

Jottings

The AIC / MHA Alumnae Newsletter
October 2010



Reunion spurs memories of wayward oranges, flashlight reading, and life lessons learned

Jeri (Malone) Norman, Academy class of 1959, hadn't been back to the monastery since she graduated.

But the joy she experienced attending the annual Academy Alumnae Reunion on June 26-27 had her saying, "There is no doubt in my mind I will be back."

It didn't take long for the nostalgic memories of that long-ago time to captivate her.

"The main castle on the hill was such a beautiful sight," said Jeri, "as we drove up to it I had tears in my eyes."

She went to the gift shop upon arrival, where the first of many unexpected gifts – the best kind, after all -- greeted her. Seeing Sister Charlene Ann Wheelless '59, gift shop manager, for the first time in 51 years was just the beginning of a weekend of highlights. A real treat that followed was getting reacquainted with Sister Mary Louise Uebelhor '60 on a building tour.

As is typical of other alumnae on reunion weekend, stories of the good times rolled, along with a deep appreciation for just how the Academy years changed lives for the better.

"The best story I heard was, to my surprise, some people actually remembering the time I accidentally

dropped an orange from a second story window onto Sister Priscilla's head," said Jeri, now living in Illinois and enjoying retirement with her husband of 43 years.

"The good sisters instilled in us great values. I am very grateful for that. And I learned the hard way that a young lady never chews gum in public! But seriously, we all learned to be good Christians and to share the love and knowledge the good sisters gave us."

Marguerite "Marc" (Weyer) Hollingsworth was part of the class of 1960, which had the largest attendance, at 21, of any class at the reunion, and was determined to leave its mark. They did just that on Sunday as they paraded around the dining room cheering, "We are the 60s, mighty, mighty 60s, everywhere we go people want to know who we are, so we tell them . . ."

"What a better way to end a fabulous weekend with dear friends for life," said Marc, who is an accounting manager living in Carmel, Indiana, with her husband, Don.

Continued



Karin Fujino '90, from Japan, is excited to receive the attendance prize for traveling the farthest to the summer reunion. She received a gift certificate to the monastery gift shop, *For Heaven's Sake*.



Alumnae board member Mary Jo (Boorman) Kaiser '58 presents a gift basket to Sister Mary Claude Croteau '49 for her eight years of service to the alumnae association and board as monastery/alumnae liaison.

Her cohorts, picking right up where they left off 50 years ago, spun fond tales of short-sheeting beds, riding in laundry carts, and squirt gun fights.

"I remember the softball games, the walks to Camp Marian, sledding down the hill, musicals in the old gym, and of course, praying together in the Chapel," said Marc.

And she remembers the importance of the three "Fs" – Faith, Family, and Friends. Those dovetailed into the primary teachings of the sisters she took with her: to have confidence, integrity, independence, and the strength our Faith offers us.

Dorothy (Dethy) Allen, class of 1950, noted how successfully alumnae have coped with the hard life dealt them, "perhaps in part as a result of the example set by the dear sisters at the Academy."

"These women had an important part in making us the women we became," said Dorothy. "In their own way they each left their mark on each of us."

One of her best memories was continuing to read under her covers with a flashlight after 'lights out.' "Years later, I asked Sister Mary Regis if she knew what I was doing. She replied sweetly, 'I knew a lot of things that you girls thought I didn't know.' So the moral of the story is, I will never know if she knew."

Dorothy, a widow and retired, lives in Georgetown, Indiana.

She said the best examples set by the sisters for her were to have a joy for life, acceptance, tolerance, and a commitment to make the world a better place. Attending the Academy taught her "to persevere, to walk humbly before God and my fellow persons, and to live an organized and simple life."

Karin Fujino, class of 1990, likely had the most unique journey to the reunion. She was married last February, and had a dream to bring her husband to the place where she graduated. And even though she is a native and resident of Japan, she convinced her husband to visit the reunion as part of their honeymoon trip. They went from Rome to London to Ferdinand.

"It was very difficult to arrange flights, but I was determined to make it happen," said Karin.

"Trish Krampe and the class of 1990 had gathered on Facebook to share information about the reunion. I found many classmates I had lost touch with. It is amazing we all had different lives after graduation, yet managed to meet on-line and face-to-face. It is great to still have friends from high school."

Karin had originally not planned to go to the Mass. But her group decided to attend at the last minute. Good choice.

"We walked into the church, which had been renovated, and it was stunningly beautiful. When I saw Ms. Jane Ann [Breen] and Mrs. Julie Buechler during the Mass, I burst into tears. Mrs. Buechler taught me Spanish, and was always kind and very patient with me. She always encouraged me to try to learn, and I wanted to be like her – happy, cheerful, and positive."

Karin currently works in marketing for Federal Express Corporation, Japan Branch.

"I've always worked in multi-cultural and multi-national environments," she said. "I am glad that the Academy deepened my understanding of people from different countries and cultures, and gave me the social skills to interact with them."

View photos from the reunion at <http://thedome.smugmug.com/MonEvents/alum2010>



Letter from the Monastery/Alumnae Liaison

Happy 85th anniversary to the AIC/MHA Academy Alumnae Association! Sister Hilda Godecker, principal from 1922 to 1926, established the Alumnae Association in 1925. Today, in 2010, our Alumnae Association is alive and well, judging from our summer reunions.

This year's reunion drew more than 140 alums and guests to the hill. The enthusiasm and excitement created an energy and spirit that only an Academy alum would understand. If you haven't been to a summer reunion since you left the Academy, talk to an alum who has, and make plans to return to your alma mater for the reunion weekend next summer — June 25-26. An alum who hadn't been back for 51 years said, "I didn't realize what I was missing."

Congratulations to the class of 1960, "the golden girls," who had the largest number in attendance (21) for the reunion weekend. They were a rowdy group and made their presence known in a grand way as they paraded through the dining room, chanting a "theme song" from their Academy days (see the feature story). In appreciation for their education at the Academy, they presented a class gift of \$1,800 to the Sisters of St. Benedict.

Ten members present from the class of 1950, remembering their teachers from 60 years ago, also expressed their gratitude and presented a gift of \$790 to the sisters.

The class of 1990 used Facebook as a way to contact classmates about the summer reunion. Their networking brought 11 of them back for their 20th anniversary. Karin Fujino, from Japan, said, "Even though many could not make it to the reunion, it was great to find classmates and get in touch again."

Thanks to the Alumnae Association Board — led by Janie Nunning, president, — who planned and hosted the Alumnae Reunion. And special thanks to

Tina Dalton, Janice Greene, Mary Jo Kaiser, Ruth Metzger, Ann Nagy, and Sarah Tucker, who contributed beautiful original art pieces and a gift basket for the silent auction, which raised \$277 at the reunion.

Are you on Facebook? "We would like to gather all the alumnae who are on Facebook onto one page," said alumnae board member Tina Dalton, "to make it easier for all of us to find Academy friends and classmates." Tina has established a new "official" group for alumnae. If you are on Facebook, search for "Marian Heights Academy/Academy Immaculate Conception." Or go to the sisters' Facebook page at Facebook.com/FerdinandOSB and find the link (lower left side) to the alumnae group.

Barbara Zinkan Taylor '65 recently posted on that Facebook page: "Any other grads from 1965 out there? Come on, Facebook is not just for the young bunch."

Another way we try to keep in touch with alums is through e-mail. We currently have about 600 alums on our e-mailing list. We would like to have more. If you want to receive periodic e-mail from "the hill," send your e-address to me at pseng@thedome.org or complete the form on the alumnae web page (www.thedome.org/alumnae) to update your contact information.

Whether you attended the Academy for one semester or the entire four years, you shared the Academy experience and belong to a unique group. You are gifted women who have been leaders in your communities and families. You are generous women, aware of and responding to the needs of others. You continue a tradition of leadership and service learned at the Academy.

Many times when I watch the segment "Making a Difference" on an evening news program, I think of our alums throughout the world who are making a difference.

We are proud of our alumnae, and we pray for you daily. We enjoy hearing from you, and we enjoy your visits.

Stay in touch,
Sister Paulette Seng '59



The 40s

Sharon (Swain) Werner '49 and her husband, Bud, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary this summer.

The 50s

Darlene (Schepers) Brinkman '58 and her husband, Wilfred, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in September. They live in Jasper and have two sons and a daughter.

The 60s

Linda (Little) Wenning '64 is a member of the Historic District Board of Review in Madison, Indiana, and on the Madison Main Street Program Board, a charter member of the Main Street Program nationally. "Jim and I are in our fifth year in Madison and loving the town and people."

Phyllis (Ploetner) Corrigan '65 "I am still working as a librarian at the Glenview [Illinois] Public Library." [As the class chairperson, Phyllis contacted 35 of her classmates about attending the Alumnae Day reunion this summer for their 45th anniversary. She heard from a number of them and then compiled their updates to send to everyone in the class. Some of their information is included here in *Jottings*.]

Jane (Seng) Benda '65 completed chemo treatments for uterine cancer earlier this year and is now cancer free and "living each day to the fullest."

Sister Linda Bittner '65 retired from the North Spencer County School Corporation after 21 years in public schools and 18 in parochial schools. She moved back to the monastery and has taken a position as a full-time instructional assistant at Ferdinand Elementary School.

Sharon Bittner '65 works as chaplain at Northwood Retirement Community in Jasper and as cashier at K-Mart. She also does volunteer work at the monastery gift shop.

Jane (Beckman) Chappell '65 stays involved with the sisters through the Women of the Rule group and does other volunteer efforts. She lives in Jasper.

Elizabeth (Kavanaugh) Michaels '65 lives in Montgomery, Indiana, and works part time at Daviess Community Hospital as a CNA. She has five children, 14 grandchildren and the third great-grandchild on the way.

Elaine (Renner) Potter '65 works with massage therapy and lives in California.

Judy (Becher) Reisinger '65 and her husband have been married 41 years and have five grandchildren. Judy is working part time doing bookkeeping. She lives in Huntingburg.

Jane (Block) Schwenk '65 is retired and lives in Jasper. She and her husband have one son.

Nancy (Jochim) Sylvester '65 is Professor Emeritus of Speech at Rock Valley College in Rockford, Illinois. She retired in 2001 after 31 years there. She continues working as a professional parliamentarian and consultant. She has authored two books.

Elizabeth "Liz" (Seger) Neukam '65 lives in rural Jasper. "My family and I are doing great. We have five children and nine grandchildren (ages 14 to 4 months) and are expecting our tenth in December. Ken and I are still working; he still drives for Kimball and I still work for a plumbing, heating, and air-conditioning business. Getting closer to the big 'R' word!"

The 90s

Ann-Marie Tedrick '90 lives in Blacklick, Ohio, and works as a systems analyst/computer programmer in Columbus, Ohio. "I have been blessed with an amazing 4-year-old daughter named Eva and a job I love."

Dulce Ramon Flores '93 lives in Del Rio, Texas. "I have very fond memories of my time at MHA. Thank you so much for your patience and dedication. God bless you."

Jackie Perry '96 and William Eugene Daniels were married at Indiana Memorial Union-Alumni Hall at Indiana University in Bloomington on May 29.

Megan (Krivickas) Pollard '96 lives in Dryden, Ontario, and works part time for the Dryden Police Services as a 911 dispatcher. "My husband Chris and I just celebrated our 11th anniversary this year. Our wonderful daughter Emma, 6, begins second grade this fall. I love finding old school friends on Facebook!"

Gretchen (Schlomer) Mercer '97 lives in Crown Point, Indiana, and works as a speech-language pathologist at St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart, Indiana. "My husband, Mark, and I have an 8-month-old son, William. We call him Baby Will. He is our biggest blessing! He was born in December and was the best Christmas present we've ever received! We are so thrilled to finally be a family of three!" Congratulations!

Campbell (Davis) Herrault '97 lives in Santa Rosa, California, and works as a chemist. "On November 16, 2009, my husband, Alex, and I welcomed our son Carter into the world. He has been a joy and is a very happy baby. Alex and I have returned to work, but work different shifts so we can each stay home with the baby. I love being a parent, but I miss sleeping in! Being a mom has taught me to be grateful for all the little things in life and to appreciate every day with my family."

Jennifer (Vaal) Keller '99 has been promoted to the position of director of Abbey Caskets at Saint Meinrad Archabbey. She had served in marketing and sales and as operations manager for the past six years. Abbey Caskets is operated by the Benedictine monks at the Archabbey. Jenny lives in Evanston, Indiana, with her husband, Matt, and children, Levi (3) and Gabriella (5 months).

The 00s

Lindsey (Moorman) Healy '01 Lindsey and Nick have their first son, Colson Daniel, born July 15. "We are all doing well and excited to have him around! Jillian is so excited to be a big sister!" Lindsey and family live in St. Anthony, Indiana.

News from 'the hill'



Sister Jeana Visel will make her final profession of monastic vows at the monastery in Ferdinand on October 2. Sister Jeana, 31, from Winnebago, Illinois, entered the monastery in 2003 and made her first profession of vows in 2006. Prior to her entrance, she worked with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps in Chicago. She has a bachelor's degree in religious studies from Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio. She has continued theology studies since entering the monastery. She teaches theology at Our Lady of Providence Junior-Senior High School in Clarksville, Indiana.



Sister Shirley Ann



Sister Mary Lee

Sisters Shirley Ann Schultheis '58 and Mary Lee Hillenbrand '54, former Academy students, and Sister Mary Francis Williams, Academy business teacher from 1965-1966, celebrated the 50th



Sister Mary Francis

anniversary of their religious profession as a Sister of St. Benedict on July 3 at the monastery. Sister Shirley Ann currently works at the monastery gift shop; Sister Mary Lee ministers in the monastery's community health services and support services and volunteers at Lange-Fuhs Cancer Center in Jasper; Sister Mary Francis teaches computer and business at Mater Dei High School in Evansville.



Sister Mary Leah



Sister Theresita

Four other alums will celebrate special anniversaries of their religious profession on October 31: Sister Mary Leah Baehl '49 — 60th anniversary; Sisters Theresita Schenk '38, Mary George Kissel '41, and Wilma Davis '39 — 70th anniversary. Sister Mary Leah teaches English at the Benedictine monastery and ministers at a nursing home in Morropón, Peru; Sister Theresita composes music, helps plan liturgies, and plays the organ



Sister Mary George



Sister Wilma

for services at the monastery; Sister Mary George serves as director and teacher at The Reading Carrel in Evansville; Sister Wilma serves in the prayer ministry.

Sisters explore opportunities with Ivy Tech

For the past year, the sisters have been engaged in efforts to bring additional educational services to the local area. With community leaders from Ferdinand and the tri-county area and with representatives from area businesses, industries, and educational institutions, they have been exploring the need for affordable opportunities for training and other services benefitting the workforce and employers. They have also been in conversation with Ivy Tech officials in Evansville about providing needed services.

Sister Barbara Lynn Schmitz, director of Mission Advancement for the sisters, told a meeting of area leaders, employers, and officials in July, "Like many of you, we recognize the need for education in the form of workforce training — matching employers' needs with employees' skills and talents, a testing center for various certifications that is close to home, and expanded services for those seeking to adapt their skills for professional advancement."

At that July meeting, after receiving widespread interest and support from area leaders and employers, the town of Ferdinand, the Ferdinand Chamber of Commerce, and the Sisters of St. Benedict invited Ivy Tech to explore the possibility of establishing an Ivy Tech Community College instructional center in Ferdinand. In addition to their main campus in Evansville, Ivy Tech currently provides courses at sites in Tell City and Princeton, Indiana.

This project is in the exploratory phase. An advisory committee to be set up in September will help move the project along and provide additional research and information, including a feasibility study.

If Ivy Tech decides to establish a center in Ferdinand, they have various options for the location, including some of the facilities on the monastery campus. Sister Kristine Anne Harpenau, prioress, said, "We hope that one of our buildings might be suitable for such a center."

Sisters to present Advent/Christmas Concert under two domes in Southern Indiana



In conjunction with Ferdinand's annual Christkindlmarkt festivities, the Sisters of St. Benedict chorus and handbell choir will present an Advent/Christmas Concert "under the dome" of the monastery church at 3 p.m. EST, November 21. The sisters will also present this concert in the famed domed atrium of the West Baden Springs Hotel, West Baden, Indiana, in conjunction with a Christmas tree lighting ceremony "under the dome" the evening of November 21.



Thirteen members of the class of 1964 gathered at the Feed Mill restaurant in Poseyville, Indiana, the evening of August 9. Kathy (Walter) Koch provided this photo and said they had a great time and are planning a very special get-together next spring. Many Academy classes try to stay in touch through such regional gatherings.

Sister Teresa Gunter served on the Academy staff from 1992-1994 and 1996-1999. She taught physical education, chaired the department, and coached sports.

Coming soon to a computer near you!



Check out the sisters' new web site coming your way in mid-October. We've woven a more user-friendly web design just for you, putting more features, information, and photos right at your fingertips.

thedome.org



*One of the hardest things
about my decision
to become a nun?
Explaining it to
my boyfriend.*

— Sister Teresa

"When I told him, he asked what I'd be doing in Indiana. I said I hoped I'd be teaching, doing youth ministry, playing guitar at Mass – just as I'd been doing. And that's how it turned out. But, for me, doing them as a Sister of St. Benedict of Ferdinand, as a part of this community, makes all the difference."

Is religious life for you? Take the first step and get to know your Sisters at thedome.org. You can read our latest blog postings, take a virtual tour, and make plans to visit with us.

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October 2010

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Ferdinand, Indiana 47532-9239

Dear Alumnae,

We are grateful for the plans made and the vision set forth by generations of sisters who have gone before us!

Today, armed with a strategic plan for the future and a vibrant group of sisters to see it through, we look confidently to the years ahead. We trust in God's plan for us and in the loyalty and generosity of our extended family, of which you are such an important part. We are so thankful for you and for the ways you have touched our lives.

As we look to our future, we turn to you, our cherished alumnae. We invite you to prayerfully consider including the Sisters of St. Benedict in your will.

Have you ever wondered how you will be remembered at the end of your life? Will those you love be able to say what values, friends, and causes were important to you? That is what a carefully crafted will ensures. And that is why we humbly ask you to consider our request.

There are many ways you can include our sisters in your will. You can make a gift to them for a specific amount, for a percentage of your estate, or even as a residual gift after your specific bequests have been addressed. If you already have a will, you may want to consider simply adding a codicil. A codicil is like a letter's P.S. and doesn't demand an extraordinary amount of legal time or expense.

If, after prayerful consideration, you do decide to include the sisters in your estate plan, you should know that their legal title is: Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand, IN, Inc.

Of course, we always encourage you to consult a trusted attorney who can help with the details. In most cases, the cost of that consultation is minimal, especially in light of the potential heartache for those who are left behind, if their loved one hasn't planned for the future.

If you would like to learn more, or to request a copy of our booklet *Planning Your Bequest*, please contact me in our Mission Advancement office at 888-649-1121, extension 2638.

Karen Blesch
Mission Advancement Planned
Giving/Gift Officer
Sisters of St. Benedict, Ferdinand



May they rest in peace

Alumnae: Sister Mary Henry Schiff '33, Iler Jean (Mullen) Zoercher '33, Sister Mary Mark Graf '42, Leona C. (Waldhier) Sandage '42, Sister Catherine Beach '44, Margie (Martin) Adler '45, Mary Margaret "Marge" (Wollenmann) Hurst '46, Dorothy (Johanneman) Vaal '49, Mary Elizabeth (Rexing) Barber '50, Bertha Ann (Fischer) Mings '50, Kay (Naas) Huther '59, Rita (Mattingly) Elliott '64, Claudia (Stader) Boullie Boyd '66

Husband of: Norma Lee (Baehl) Goedde '53

Mother of: Sister Christine Marie Fendel '60, Katie Schwenk '67, Harriet (Goffinet) Neill '68, Sharon Brosmer '74, Ellen (Huther) Stanage '84

Father of: Amy Brockman '96, Sherlenia and Shermona Mitchell '00

Sister of: Imelda (Meny) Balbach '49, Rita (Rexing) Wilson '52, Verna Wollenmann '52, Sister Diane Fischer '54, Carolyn (Wollenmann) Tieken '54, Sister Dorothy Graf '61, Joanne (Stader) Buchanan '63, Barbara (Stader) Nurrenbern '64

Brother of: Betty (Borho) Wollenmann '50, Sister Ida (Juanita) Otto '62, Marti Stumpp '74

Faculty: Sister Mary Celeste Oberst (Development Office assistant and journalism teacher – 1969-70 and 1971-1996)

Alumnae card party benefits sisters



Janie Nunning, president of the Academy Alumnae Association, presents a check from the proceeds of the alumnae card party to Sister Jane Will, subprioress of the Sisters of St. Benedict. This fourth annual "bloomin card party," held in Evansville in April, netted \$3,300 for the care of the senior sisters at the monastery. "It was the best party yet," according to organizers Janie Nunning '58 and Kathleen Boink '58, co-chairs of the event, and committee members Joanie Schneider '58, Eleanor Buchanan '49, and Mary Jo Kaiser '58. The sisters are grateful for all the work and generosity of the committee and other volunteers, the 120 who played cards and games, and all the contributors of prizes for this very successful event. (Also in photo are Sisters Mary Philip Berger and Mary Claude Croteau, former directors of the Alumnae Association, and Joanie Schneider.)



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AIC/MHA Alumnae Association

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Concert of sacred music October 30 in monastery church



A rare opportunity for you to enjoy the vocal group Angelus will be Saturday, October 30, at 7:30 p.m. EDT in the monastery church. Angelus, a group of five women students from Mount Vernon (Indiana) High School, will perform sacred music of varied religious traditions and historical periods. Also performing will be Sister Jeana Visel, vocalist, and Sister Theresita Schenk '38, organist.

Angelus' recent concert appearances included Chicago, South Bend, Indianapolis, and Evansville. Their summer tour schedule had performances in Cincinnati, Philadelphia, and New York City.

This is the first concert of the Mechtilde of Hackeborn Sacred Music Series, sponsored by an endowment established by the Verkamp Family with the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand in honor of Sisters Mary Aquin '50 and Mary Ann Verkamp '61 and their love of sacred music.

Although there is no charge for the concert, a free will offering is welcome.

Additional contributions to the endowment are also welcome. For more information, contact Sister Barbara Lynn Schmitz at barbaral@thedome.org or 812-367-1411, ext. 2630.

