camp Vittel to the cheers of the internees remaining behind. At the train station, Sr. Loretta said, "Our guards this time were just young boys. We felt sorry for them." On March 15, they arrived safely in American waters and docked at Jersey City, NJ. The sisters were met by Mother Mary Anthony and Sr. Helen Marie, from Spring Valley, IL. Everyone was surprised at the good health of the sisters, after two years in an internment camp. Sr. Annetta wrote, "They were expecting skeletons in rags."

With their return to America in 1944, the sisters went about their quiet lives again.