

Jottings

The AIC / MHA Alumnae Newsletter
Fall 2015



Alums celebrate their “castle-on-the-hill” days

By Sister Paulette Seng, OSB

For 90 years Academy alums have been returning to the hill for their annual summer reunion. This year’s gathering was extra special. We celebrated not only all the alums who were present, but also the 90th anniversary of the Alumnae Association – an Academy organization that Sister Hilda Godecker, principal, established in 1925 “for the perpetuation of friendship among its members, the advancement of their temporal and spiritual welfare, mutual encouragement, and the promotion of the interests of the Institution.” (taken from the original A.I.C. Alumnae Association Constitution, composed in 1925)

In observance of this anniversary, we asked some members of this year’s anniversary classes and board members to share their thoughts and feelings about the reunion and the Alumnae Association.

Tina Dalton ’82, president of the Alumnae Association Board: “We had another amazing Alumnae Weekend! The stories from one decade to another all had the same sort of feel. We have so much in common with each other. We learned so much from the sisters and teachers and became the strong women we are because of our shared experience.”

Ann-Marie Tedrick ’90: “This year I made the pilgrimage to ‘the hill’ for my 25th anniversary reunion. Now I feel that I need to go more often than just anniversary years. These ladies were my sisters for two and a half years, and I am in awe of the remarkable women they have become. I was so moved to see them happy in their lives; I literally cried tears of joy. My heart was full, and I was reminded of how blessed I was to attend

Marian Heights. This is where I grew up and where the foundation was laid for the person I am today.”

Members of class of 1955: “It’s good to reunite with Academy ‘sisters’ at the reunion in those beautiful surroundings. As we get into these ‘Golden Years,’ it’s important to stay in touch to know what is happening

in each other’s lives, to offer encouragement, prayers, and love.

Memories come flooding back. We never tire of repeating our stories of A.I.C. days, and, fortunately, none of us tires of listening to them. Thanks to all those responsible for making our 60th reunion a wonderful day! You are going to have to go a long way to make our next anniversary celebration better than this one. It was well planned and organized, room and

decorations were lovely, and an enjoyable meal and place to visit. The souvenir glasses were such a nice surprise. Everything seemed to be so thoughtful and beautiful.”

Marguerite (Weyer) Hollingsworth ’60: “Before we left the reunion, we vowed that we would plan to come back each year to celebrate the ‘castle-on-the-hill’ days. Friendships are priceless, and when 15 classmates come together, nothing more needs to be said. Thank you for the opportunity each year for friends to celebrate together — once again!”

Sister Mary Claude Croteau ’49 and former teacher: “From my experience of being an AIC alum and teacher, an Alumnae Director, and a loyal attendee at reunions, I stand in awe at our conscious or unconscious tendency to follow our commitment to ‘Draw



Lola (Shiebler) Conway, Allison Guide, and Mary (Espy) McCoy, all class of '92, reconnect at the reunion.

Continued

closer to Christ and to one another.' If I had a composite picture of all our alumnae, I would see a vast array of women, each striving in her own way to be the person God wants her to be, and each being successful in her own way. We have been and are blessed!"

Bert (Blume) Miller '65: "A special bond was developed while being at AIC because we spent four years living together. The classes were small enough to really get to know everyone. The reunion is a unique opportunity to reminisce and to catch up on each other's lives and what's happening on 'the hill.' Time has passed, but we have not forgotten the wisdom we acquired there."

Susie Schafer (Teacher/proctor 1986-1999): "My husband, Erik Conrad, had no idea what to expect, but he was thoroughly impressed with the beauty and serenity of the environment as well as the hospitality and friendliness of everyone. I was rejuvenated by the peace, serenity, and beauty of the campus, as I've been every time I've returned since my first interview with Sister Mary Dominic for a teaching position 29 years ago. But I was even happier and more spirit-filled to see the people who were there — to rekindle acquaintances with former colleagues, but also to see the ladies that those teenagers I once taught have grown into."

Marianne Butler '85: "Coming back to 'the hill' every year for Alumnae Day is more than celebrating the anniversary of a high school graduation and reconnecting with friends and teachers. It's an opportunity to take a break and relive those days when life



Alumnae Association Board (L to R): Catherine (Mott) Rydberg '88, Tina Dalton '82, Sister Linda Bittner '65, Sarah Tucker '81, Ruth Metzger '72, Elaine Baumgart '59, Sister Paulette Seng '59, Melissa (McMahon) Stone '01, Elaine (Fromme) Robertson '80, Julie (Uebelhor) Buechler '76, Lindsey (Moorman) Healy '01, Falisha Pierce Ball '90. (Connie (Holmes) Egloff '73 was not present for photo.)

"We owe the vitality and continuation of the Association to past and present board members. They have been and continue to be the catalyst for alumnae activities, cohesiveness, and bonding. Without this board, our alumnae would not be as active, supportive, and connected as they are. Thanks to all members who contributed items for the raffle, and special thanks to Catherine Rydberg for providing the beautiful anniversary glasses for the reunion." (Sister Paulette Seng '59, Alumnae Director.)

was much simpler, when you interacted face to face with friends rather than social media or text, and when the most important thing you had to do was homework. The strong woman you are today can trace roots back to life lessons learned on 'the hill.'"

The spirit and enthusiasm at the reunion confirms that alums value their friendships with one another and love and support each other, regardless of which class they are in. They are definitely happy to be together, and time hasn't diminished that bond.

We hope to see you next year for our gathering on the hill on June 25-26, 2016! **SAVE THE DATE!**

Facts about the 2015 reunion

At least 140 alumnae and their guests gathered for the reunion weekend. Of the 13 celebrating classes, 11 had members present. The 50th anniversary class (1965) had the largest attendance with 19, and the 1960 class had the second largest with 15. Both classes gave a gift to the sisters of \$895 and \$880, respectively. Amy (Conrey) Andreas '90, from Montana, and Elaine (Renner) Potter '65, from California, won prizes for traveling the farthest for the reunion. The raffle items, made and donated by board members, brought in \$465 to help defray the cost of *Jottings*. Alums appreciated having the Monastery Event Hall and outdoor campus areas to use for the weekend activities.



Teacher Julie (Uebelhor) Buechler '76 greets Katherine Parmenter '88, one of her former students that she hadn't seen for almost 30 years.

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AIC/MHA Alumnae news/Facebook postings

Mary Ellen Alig '53 was married in April 2015 to Walter Schmitteckert in a private ceremony with their families. "I'm now Mary Ellen Alig-Schmitteckert." This was Mary Ellen's first time to marry. Congratulations, Mary Ellen and Walter!

Sharon (Holland) Hedinger '60 Congratulations to Sharon and her husband, Dennis, who celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary this summer. "I'm sorry I couldn't be at the reunion to celebrate our wedding anniversary with classmates as well as our 55th class anniversary. My sister and I were always telling our parents that the best money they ever spent was sending us to the Academy. It enriched us then and is still doing so today."

Juanita (Koch) Singer '60 and husband, Melvin, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary this summer. Congratulations!

Carilyn (Higdon) Dillman '73 "Graduated in 1973; oh, the memories!"

Nanette Bulebosh '76 "I can't be there for the reunion, but I'll be with you all in spirit. Blessings to that beautiful place that holds so many rich memories. And blessings especially to the sisters and my fellow alums. My four years at MHA (two in the 70s as a student and two in the 80s as a teacher) were among the happiest in my life."

Tanya (Cooke) Tullos '88 "Missed another annual reunion with my sisters, but I will make it back to this wonderful place one day – MHA! It's been 27 years since we walked into the chapel with our white gowns on to receive our high school diplomas."

Kristi (Pnacek) Bonilla '90 "Just had the opportunity to read *Jottings*. As I stand in my kitchen, full of emotion, I must say to my esteemed and dear teacher, Julie Buechler, 'thank you.' You wondered if you taught us. Inspired us. Let me say that I am who I am because of you. As I teach my students, I quote you, I hear you. I think of you often. I pray that I may impact just one student as you impacted me and so many of my peers. So, *gracias maestra. Dios la bendiga.*"

Campbell (Davis) Herrault '97 "I'm living in the San Francisco Bay

Area and have a 5-year-old son and 3-year-old daughter. I'm in graduate school for Industrial Engineering and still working as a chemist. I miss the well-kept grounds around MHA – it made for a beautiful view while studying! I hope all my classmates and their families are well."

Congratulations to **Melissa (McMahon) Stone '01** and husband, Lance, on the birth of their son, Bennett Aden Stone, born in April 2015.

Katie Johanning-Gray '01 received a degree as Doctor of Psychology in Clinical Psychology from Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in July 2015. Congratulations, Katie!

Alums share on Facebook about their Academy experience...

Tina Dalton '82 "Many people have asked me why my high school is so important, 'It was just school,' they said. They don't get what it meant to live with such great people and teachers."

Elizabeth Hagman '79 "MHA girls, staff, and the monastery are all family. Sister Mary Dominic Frederick is still one of the most important people in my life as well as Julie Buechler."

Roberta (Webb) Miljure '89 "The years at the Academy are still some of my most cherished memories; the wonderful friendships that I still maintain and the education and leadership skills have served me well."

Falisha Pierce '90 "I attended all four years. The Academy for me was a haven. In many ways the sisters, staff, and friends were the biggest influence in my life. So many amazing women in one place! I learned the world was so much bigger than what I'd ever seen!"

Samara (Hussain) Morgan '97 "My beautiful alma mater! Here I learned to live a little more independently, to speak Spanish, enjoy a voluntary before-school Mass, build confidence in my leadership skills, to sing opera music, and much more... and where I made friends from around the world."

Bea Forlano '00 and her mother, Mary Jane Halloran, recently spent some days at the monastery and attended a special luncheon for Women of the Rule, a women's philanthropy circle that supports initiatives of the Sisters of St. Benedict. Bea shared why she became a member of this group. "The time I spent at MHA was life altering and one of the most educational, enjoyable, and impactful times in my life. The sisters supported us in so many ways, from making it possible for many of us to attend the Academy to the personal encouragement, direction, development, and advice they gave us daily. I joined the Woman of the Rule because it supports specific projects that the sisters are working on, and it has been fun hearing about all of the great work that they continue to do. It also gave me the opportunity to spend a little time back on 'the Hill' after all these years. I would encourage alums to give in any way you can to the sisters who gave us so much. The Women of the Rule is a very meaningful way to contribute and be involved in the work that the sisters of Ferdinand are doing." Visit www.thedome.org/wotr if you would like to know more about Women of the Rule.



2015 Academy Alumnae Reunion

1945



“Way to go, AIC/MHA Alumnae Board! We worked well as a team. What a marvelous reunion day it was! A wonderful group of young ladies returned.” — *Julie Buechler '76*

“When our class gets together, we become AIC students once again, reliving our wonder years.” — *Marguerite Hollingsworth '60*



“So many things that I learned from the community of sisters and teachers have guided my life, and I was grateful to be able to thank them. And so grateful that I got to ‘grow up’ at MHA!” — *Ann-Marie Tedrick '90*



“It’s important that we gather together to keep our Academy bonds strong. Some of us don’t realize how important we are to each other.” — *Tina Dalton '82*



“I was rejuvenated by the peace, serenity, and beauty of the campus, as I’ve been every time I’ve returned since my first interview with Sister Mary Dominic 29 years ago.”
— *Susie Schafer (Teacher/proctor '86-'99)*

“The weekend was wonderful! I hardly have words to express it. It was magical and joyful!”
— *Dorothea King '65*



“I thoroughly enjoyed this year’s get-together because 18 of our class came for our 50th anniversary, several of them for the first time.” — *Bert Miller '65*



“Seems like we take a little bit of each other home with us to enjoy until the next time we meet.” — *Mary May '55*

“Reconnecting with our roots and friends from ‘the hill’ reminds us of where we came from and has us looking forward to the next Alumnae Day.” — *Marianne Butler '85*



News from the hill

Thirteen sister alums observe special anniversaries this year



Sister Donna Marie

Sister Donna Marie (Connie) Herr '63 was one of four sisters who celebrated their 50th anniversary of their profession of monastic vows on August 22 at the monastery. For the past seven years Sister Donna has served, and continues to serve, as manager of the St. Vincent de Paul Pantry and Office of Emergency Assistance in Evansville. Prior to that, she was a religion and social studies teacher at Mater Dei High School in Evansville for 38 years and an administrative assistant in the retreat ministry at Kordes Center in Ferdinand.

Sisters Eileen Reckelhoff, Jane Becker, and Agnes Weinzapfel also celebrated their golden jubilee. Sister Eileen currently serves as the Coordinator of Pastoral Care for the monastery's Hildegard Health Center. Sister Jane is the sub-prioress at the monastery and works as a clinical psychologist at St. Luke Center in Louisville. Sister Agnes is currently a CNA in Community Health Services at the monastery.

On October 25, 12 sister alums will celebrate special anniversaries of their vows. Sisters Theresita Schenk '38, Wilma Davis '39, and Mary George Kissel '41 will celebrate



Sister Theresita



Sister Wilma



Sister Mary George

their 75th anniversary of their profession of monastic vows. Sister Theresita does music ministry as an organist and composer; Sister Wilma serves in the ministry of prayer; Sister Mary George does monastery support services and tutoring for Family Scholar House.



Sister Mary Victor



Sister Mary Leon



Sister Mary André

Sister Mary Victor Kercher '43 will observe her 70th year of monastic profession. She is coordinator of mission appeals and does monastery support services.



Sister Barbara C.



Sister Jacqueline



Sister Carlita

Celebrating 60 years of monastic vows are Sisters Mary Leon Kiesel '53, Mary André Gettelinger '55, Barbara Catherine



Sister Jolinda



Sister Mary Beth



Sister Michelle

Schmitz '55, Jacqueline Kissel '55, Carlita Koch (teacher/proctor), Jolinda Naas '55, Mary Beth Maier (ESL teacher and receptionist), and Michelle Mohr (music teacher).

Sister Mary Leon volunteers in Mission Advancement Office and does monastery support services and prayer ministry; Sister Mary André does hospitality and tours, hair care, liturgical environment, and other monastery support services; Sister Barbara Catherine is Outreach Advocate for Family Scholar House in Southern/Central Indiana and works in Mission Advancement Office; Sister Jackie Kissel is director of the sisters' House of Discernment in Evansville and a caregiver for a family member; Sister Carlita serves in prayer ministry and monastery support service; Sister Jolinda is guest house manager, switchboard operator, and chauffeur for elderly sisters; Sister Mary Beth does monastery support service and serves on the sacristan team; Sister Michelle does music ministry, liturgy projects, and is caregiver for a family member.

Ferdinand native to make perpetual monastic profession



Sister Doris Schepers will make her perpetual monastic profession as a member of the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand on October 17. Originally from Ferdinand, Sister Doris entered the monastery in 2006. Prior to that she worked as a Systems Administrator for U.S. Congressman Lee Hamilton and Congressman Baron Hill and as Youth Minister at St. Anthony Parish in Clarksville, Indiana. After entering the monastery, she was a substitute teacher in Evansville and also taught math at John Paul the Great Catholic High School in Jasper. She is currently in her fifth year of teaching religion at St. Patrick School in Louisville.

Sisters accept two women into the novitiate



Postulant Lynn



Postulant Lisa

The sisters will receive two women into the novitiate, the second stage of incorporation into the religious community, on November 14. Lynn Falcony and Lisa Schutz began their initial formation after entering the monastery earlier this year.

Postulant Lynn, 27, is from Evansville and worked as an IV Pharmacy Technician at St. Mary's Medical Center in Evansville prior to entering the monastery.

Postulant Lisa, 37, is from Crown Point, Indiana, and worked as a Certified Nursing Assistant at Deer Creek Assisted Living in Schererville, Indiana, before entering the monastery.

During their 12-month novitiate period, they will live and work at the monastery and continue an intense study of Benedictine history and spirituality, monastic practices, Scripture, and human growth and development as they prepare for vowed membership in the Benedictine community.

New “Monday Message” writer



Sister Kristine Anne Harpenau, Academy class of 1967 and former prioress of the Sisters of St. Benedict, is now writing the community’s “Monday Message” sent each Monday via email. Sister Maria Tasto ’55, who had been writing these messages, passed away in July 2014 but had written enough reflections to last another year. Sister Kristine Anne will now be sharing her reflections every week on how the Rule of St. Benedict can be a guide for lay people as well as monastics. If you wish to receive her reflections in your email on Mondays, contact Angi Seffernick (aseffernick@thedome.org or 812-367-1411, ext. 2637).

Sister Kristine Anne also writes “God is inviting you” on the sisters’ blog — daily reflections on the scripture readings at Mass. Visit ferdinandbenedictines.blogspot.com.

Update on use of buildings on campus

The sisters’ **Benet Hall project** is moving along faster than anticipated. This past February, their application for tax credits for converting Benet Hall into affordable housing for seniors was approved. Since then, the project has been on a fast track. Sister Barbara Lynn, prioress of the Sisters of St. Benedict, and other sisters on the administrative council, along with Alan Hoffman, chief operating officer for the sisters, have been working with developers, marketing surveyors, financial consultants, investors, architects, designers, engineers, apartment managers, and many more experts in planning and implementing this project.

Since May, there have been many meetings to create the design for the facility. The building will be reconstructed into 15 senior housing apartments. It’s expected potential contractors will be given detailed prints by September/October. Once the contractor is selected, construction is scheduled to begin later this year, with completion in October 2016 — earlier than the original estimate. “Thanks to the project having solid financial support, we received favorable loan terms that enabled us to start the process sooner,” said Sister Barbara Lynn.

Persons interested in renting an apartment can get their names on a list by contacting Ginny Van Kirk at 812-367-1411, ext. 2650, or at gvankirk@thedome.org. Valenti, the organization that will manage the apartments, will process applicants to insure compliance with all eligibility requirements.

The **Monastery Event Hall**, located in the former MHA gymnasium, has been available for rental since February. Recently, with inquiries and rentals increasing, more is being done to enhance the kitchenette area, which will include a stove, refrigerator, and sink. At least eight weekends have been booked from August to December. Events include weddings, family gatherings, parties, spiritual enrichment and educational programs, etc.

Alums experienced the comfortable and attractive space of the hall during their reunion weekend in June. “The room and decorations were lovely and an enjoyable place to

visit our classmates,” commented one of the alums. If you or someone you know is interested in renting Monastery Event Hall, call 812-367-1411 for Laura Reckelhoff at ext. 2635 or Angi Seffernick at ext. 2637, or email them at lreckelhoff@thedome.org or aseffernick@thedome.org.

St. Benedict’s Brew Works, a microbrewery located in the former Academy Art Studio building leased by the sisters, will hold its grand opening on Saturday, October 10. The brewery owners, two local entrepreneurs, received state and federal licenses earlier this summer to operate a brewery. With that approval, they began setting up equipment and preparing the inside of the building. Also, new siding was put on the exterior. Now the brewers are brewing their specialty craft beers, and the former Art Studio is again in use. Alumnae are invited to patronize the brewery and taste the specialty beers (without watching out for a proctor).

St. Ferdinand Parish uses monastery church

While the St. Ferdinand parish church is undergoing renovation for the next few months, any previously scheduled weddings at the parish have been or will be taking place in the monastery church. The parish church renovation is expected to be completed sometime in January.

May they rest in peace

Alumnae: Rose Mary (Schip) Buechler ’38, Clara (Altmeyer) Schnieders ’38, Angeline (Arvin) Fithian ’40, Rita Marie (Craig) Meth ’40, Germaine L. (Dewig) Relleke ’40, Ann Jeanette (Baumgart) Lannert ’45, Mary Lou (Meyer) Barrows ’46, Anna Lee (Jasper) Haug ’49, Gloria (Brockriede) Bumb ’51, Patricia (Kares) Bratcher ’59, Dolores Lange ’63, Joan Baehl ’65, Martha Jean (Hoehn) Breeze ’76, Mary Elizabeth Johnston ’83, Nancy (Branley) Mack ’87

Husband of: Rosemary (Rich) Yabroudy ’49, Barbara (Braun) Zenthoefer ’59

Father of: Mary Lou (Hohler) Gehlhausen ’66, Ruth (Hohler) Seger ’69, Sister Anna Corrine O’Connor ’69, Pam (Albert) Blessinger ’71, Andrea (Boarman) Johnson ’87, Melanie (Boarman) Schwab ’88

Mother of: Lynda (Becher) Provence ’66, Christie Dickman ’69, Nicole (Beck) Beavin ’70

Brother of: Patricia (Clark) Hurley ’45, Dorothy Clark ’48, Alice Schroering ’48, Theresa (Kloeck) Wahl ’48, Sister Mary Leah Baehl ’49, Sister Vera Kloeck ’50, Edwina (Kloeck) Wahl ’53, Rose Marie (Blume) Bartley ’56, Jeanette (Blume) Becher ’57, Rosemary (Schroering) Rivers ’58, Lucy (Schroering) Alcorn ’60, Phyllis (Blume) Lilly ’61, Carole (Blume) Tabor ’64, Roberta (Blume) Miller ’65, Sister Patty Lasher ’66

Academy Principal 1993-95: Richard Mathena



Jottings

AIC/MHA Alumnae Association

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Upcoming Spirituality/Hospitality programs on the hill

*Check the monastery web site for more details and events:
thedome.org/events*

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| October 24 | Sacred Music Series Lecture:
Benedictine Spirituality of Music |
| November 6-7 | Spiritual Practices to Improve
Health, Healing, and Wholeness |
| December 5 | Praying with Julian of Norwich |
| December 12 | Remaining Faithful Amidst Life's
Difficulties and Tensions |
| January 4-6 | Come Away Retreat |
| January 5-6 | Reading the Bible as Story |
| January 16 | Introduction to Centering Prayer |
| February 13 | Forgiving What You Cannot
Forget |
| February 27 | Never Despair of God's Mercy |
| March 19 | Loss and Grief |

