

May 2010

SPIRIT

Spirit of St. Mary's O'Neill, NE



One Hundred and Ten and Counting

St. Mary's School enjoys a beautiful and rich past. As the oldest private institution in O'Neill we can be proud of that fact. We can also be proud of the fact that St. Mary's has every intention not just to continue, but to grow. We are as excited about our future as we are grateful for so many blessings of the past.

In the first years of St. Mary's the Franciscan Sisters wrote, "May Almighty God always bless the work here begun!" From day one this institution has survived on blessings and faith and continues to do so today. Imagine the faith it would have taken one hundred and ten years ago to build a school on the hill above the Elkhorn in a town known for its wild west feel and pioneer spirit. The Sisters note in the Chronicles that the school "is founded on many bitter sacrifices." Of course today, there's no doubt that without the sacrifice of so many generous benefactors, alumni, and school families, this school would cease to exist. But why make so many sacrifices? Why work so hard for Catholic education to exist in O'Neill? The answer: When a school is committed to its Catholic and Christian identity, there is no better way, besides the family, to pass on the faith to the next generation. John Paul II stated in an address to Bishops of the United States in 1998, "The mission of the Catholic school is to...work effectively for the evangelization of the culture and for the common good of society." As our culture grows more secular, as it drifts away from religious belief, where the dignity and sacredness of life is not upheld, where moral relativism becomes the standards for behavior, Catholic education is needed now more than ever!

We love our school and we believe in its mission. We are proud of our past and we are elated about our future. We are inspired by our Savior and protected by His Mother. We are St. Mary's - One Hundred and Ten Years and Counting!

St. Patrick's Day Celebration at St. Mary's →

In this issue...

- Larry Tomlinson Enters Hall of Fame
- Sixth Grader Wins Spirit Award
- One Act Places 2nd at State
- Sister Anita, Educator of the Year
- Miss B
- New Look Website



Paula Zakrzewski Receives Spirit Award

On March 16, Paula Zakrzewski, daughter of Mary and the late David Zakrzewski, received the Children's Scholarship Foundation Spirit Award. The foundation awards six students from all those nominated from the Omaha metropolitan and rural Christian schools in Nebraska.

The award banquet was held at the Harper Center on the Creighton University campus. The guest speaker was Mr. Jim Hendry who is the general manager from the Chicago Cubs. Mr. Pete Ricketts owner of the Cubs is currently the chairman of the foundation. Many

dignitaries were there to honor the students including Archbishop Lucas and the mayor of Omaha.

Paula, a sixth grade student at O'Neill St. Mary's, was nominated for the spirit award because of the outstanding sense of faith, compassion, attitude and the desire to always put others before her that she brings to the classroom. She was the first student outside of the metropolitan area to ever receive this award. Those invited to join her in the presentation were her mother, Mary; her sister,

Jean; Fr. Nigli, pastor at St. Patrick's Catholic Church; Mr. Dupre, principal at St. Mary's; and the nominating teacher, Mrs. Berg.

Congratulations go out to Paula from all of St. Patrick's parish and St. Mary's School.

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Pictured (l-r): Nancy Berg, Paula Zakrzewski and Walter Dupre

Find Your Yearbook at www.stmarysoneill.org

The screenshot shows the website <http://www.stmarysoneill.org/yearbooks/>. The page has a header with the school name and a navigation menu: HOME, SYCAMORE, LOGIN, CONTACT US, SEARCH, ALUMNI, ABOUT US. Below the header, there are two main sections: 'high school' and 'grade school'. The 'high school' section lists: Announcements, Photos, Curriculum, Spiritual Formation, Guidance Counselor, Library, Teachers, Tuition, ACT Exams. The 'grade school' section lists: Photos, Curriculum, Accelerated Reading, Accelerated Math, Teachers, Preschool, Tuition. In the center, there is a note: '(Please note that these are fairly large PDF files and may require some patience when opening them.)'. To the right, there is a 'news info' section with a small image of the Virgin Mary. At the bottom, there are yearbook covers for the 1940's (1948), 1950's (1951, 1952, 1953), and 1954 (THE MARIAN 1954).

Sister Anita Named Secondary Teacher of the Year

By Mr. Walt Dupre, Principal



God has a plan for us. There is a purpose in what we are called to do. And there is a just reward.

When I was called to Vanderbilt Catholic High School some years ago God had a plan for me. I know that part of that plan was getting to know Br. Alfred Kolb – an institution at Vanderbilt Catholic – a Sacred Heart Brother who at that time was entering his 63rd year as a teacher. From talking with him and observing him, I learned the true meaning of service to others above self. His presence in my life was a tremendous reward for me listening to God's call.

Now, eleven years later, I find myself at St. Mary's in O'Neill, NE from Louisiana. People ask me all the time, "How did you get to O'Neill; what made you come to O'Neill?" The answer is simple. It was part of God's plan for me and though I have not been here a year yet I already know part of God's purpose for me coming here and my reward for listening to His call. Part of God's plan for me being here is getting to know Sister Anita.

This is Sister Anita's 54th year of service to Catholic education and her 24th here at St. Mary's. Sister is a beacon of light shining for the rest of the staff here at St. Mary's. Her dedication and professionalism is surpassed by none. She is a tireless worker dedicated to her students, St. Mary's School, and the Notre Dame Sisters. This school year Sister's teaching assignment includes Geography, American Government, Theology 7, Theology 10, and Theology 11. In addition, she makes weekly visits to grades K-4 to enhance the religion lessons of those students. She assists in the planning of both grade school and high school liturgies, works with Mass lectors, plays the piano at masses, serves on the Teachers' Advisory Committee, and performs any other duty asked of her. Sister works patiently with struggling students. She modifies lessons, assessments, and works with them outside of class to insure all her students are given the best chance to succeed.

Sister Anita has taught nearly every subject and every grade level offered. She currently holds certificates in elementary education, English, history, and social sciences. She continues to adapt her instruction without ever losing sight of the school's commitment to Catholic values and the teachings of Jesus Christ.

She is highly respected by faculty, students, parents, and the community. She is a true blessing to St. Mary's School.

All of Sister's work of listening to God's call and following His Plan also has some reward. We are blessed and honored to share the good news that Sister Anita has been named the 2010 Secondary Teacher of the Year for the Archdiocese of Omaha.

I can think of no one more deserving of the Archdiocese of Omaha's Educator of the Year Award. Sister will be presented her award by Archbishop Lucas on Sept 16, 2010, at the Archbishop's Dinner for Education in LaVista, NE.

Miss B

Lovingly Remembered



1931-2009

"She was the best teacher I ever had," Jennie Schneider '84 said.

This statement and many like it have been echoed over and over again when reminiscing about Miss B. Barbara Birmingham, affectionately known as Miss B passed away March 26, 2009.

Miss B was a 1948 graduate of St. Mary's Academy. After graduation she continued her studies at Duchesne College and also received a Master of Arts degree in speech and drama at Catholic University. She put her studies to good use when she returned to St. Mary's in the early 60's where she taught English and humanities along with speech and drama. Barbara was also a huge part of the very successful musicals presented at St. Mary's.

Miss B could be remembered for many things – her generosity to the school and parish, her teaching and storytelling, or the class and dignity in which she carried herself. Students, however, will remember her as someone who would look you in the eyes and you knew she cared.



Marian Award Recipients

Molly Gallagher & Josh Tomjack

This award is an honor bestowed by the faculty on one senior boy and one senior girl (two awards) who show evidence of the high personal and Catholic-Christian qualities for which St. Mary's stands. They shall be people who demonstrate the Marian qualities of lively faith, respect, positive attitude, good manners, hard work ethic, openness, generosity, helpfulness, cooperation, and patience. It is the highest honor that a student can receive from St. Mary's. They shall be selected by measuring these qualities and by measuring the amount of time they devote to others. (St. Mary's Handbook)

One-Act State Runner Ups



There doesn't seem to be any question in the minds of the State One-Act judges who the top two teams were at State this year.

The judges' scores indicate that St. Mary's and Wausa were ahead of the other competition with one judge even giving St. Mary's the number one rank over Wausa. Brian Hoelsing, Wausa's director, had good reason to sweat out the wait for the judges' final decision as he revealed to Mrs. Berg, "You guys had me worried."

The cast and crew of St. Mary's production of *Nora's Lost* proudly wore their medals around their necks at school on Friday. Though exhausted after months of early morning rehearsals and the pressure of staying on top of an already busy academic schedule, these students carried themselves differently today. They carried themselves with an attitude of humble achievement knowing that with hard work, family support, and God's grace they had indeed accomplished something special for themselves and for their school.

2010 Alumni Banquet Set for June 26

Master of Ceremonies

Dr. Steven G. Schneider graduated from St. Mary's in 1985. He was born and raised in O'Neill along with two brothers and two sisters. All five of them graduated from St. Mary's along with their father Tom who graduated from St. Mary's Academy in 1957.

After high school Steve attended the University of Nebraska Lincoln where he played football and majored in Biology. He graduated in 1990, and attended medical school at University of Nebraska Medical Center. He finished medical school in 1994 and moved to Kansas City, MO to do his surgical residency. In 1999 he finished his surgical training and moved to Grand Island, NE and joined Surgery Group of Grand Island where he currently practices as a general surgeon. In 2003 he married his wife Karla and they have four children, Jordan, Kami, Madison, Thomas.

O'Neill Public & St. Mary's O'Neill 9 Hole - 4 Person Scramble

June 26 - Tee-off at 9:00 am

\$30 per person with Lunch Included*



Call the O'Neill Country Club at 336-1676 to register.

Proceeds will be split between the schools' booster clubs.

*Rental cart fee not included.

Father Gerald Leise will be the featured guest speaker at this year's Alumni Banquet. Fr. Gerry taught at St. Mary's from 1978-1982 and 1991-1993.



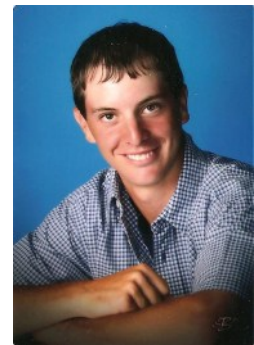
Braden Victor Baseggio

Son of Victor Baseggio & Melanie Peetz
Plans to attend Northeast Community College
and Major in Diversified Agriculture



McKenzie Jordan Connot

Daughter of Gary & Cathy Connot
Plans to attend Central Community
College in Columbus Majoring in Radiology
and Playing Volleyball



Joseph Dugan

Son of JoAnn Baum and Tim Dugan
Plans to attend Northeast Community
College to study Animal Science



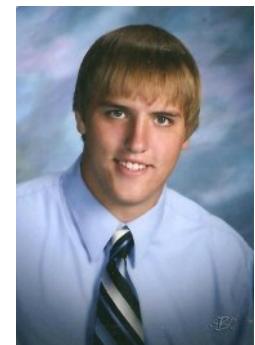
Molly Lynne Gallagher

Daughter of Greg & Sue Gallagher
Plans to attend Wayne State College Majoring in
Radiography



Michael John Krotter

Son of Bill & Jeanne Krotter
Plans to attend Northeast Community College
and Majoring in Drafting/Architecture



Alexander James Miles

Son of Terry & Beth Miles
Plans to attend Wayne State College Majoring in
Criminal Justice



Avery Michelle Schneider

Daughter of Darold & Merri Schneider
Plans to attend the University of
Nebraska at Kearney or Omaha Majoring
in Communications Disorders or
Occupational Therapy



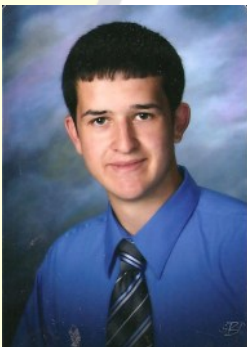
Sarah Patricia Spencer

Daughter of Wendell & Sharon Spencer
Plans to attend Creighton University and
Majoring in Nursing



Tyler Edward Stracke

Son of Mark Stracke & Sheri Welsh
Plans to attend Northeast Community
College for two years of General Studies
then the University of Nebraska at
Kearney majoring in Health Science.



Ryan Eugene Timmerman

Son of Raymond & Jeanette Timmerman
Undecided



Tanner Ray Timmerman

Son of Ed & Karen Timmerman
Plans to attend Nebraska Wesleyan
University Majoring in Business
Administration



Joshua John Tomjack

Son of David & Dorothy Tomjack
Plans to attend the University of
Nebraska at Lincoln Majoring in
Agricultural Engineering



Heather Marie Vandersnick

Daughter of Leo & Stacy Vandersnick
Plans to attend Wayne State College
Majoring in Elementary Education



Ruthie Christine Wetzel

Daughter of David & Barbara Wetzel
Plans to attend the University of South
Dakota Majoring in Earth Science

Larry Tomlinson '59

Inducted into Hall of Fame



Last September I was inducted into the Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame. This is a very great honor. I am very fortunate to receive this honorable award and I am proud to, once again, represent St. Mary's and O'Neill.

This is an award that I must share with all my teammates. It was your example that showed me the effort that it took to excel. I thank all my teammates (and even my opponents) because without your competition and enthusiasm I would not have put as much effort into sports.

I thank the classmates and fans who attended the games. It was your enthusiasm and cheering that provided the adrenalin for our teams to play beyond expectations.

I have to thank Matt Beha Jr. for sending me the web site for the Hall of Fame. It was at his insistence that I put my name in for consideration.

I thank my mother who made many great sacrifices to put me through school and she did it without any complaints. Well, there were a few times when I was being a rebellious teenager where she may have complained a bit.

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank the St. Mary's Academy faculty who were here when I attended St. Mary's for their contribution in this award. This gesture comes too late for many of the faculty who have left us; it should have been done many years ago.

I believe God's providence brought me to St. Mary's. When my father became sick we moved from the farm to Lynch. When he died Mom and I moved to O'Neill. If I didn't have so many friends that went to St. Mary's, I would have gone to O'Neill High.



I thank all the upperclassmen who volunteered their time and effort to coach our grade school teams. You may not have realized it at the time, but you instilled my desire and enthusiasm to excel.

There is a lot of emphasis put on sports these days, especially at the pro level. With the economy the way it is currently the first item considered for budget cuts is sports. But sports, I believe, offer a very important avenue of life at the amateur level. It is one of the best ways to build character.

Lastly, I would like to thank Coach Don T. Starting, my coach in the seventh grade. Don spent a lot of extra time and effort developing my skills. And more importantly being a stand in father when I needed one.

Thank you. Larry Tomlinson (Class of 1959)



Class of 1999



Class of 1989



Class of 1984

Alumni Banquet 2009



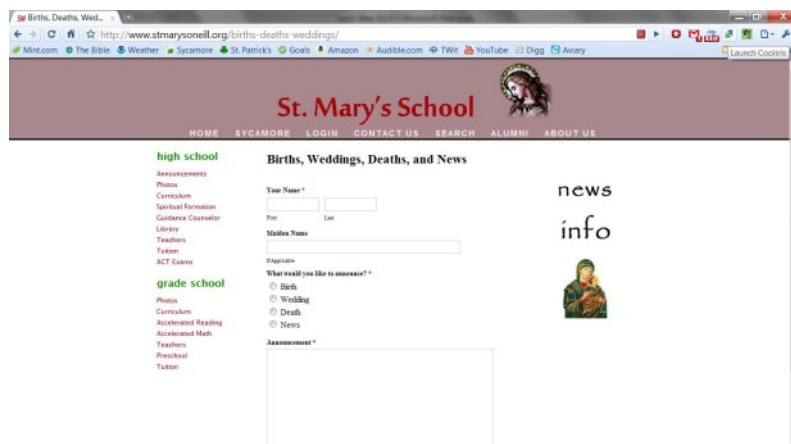
Class of 1969



Class of 1959



Class of 1949



Births, Weddings, Deaths, and News

We need your help! If you have any news about babies, funerals, weddings, or anything that's going on with you please help St. Mary's keep track it by

either mailing us, emailing us, or submitting it in the Alumni section of our website. As our families continue to grow and spread we want to make

sure you know that you are part of the St. Mary's Family as well.

klgtomjack@gmail.com
www.stmarysoneill.org



New Bus Paying for Itself

In 2009 St. Mary's decided to do something about the rising costs of transportation for school activities. In previous years the school hired out for all its transportation needs. The bus came equipped with extra storage compartments and a DVD/Stereo system for those long hauls. Despite a few early breakdowns in the first year which were covered under the warranty, the bus is quickly paying for itself. With the savings the bus will easily pay for itself in 3 years.

New Development Director



St. Mary's is excited to announce that Kelli Tomjack (Givens) '94 has accepted a full-time position as the Development Director for the school and parish.

Included in her responsibilities will be to oversee the already established fundraising events in the parish and offer assistance in estate planning for those who wish to contribute to the school endowment. Additionally, she will

maintain and establish a new ties between alumni and the school.

Kelli's new job will help St. Mary's to remain viable in the 21st century, as it actively pursues new and creative fundraising avenues.

Kelli begins work at the parish office in June, 2010.

WEDDINGS:

'95 **Jason Timmerman** and Amy Ziems were married on January 2, 2010.

'01 **Jessica Dougherty** and Brock Swisher were married on August 15, 2009 at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Milford, IA.

'02 **Shannon Holz** and Mark Bronzynski were married on August 29, 2009 at St. Patrick's Catholic Church in O'Neill.

'02 **Stacey Zakrzewski** and Jason Naiman were married on September 26, 2009 in Kearney, NE.

'04 **Emily Walnofer** and Aaron Traxler were married on November 7, 2009 at St. Patrick's Catholic Church in O'Neill.

'07 **Lisa Marx** and Johnathan Sobotka were married on June 27, 2009 at St. Patrick's Catholic Church in O'Neill.

*Alumni
News*

BIRTHS:

'02 Born to **Joe** and Pam **Pongratz**, O'Neill, a daughter, Amanda May on November 28, 2009.

Born to **Chris** & ? Timmerman, a daughter, Reece Adalyn on December 16, 2009.

'00 **Jennifer (Shoemaker)** and Jason Koehlmoos, a son, Christopher Wayne on December 20, 2009. He joins two brothers, Andrew 6, and Matthew, 4. Grandparents are 'Hugh & Mardell Shoemaker.

Born to 'Krista and **Mike Wanser**, a son, Thomas John (TJ). He joins three sisters, Ashley 12, Amber 12, and Lily 2. Grandparents are Millie & **Larry Wanser** of O'Neill.

'04 Born to **Ryan Kelly** Brianna , a son, Ryder Scott on September 20, 2009.

'95 Born to **Michelle (Steele)** and Kevin Potter, a daughter, Norah Grace on September 3, 2009.

'01 Born to **Marian (Carr)** and Grady Schake, a son Chase Roger on December 25, 2009. Grandparents are Carolyn and Roy Carr.

'00 Born to **Courtney (Flaherty)** and Chad Maas, a son, Grady Steven on January 29, 2010. He joins two siblings, Raegan 4 and Grant 2.

'90 Born to **Karen Dugan Havlicek** and William Havlicek, a son, Tyler Richard Havlicek on April 7, 2009. He joined his sister Stephanie Alexis Age 7 and his brother Benjamin Charles Age 2.

DEATHS:

'48 **Larry Pribil** died December 19, 2009 in O'Neill, NE.

'49 **Margaret (Judge) Krugman** died January 21, 2010 in O'Neill, NE. She is survived by sons, Daryl, Terry, Dean, and one daughter Rita Laky.

'78 **Ann (Ramold) Barritt** died February 19, 2010 in Norfolk.

Donald Boyle died October 26, 2009 in Windsor, CO.

Bernard Pongratz died December 25, 2009,

Reservation Card

Name: _____

Maiden Name _____

Class of: _____ Spouse/Guest: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please reserve _____ tickets for the Banquet (\$20 per person)

5pm Mass, **6pm** Photos & Social, **7pm** Banquet in Parish Hall

Please return this ticket to: **St. Mary's Alumni Association**
PO Box 12, O'Neill, NE 68763



Alumni Banquet June 26, 2010

Spirit of St. Mary's
Development Office
301 E. Adams St.
O'Neill, NE

Phone: 402-336-1602
www.stmarysoneill.org

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