

St. Mary's Catholic School

Development Office

301 E. Adams

O'Neill NE 68763

402-336-1602

www.stmarysoneill.org

Facebook: /stmarysoneill/

jmwallyway@archomaha.org

#### President

Father Bernard Starman

#### Principals

Mrs. Paula Atkeson, '84

Mrs. Jennie Schneider, '84

#### Guidance Counselor

Mrs. Paula Atkeson, '84

#### Athletic Director

Mr. Tony Allen

#### Development Director

Mrs. Jennifer Wallwey

#### Director of Operations

Deacon MJ Kersenbrock, '74

#### Mission Statement

St. Mary's Catholic School is committed to forming students in the image and likeness of Jesus Christ, through the hands of Mary, fostering the formation of the whole person, body, mind and soul.

Uniting learning with Faith in God, and our Faith in God with daily life, we joyfully proclaim, "May My Soul Magnify the Lord!"

#### Change of Address

To notify us of address changes or personal updates, please fill out the on-line form at [stmarysoneill.org](http://stmarysoneill.org) under the Alumni Tab or call the Parish Office at 402-336-1602.

# ST. MARY'S SPIRIT NEWSLETTER

WINTER  
2021-2022

## *Greetings from our principals*

It has been a very full first semester here at St. Mary's, and the time has flown. It seems like just yesterday we were complaining about the heat and now, here we are, in the midst of ice and snow!

This fall, our sports teams had really good seasons. Our volleyball team had a record of 17-13. They were a young team this year—no seniors and three juniors. We look forward to seeing our girls grow and take the leadership reins in our program. Our football team finished the season with a playoff appearance, but fell in the first round. Their record this season was an impressive 7-2. The softball team finished as district runner-up with a record of 17-12. The golf team had a great season and the team qualified for state golf with Kaylin Gaughenbaugh qualifying as an individual. We didn't have any high school cross country runners this year, but we did have four junior high students participate. We look for even more great things in the coming years. We offer our gratitude to all our seniors who have given so much of themselves to our programs.

Our students have also been working hard keeping up with community service projects. This semester, we have unloaded commodities, planted trees, helped with the Christmas Closet, set up for the Christmas concert featuring the Ball Brothers, collected food for the food pantry, held a coat drive and a blood drive, and we even helped an alumnus move back into his family home here in O'Neill and an elderly lady move to the assisted living! And, of course, our students do many things around St. Mary's. There are always chairs to be set up and taken down, painting to be done by the shop class, mailings to be readied, and other small jobs that make life easier for all of us.

We continue to pray a weekly Rosary for the intentions of our students and their families, our alumni, benefactors, and members of our St. Patrick's family. Our Theology room has an 'Intentions Wall' where students and staff can add any special intentions they have. If you have something you'd like to add to our intentions so we can pray for them each week, please feel free to send us an email and we'll add your needs to ours.

Our one-act students presented the play "They Promised Her the Moon". They finished as NVC and district champions and made a trip to Norfolk for the state competition where they finished fourth! Mrs. Christina (Reynoldson '05) Spader directs the one-act. She is assisted by Merri Schneider and Patricia Bauer.

There are so many great things happening in our grade school as well. Here are just a few: the Thanksgiving Feast, the Littlest Pumpkin play, an ecosystems display, a wax museum, the Veteran's Day program, the All Saints Day program, visits to the pumpkin patch, a visit from Mary Duffy (aka the HAT lady), the Cardinal Kindness Club, a presentation on explorers, book boxes, a Living Nativity, and so much more! Our teachers do a fantastic job of incorporating fun learning experiences into daily lessons.

Catholic Schools Week was January 30-February 5, and our Catholic Identity committee did a great job planning. We were blessed to have Danny Leger, former St. Mary's theology teacher/Youth Coordinator come for a mini-retreat for our students. In return for his time, we are offering all of our school Mass collections for the mission he helped found—Hope of the Poor. Our students have been very generous so far.

As we look back on our first semester as principals at St. Mary's, we feel so much gratitude. We are so fortunate to work in a school where we can pray together and serve together. We have a wonderful staff of dedicated people who love our school and our students. And did we mention that we have great kids? So much to be thankful for!

In servitio Christi,

*Paula Atkeson*

patkeson@smccards.org

*Jennie Schneider*

jschneider@smccards.org

Dear Alumni & Friends,

Another year slipped away, and I'm reminded that I am woefully overdue for an alumni newsletter! This edition will be packed with all sorts of updates, so be sure to check it out completely as we have a LOT to catch up on! Please know that you are always in our prayers and thoughts. We are so richly blessed with the support of a generous parish and community, as well as our alumni family.

I look forward to your regular updates, whether by mail, email, or phone call, and enjoy the opportunities I am given to get to know some of you. I especially enjoy the stories that are shared with me, connecting back our current families with the past students & families, telling stories of the old academy, and seeing the legacy that has been handed down to our students. While I am a "transplant" to the area, through your stories and connections, I have been able to feel like I too am a part of the ongoing story of St. Mary's.

In the love of Christ,

*Jennifer Wallwey*, Director of Stewardship & Development

## Technology Updates



As you are probably aware, the U.S. Department of Education launched the Emergency Assistance for Non-Public School (EANS) initiative through the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Act (CRRSA) in December 2020. The bill enabled the Nebraska Department of Education to administrate \$17 million in funds to address the impact of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) for K-12 non-public schools in the State.

St. Mary's was able to do some significant and much needed technology upgrades with this money, including the purchase of: 6 Macbook Air laptops; 2 Dell laptops; 4 Smartboards; displays in the computer lab, art room, and resource room; two projector upgrades; 20 Chromebooks; various software licenses including Accelerated Reader, Lexia and GoGuardian; and a contract with ESU8 for technical support and service.

This money allowed us to finish a complete overhaul of technology. Along with upgrades done over the past couple years from generous donations, St. Mary's can now proudly say:

- Every classroom K-12 is 1 to 1 with either Chromebooks or iPads.
- All teacher computers have been replaced. (Some teacher computers were ten years old!)
- Smartboards are in all grade school classrooms and in all math and science high school classrooms. Projectors or TVs are in all other rooms.
- We have upgraded our internet to fiber gigabit. That is 10 times the speed of our previous connection!
- The high school gym is equipped with livestreaming capabilities, and we have live streaming capabilities for football games.

With your help, we continue to move forward including staying on top of the latest technology advances for schools!

# ST. MARY'S CLASS OF 2021



# St. Mary's Class of 2021



*Jadyne Marie Eby*  
 Parents: '85 Bill & Jessica Eby  
 Plans to attend Northeast  
 Community College majoring in  
 Accounting  
**Honors & Awards:**  
 Athlete of the Year



*Naimjon Ghafurov*  
 Host Parents: Bob & Diane Watson  
 Plans to attend the University of  
 Nebraska at Lincoln majoring in  
 Pre-Medicine



*William Matthew Otte*  
 Parents: Matthew & Ranell Otte  
 Plans to attend University of  
 Nebraska at Kearney in Nursing  
**Honors & Awards:**  
 Marian Award, Scholar Activity  
 Award, Magna Cum Laude grad  
 (at least 3.75)



*Araceli S. Perez*  
 Parents: Juan & Vianey Perez  
 Plans to attend Northeast  
 Community College majoring in  
 Nursing



*Shukhrat Rakhimov*  
 Host Parents: Bob & Diane Watson  
 Plans to attend Missouri State  
 University majoring in Software  
 Engineering



*Catilyn Rose Reiser*  
 Parents: Troy & Cassandra Reiser  
 Plans to attend Northeast  
 Community College majoring in  
 Veterinary Technology



*Connor William Semin*  
 Parents: Eric & Karie Semin  
 Plans to attend Wayne State College  
**Honors & Awards:**  
 Athlete of the Year, Scholar Athlete  
 Cum Laude Graduate  
 (at least 3.5 GPA)



*Michael Grant Tomjack*  
 Parents: Ross & '94 Kelli (Givens) Tomjack  
 Plans to attend the University of South  
 Dakota majoring in Music Education  
**Honors & Awards:**  
 Scholar Activity Award  
 Cum Laude Graduate (at least 3.5 GPA)



*Isaiah G. Wiese*  
 Parents: Roger & '87 Regina (Mudloff) Wiese  
 Plans to attend University of Nebraska Lincoln  
 participating in the Army ROTC program  
 majoring in Biological Sciences for a career in  
 Physical Therapy after an Army career.  
**Honors & Awards:**  
 Cum Laude Graduate (at least 3.5 GPA)



*Faith Erin Williamson*  
 Parents: Curtis & Autumn Williamson  
 Plans to attend Concordia University  
 majoring in Biology & participating in  
 the track program. She plans to attend  
 graduate school to become an  
 orthodontist.  
**Honors & Awards:**  
 Scholar Athlete  
 Cum Laude Graduate (at least 3.5 GPA)



*Grant Edward Winkelbauer*  
 Parents: Dr. Matthew & Erika Winkelbauer  
 Plans to attend University of Nebraska at  
 Lincoln majoring in Biological Sciences  
**Honors & Awards:**  
 Marian Award  
 Summa Cum Laude graduate (4.0)

*Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers  
 in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. -1 Timothy 4:12*

# Staff Changes

At the end of the school year, May 2021, we said a fond farewell to some of our staff who are moving on or retiring, as well as welcoming some new faces (or not so new but moved to new positions.)

Congratulations to Mrs. Marlene Zurovski (art) and Mr. Jim Summers (maintenance) on their retirements. We also bid a fond goodbye and good luck to Mr. Cody Havranek (principal) who accepted a new position as principal at West Holt in Atkinson. We thank him for his 6 years as principal here. We are grateful for his service and commitment to our school. We wished Ms. Amber Ginter (HS math), '05 Mrs. Sarah (Novak) Hartmann (4th grade), and '65 Mrs. Sue (Cavanaugh) Reynoldson (cafeteria) the best of luck as they pursued new opportunities! Father James Weeder was also moved to a new parish.

With farewells also come welcomes, but our new principals hardly need a welcome as they have been a part of our St. Mary's family for many years! We are very excited to officially announce our new co-principals at St. Mary's—'84 Mrs. Paula (Boyle) Atkeson & '84 Mrs. Jennie (Dugan) Schneider.

Mrs. Paula Atkeson has been at St. Mary's as a teacher and guidance counselor for 33 years, and she was assistant principal at St. Mary's for the last 3 years. She continues her role as guidance counselor in addition to her responsibilities as co-principal. Mrs. Atkeson's history with St. Mary's is a long one! Both of her parents, and all of her brothers and sisters are St. Mary's graduates. She attended St. Mary's as a student from 1<sup>st</sup> grade through high school graduation. Three of her four children are St. Mary's graduates, and the fourth will graduate with the class of 2023.

Mrs. Jennie Schneider has been at St. Mary's as a teacher and/or librarian for 32 years. She has continued her role as librarian in addition to her responsibilities as co-principal. She attended St. Mary's as a student from 1st grade through high school graduation (with Mrs. Atkeson if you didn't already catch that!) She and her husband Tim ('86) raised three daughters that are all proud alumni of St. Mary's: Kate (2012), Meg (2015), and Bridget (2018), and her daughter Bridget is teaching theology at St. Mary's High School now.

We also have 3 new teachers in our schools: '16 Mrs. Rylie (Pistulka) Reynolds (4th grade), Mrs. Ranell Otte (Art), and Mrs. Patricia Bauer (7th-11th grade science & math.) Mrs. Reynolds attended St. Mary's from kindergarten to her graduation in 2016. Mrs. Otte is teaching K-12 art. She has resided in O'Neill since 2003 with her husband Matt, and all five of their children have attended or are attending St. Mary's. Mrs. Bauer is teaching science and math classes for 7th through 11th grade. She and her husband John moved to the area when he accepted a job as the Game & Parks Game Warden for Holt & Boyd Counties. Their two daughters, Lily & Olivia, are students at St. Mary's.

In addition, we welcomed Ben Sholes as our maintenance person, Sydney Acklie as our youth director, and Father Ross Burkhalter as the senior associate pastor.

# Winter/Spring 2021

**The St. Mary's Boys Basketball team** had an incredible season, closing out the 2021 basketball season with a 22-2 record wins! From NVC Conference Champions to District D2-2 Champs to 4th in the state, our Cardinals set a TON of new records including most team points & team defensive average in a season. A few individual records were broken as well: Blake Benson broke the

record free throw percent in a season with 91%, which was previously held by Tom Schmitz with 85% in 1984. Aidan Hedstrom broke the record for most individual points in a season with 630 points which was previously held by Adam Moon with 607 in 2013. In addition, Aidan tied for the record of most free throws in a game held by Travis Walnofer & Adam Moon with 16, and scored his 1000th career point in basketball in February 2021.



**The St. Mary's Speech Team** had another successful speech season, under the leadership of Mrs. Christina (Reynoldson) Spader. The team brought home 3rd place from conference with six medals, including Will Otte with 1st in informative & Grant Winkelbauer with 1st in extemporaneous. At district speech, the team again placed 3rd overall and brought home 16 medals! We had four state qualifiers who all placed at state speech: Grant Winkelbauer—3rd in extemporaneous, Kaylin Gaughenbaugh & Emma Otte—4th place in duet, and Will Otte—5th place in informative.

**St. Mary's track team** had a very successful season, sending 13 students to state. Our students worked hard, and it showed in their competition results! 2021 SMH Senior, Faith Williamson, won FIRST PLACE in the mile! The girls 4 x 8 team of Faith Williamson, Alissa Brabec, Kaylin Gaughenbaugh, & Lorissa Reiman won 2nd place. The boys 4 x 8 team of Gabe Pribil, Grant Winkelbauer, Isaac Everitt, & Will Schmitz took 5th place. The boys 4 x 4 team of Gabe Pribil, Grant Winkelbauer, Will Schmitz, & Connor Semin won 6th place. Connor Semin placed 8th with the 300 Hurdles, and Grant Winkelbauer placed 8th in the 800.



# Fall 2021- Winter 2022



St Mary's third grader Mallory Berg, daughter of Traci Ziegler Berg and alum Ryan Berg, won the **Nebraska State Punt Pass & Kick competition** in Omaha.

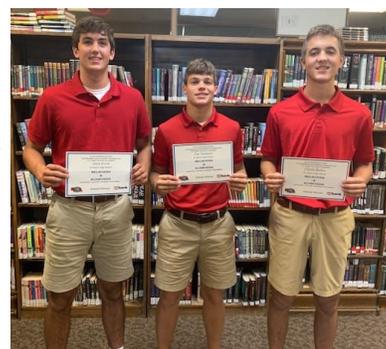


The **2021 One-Act team** had another outstanding year with this year's play "They Promised Her the Moon." They were named NVC One Act play champions and they won district championship as well to go on to state.



Kaylin Gaughenbaugh placed 4th at District golf and qualified for the state tournament. The **girls golf team** place 3rd at districts and all qualified for state as well!

Congratulations to our school nominees for the **NSAA Believers & Achievers** program: Adam Everitt, Tate Thompson, and Charles Barlow.



The fifth graders presented a **Living Nativity scene** on the morning of Monday, Dec. 20th in front of the grade school.



St Mary's Grade School has started a Cardinal Kindness Club. Our goal for this year is to focus on being kind to one another.

Each week, teachers write down students who do acts of kindness in their classroom or throughout the school. Each Friday we recognize those students who have shown kindness to others.

This year's **Homecoming** football game & dance were held on Friday, October 1st. The Cardinals played the Creighton Bulldogs, claiming a 48-14 victory. It was a fun week of school pride with hallway decorating, a kick-off bonfire, daily events, & dress-up days. Dress up days included Dress Your Age, Safari, Redneck, Superhero, and Cardinal Pride Day. Students participated in movie day, a cornhole tournament, ice cream social, and sidewalk chalking.



*Homecoming Royalty Court (pictured):*

*Jace Rosenkans, Sam Barlow, Lawrence Werth, Prince Tate Thompson, King Charles Barlow, Queen Charley Mlnarik, Princess Olivia Jarman, Emma Winkelbauer, Cecelia Mlnarik, Annabelle Barlow Crownbearers: Coby Doolittle, Emma Losing*

## Save These DATES

**April 1-3**  
Alumni Volleyball  
& Basketball Tournament

**April 25**  
\$10,000 Raffle/Vegas Night

**May 15**  
1 pm St. Mary's Graduation

**June 24-25**  
Alumni Weekend



We kicked off a new program this fall that we call "Classroom Partners." Area businesses & families & friends of St. Mary's were invited to become partners with our classrooms by financially sponsoring a class, providing money for teachers to purchase those "extras" that often have to come out of their own pockets. In addition to that, we also matched up people as prayer partners for our classes.

Nearly \$10,000 was donated by 44 businesses/people, meaning that preschool-6th grade as well as art, drama, music, libraries, and PE each got about \$700 to use for their classes! We were blown away by the amazing generosity shown, and we are incredibly grateful!

## Alumni Updates



'13 **Kyle Loecker** & his new wife Amber received Pope Francis' "Sposi Novelli" blessing that he gives to newly married couples just a few days after their wedding.

'16 **Sydney Hupp** received her white coat at the ceremony for Accelerated Bachelors of Science in Nursing through UNMC College of Nursing in February 2021.

'12 **Taylor (Kelly) Rentschler** has been certified as a gerontology primary care nurse practitioner. Congratulations!

'00 **Elizabeth Fuchser** received her Doctor of Nursing Practice with an emphasis in Nursing Leadership & Innovations in Healthcare on May 7, 2021 from the University of Missouri Sinclair School of Nursing. She also received a graduate certificate in Organizational Consulting and Change Management.



Michael & '11 **Kelsey (Dugan) Tiedtke** were married on August 22, 2020 and they reside in Battle Creek.

'09 **Hayden Schneider** married Mayra Cardenas on December 12, 2020. Hayden is the son of '85 Darold & Merri Schneider.

'15 **Brant Shoemaker** married Chasity Wilmes on March 6, 2021. The couple is making their home in O'Neill. Brant is the son of '91 Wes & Stacy Shoemaker.

Alec & '13 **Jessica (Pongratz) Rockford** were married on May 29, 2021. Jessica is the daughter of '78 Dewey & '87 Sue (Schneider) Pongratz.

Joseph & '10 **McKenzie (Connot) Rundell** were married on June 12, 2021. They are making their home in Broken Bow, Nebraska.

Riley & '15 **Molly (Atkeson) Ryan** were married on June 26, 2021. Molly is the daughter of '84 Paula (Boyle) & Bob Atkeson.

Shelton & '16 **Rylie (Pistulka) Reynolds** were married on July 3, 2021 at St. Patrick's & currently reside in O'Neill.

'17 **Jacob Crumly** married Courtney Willis on October 2, 2021. Jacob is the son of '93 Ann (Boyle) & Ryan Crumly.

Justin & '15 **Kaylee (Harvey) Palmer** were wed on November 27, 2021. Kaylee is the daughter of '88 Kris (Schneider) & John Harvey.

'13 **Kyle Loecker** married Amber Klein on December 11th at St. John Paul Newman Center in Omaha.



'06 **John & Lyndsey Hurley** welcomed home baby boy Cooper James on November 26, 2019.

'12 **Dave & Mary Shields** welcomed home their first child, Avery Theresa, on March 20, 2021.

'07 **Megan (Gaughenbaugh) & Nate Kelly** welcomed home baby boy Ledger Hayes on May 22, 2021. Ledger is welcomed home by siblings Kale, Brooks, Huxton, Maverick, and Swayzie.

'16 **Paige (Gaughenbaugh) & Jake Wilkins** welcomed home their baby boy, Matsen Bryent on May 28, 2021. They are making their home in Traer Iowa.

'15 **Krissy (Krotter) & William McClintic** welcomed home their first child, Jax Gideon, on July 6, 2021.

'12 **Ella (Spencer) & Fernando Vazquez** welcomed home baby boy Oliver Dean on June 17, 2021.

'05 **Sarah (Novak) & Ben Hartmann** welcomed home baby girl Rosalie Delphine on June 28, 2021.

'13 **Connot & Samantha Connot** welcomed home their son Cale Thomas on August 23, 2021.

'05 **Christina (Reynoldson) & Ken Spader**, and their children Mack & Alla, welcomed home Maylee Marie on October 6, 2021.

'07 **Bobby & Kady (Shane) Simons** welcomed home Henry Robert on October 6, 2021.

'08 **Jake & Michelle Reiman** welcomed Beau Richard into their family on November 19, 2021.

'06 **Chuck & Shayla Shields** welcomed home baby boy Triggen Steven on January 8, 2022. He is welcome home by big brothers Terrick (9), Trexten (2), and big sister Brezlyn (5).

'12 **Ryan & Melinda Podany** (2nd grade teacher at St. Mary's) welcomed home their new baby girl, Cecelia Jo, who arrived January 10th. She joins big sister Elsie.

'07 **Tony & Kayla Gallagher** welcomed baby girl Nora Louise on January 26, 2022.



*in sympathy  
and  
friendship*

Our sympathies to '51 **Cornelius Murphy** on the passing of his wife, Joan Murphy, on March 11, 2021.

Our sympathies to the family of Jerry Schaaf on his passing on June 17, 2021. He is survived by his wife '59 **Joann (Shoemaker) Schaaf**, and children '81 **Mary "Kathy" Boyle** (Rick), '82 **Jerry Schaaf Jr.**, '84 **Gary Schaaf**, '89 **Tim Schaaf** (Carolyn), and '04 **Matt Schaaf**, as well as 5 great grandchildren, 5 siblings, and many nieces, nephews & cousins.

Our condolences to '67 **Dolores Swinarski** on the death of her husband Dave on July 4, 2021.

Our sympathies to '67 **Jeff Hammond** on the death of his wife Patty Hammond in July 2021.

Our sympathies to the family of Robert Babl who died on Friday, July 9, 2021 at Avera McKennan Hospital in Sioux Falls, SD. Bob is survived by his mother, '48 **Ramona (Schneider) Babl**, daughter, Heather (Kurtis) Duff-Kadlec, 3 grandchildren; brothers and sisters, Tony Babl, Larry (Diane) Babl, '79 **Beth Babl**, '80 **Barbara Lindberg**, '82 **Mary Jo (Jeff) Petersen**, '83 **Charlie (Shelley) Babl**, '84 **Richard (Debbie) Babl**, '85 **James Babl**, '88 **Mike Babl**, '90 **Wendy (Todd) Grosse**, '94 **Vicki (Gabriel) Baros**. Bob was preceded in death by his father, Wendell Babl; brother, Edward Babl.

Our sympathies to the family of Virginia Gokie on her passing on December 14, 2021. Virginia is survived by her husband of 58 years, '61 **Jerry Gokie**; children, '83 **Deanna (Scott) Frankforter**, '86 **Mike (Tara) Gokie**, '87 **Terry (Jane) Gokie**, and '95 **Tim (Karen) Gokie**; 15 grandchildren; and sister, Judy Ratigan.

Our sympathies to the family of Betty Hamik who passed on January 11, 2022. Betty is survived by her nine children and spouses, '74 **Cindy ('72 Pat) Cole**, Kris (Rod) Bulau, '77 **Terri ('76 Roger) Ruzicka**, '78 **T.J. (Sally) Novak**, '80 **Debra (Chuck) Zeman**, '81 **Scott (Mary) Novak**, Steve (Barb) Novak, David (Tammy) Novak, Tracy (Steve) Schaaf; seven step-children, '77 **Angie (Charlie) Schaaf**, '77 **Sheryl (Bruce) Curtis**, Barb (Wayne) Heese, Matt Schaub, Greg (Julie) Hamik, Linda Hamik, and Cathy (Pat) Kennedy; over one hundred grandchildren and step grandchildren; and one sister, Colette (Judy) Baldwin, RSM.

# With Sympathy

Our sympathies to the family of Ruby Belzer who passed away on January 30, 2022. She is survived by her children **'70 Jim Belzer**, **'72 Greg (Polly Collins) Belzer**, **'73 Robert Belzer**, **'74 Gary (Jill Waters) Belzer**, and **'74 J'aNel (Bruce) Morrow**, as well as 12 grandchildren, 24 great-grandchildren, one sister and three brothers.

Our sympathies to the family of Jerry O'Malley who passed away January 22, 2022 at the age of 96. He is survived by his brother Leo and sister **'46 Lorretta Hargaden**, 3 children Ann (Duane) Devries, Larry (Becky) O'Malley, and Beth (Nick) Ramold, 9 grandchildren & ten great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his wife, Kay and siblings **'33 Eileen (Leo) Dowd**, **'33 Ednamarie (Tom) Haggerty**, **'38 Teresa (Jim) Dewey**, **'36 Sister Mary Faith O'Malley**, Joseph (Delores) O'Malley, and **'41 Mildred (Jim) Goggins**.

# In Loving Memory



**'32 Mary Jane Flannigan** passed away at the age of 104 on June 4, 2018, at her home in Castro Valley, California.



**'47 Patti (Keiser) Spittler** passed away at the age of 90 on September 5, 2019. She is survived by her children, 11 grandchildren, and 13 great grandchildren. *Patti attended St. Mary's through her junior year, but moved to Rapid City & graduated from there in 1947.*



**'65 Sharlene (Reynolds) Summers** passed away on August 19, 2019. Sharlene was a wonderful cook, and she also liked to garden, camp, & garage sale. She is survived by her spouse Larry, eight children, Wayne (Barb), Todd (Brenda), Shelia, Kirk(Laura), Terry, GayLee (Lisa), Phillip (Alicia Kreikemeier), and Brian (Donita) Summers; 10 grandchildren & 1 great-grandchild; a brother, Guy (Mick) Reynolds; and a sister, **'67 Nyla (Bob) Mosel**.



**'59 Lavern Pritchett** passed away on October 7, 2019. He served in the 3rd armed division of the army immediately after high school and married Geraldine Graff in 1974. Lavern was preceded in death by his parents, brother Wayne and sister Lola, and is survived by his wife Gerri, brother Chuck, and many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.



**'47 Constance "Conci" Donlin Denniston** passed away on November 18, 2019 at the age of 89. Conci taught English at Emporia State University, worked as the Director of Communications for Emporia School District, and was an artist. Conci was preceded in death by her husband Keith, 2 sisters **'44 Roberta** and **'45 Bernadette**, and one brother **'52 Thomas**. She is survived by her three children, Megan (Jeffrey), Owen (Tracey), and Ethan, three grandchildren, a sister **'49 Catherine Patten**, brother **'55 Terry** (Catherine), and many nieces & nephews.



**'50 Gayleen (Scholtes) Lucas** passed away on March 1, 2020. Gayleen loved neighborhood get-togethers and visits, and her grandchildren were the light of her life. She was preceded in death by her parents, sister **'48 Leila Scholtes**, and brother Merlin Scholtes. She is survived by her husband Stanley of 64 years, her children, and her grandchildren.



**'40 Mary (Zirinig) Goddard** passed away on August 8, 2020 at her home in Orwell, Vermont. She was preceded in death by her husband Richard and son Stephen, as well as her siblings, Frank Zirinig, **'36 Marguerite (Zirinig) Cotter**, and Gertrude Zirinig. She is survived by 4 children & their spouses, a daughter-in-law, and many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great grandchildren, nieces and nephews.



**'55 JoAnn (Ziska) Carlson** passed away on November 7, 2020 at the age of 82. On June 21, 1958, JoAnn married Jerry Carlson at St. Patrick's Catholic Church in O'Neill. Survivors include her children, Mike Carlson, Kathy (Charlie) Stracuzzi, and Barb (O'Dell) Isaac, 2 grandchildren, and a brother, **'59 Paul Ziska**.



**'43 Leonard Engler** passed away on February 6, 2021. After serving in the army during World War II, he met his wife Doris (Jaax) with whom he spent over 65 years of marriage. Leonard was family man with a heart for his community & his church. Leonard was preceded in death by his wife, and is survived by his sons James (Joan) Engler & Michael Engler, 6 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, and 1 great-great grandson, as well as his sisters **'44 Margaret Straka**, **'46 Eileen (John) Schmit**, Helen Stokely, and brother John (Dorothy) Engler.



**'57 Eunice (VanHorn) McClellan** passed away on April 8, 2021 in O'Neill. Eunice and her husband Bob owned and operated Johnson's Drive Inn for 13 years. Eunice was a generous and compassionate soul, always willing to help anyone in need. Eunice is survived by her four children, Darlene (Tom) Cepel, **'80 Jolene (Joel) Lordemann**, Diane (Steve) Goldfuss, and Douglas McClellan; 10 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren. Eunice was preceded in death by her parents, Ralph and Anna Van Horn, and her husband, Bob McClellan.



**'51 Bridget (Boyle) Ramold** passed away at the age of 88 on March 14, 2021. She was married to Joe Ramold in 1954, in a double ring ceremony at St. Patrick O'Neill when Bridget's sister married Joe's brother, and they had 11 children. Bridget was preceded in death by her husband, Joe, children **'78 Ann Barritt**, **'74 Joe (Julie) Ramold**, and Jerry Ramold. She is survived by her children **'73 Chuck (Connie) Ramold**, **'76 Alice (Roger) Starman**, **'78 Bridget Ramold**, Rose Barritt, **'83 George (Joan) Ramold**, **'84 Tom Ramold**, GERALYN Ramold, and Theresa (Chris) Kramer, and her sisters **'52 Elaine Ramold**, **'56 Rita (Ken) Grosse**, **'49 Mary Ellen Klinetobe**, **'58 Theresa Parks**, **'60 Frances (Lyle) Gillogly**, and **'60 Helen (Dennis) Cunningham**, as well as many nieces & nephews, and her Franciscan family. She was preceded in death by her parents, sister **'53 Rosalia Crawford**, **'49 Delores Schneider**, **'54 Charline Gaughenbaugh**, **'47 Sr. Regina (Alice Catherine) Boyle**, and infant sister, Cecilia.



**'49 Catherine (Dolin) Patten** passed away on April 5, 2021, at the age of 89 in Gainesville Florida. After graduating from St. Mary's, Cathy worked for the FBI in Washington DC. She married James Patten in 1951, lived in New York & New Jersey, and in 1979, they moved to Marathon Florida, purchased an RV and began traveling country, until settling in Venice, Florida, and Cathy later moving to be closer to her daughter in Gainesville, Florida. Cathy was preceded in death by her husband, daughter Belinda, and 3 sisters, **'44 Roberta**, **'47 Constance**, and **'45 Bernadette**, and brother **'52 Thomas**. She is survived by her daughter Diana (James), son Robert (Patricia), 3 grandchildren, as well as her brother **'55 Terry (Catherine) Donlin** & sister-in-law Lorella Donlin. *A note from her daughter Diana Creaver: Mom remembered St. Mary's Academy fondly and also with gratitude for providing her the opportunity to learn skills she could carry out into the world and support herself and her family. On her behalf, thank you.*



**'49 Robert Koci** passed away on May 29, 2021 at the age of 89. Bob entered the U.S. Army on November 3, 1952 and after basic training, spent 14 days on a ship to Japan, before continuing on to Korea. Bob earned the rank of staff sergeant, and later platoon sergeant. He received the Combat Infantry Badge for Excellence and the Rifle Precision Badge for Marksmanship. Bob was Honorably Discharged on November 3, 1954 and he then returned home to Chambers to continue ranching with his father. Bob will be remembered as a hard worker, an excellent rancher, and a steward of the land. He was often seen riding his Honda 4-wheeler on county roads accompanied by his beloved dog. Bob is survived by his wife of 63 years, Sylvia Koci, three daughters Nader Johnson, Juli (Rob) McCumber, Joan (Don) Denker, and several grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. Bob was preceded in death by his parents and one sister **'44 Dorothy (Bob) Brazda**.



**'70 Charles (Chuck) Appleby** passed away on August 5, 2021 at the home he shared with his brother Kelly in Omaha. Chuck's passions were St. Louis Cardinals baseball, the Creighton Bluejays, fishing, horse racing and reading. Chuck is survived by his mother LaVonna; two brothers **'73 Kelly** and Greg (Kaye); three sisters **'69 Linda (Mike) Verzal**, Ann Austin, and **'80 Ellen (Mike) Ludemann**; many nieces and nephews; and caring friend Debbie Donohoe.



**'86 Margaret (Shoemaker) Pierce** passed away on August 8, 2021 in West Point Nebraska. Throughout her life, Maggie worked full and part time as a dental lab technician and dental assistant. In 2003, she started Maggie's Memory Bears, and for 18 years she crafted memory bears to comfort those who had lost loved ones. Maggie was a loving wife and the best mom. She is survived by her husband Lynn and three children: Haley, Seth, and Jamie; parents **'60 Jim** & Dianne Shoemaker; sisters JoEllen (John) Ackerboom, **'86 Maureen Shoemaker**, and **'86 Mary Long**; and brother **'93 Chris (Sarah) Shoemaker**.



**'00 Joe Gray** passed away on August 8 2021. Joe had a witty sense of humor, a love of animals, and an incredibly kind heart. He worked for the American Red Cross and taught classes at the University of Arizona at Phoenix. Joe is survived by his parents, **'70 Peg (Hammond)** and **'70 Tim Gray**; sisters **'98 Rebecca (Kris) Wohlert** and **'05 Rachael Gray**; and three nieces, Delaney, Aubrey, and Emersyn Wohlert. Joe is preceded in death by his grandparents **'41 George & '40 Dorothy (Ryan) Hammond** and Duane & Dorothy Gray.



**'68 Don Peters** passed away on December 26, 2021. Don owned his own architecture firm, Peters & Associates Architects. He was also a talented musician and composer, and loving husband and father. He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Rita, and 4 children: Scott (RuthCher) Peters, Lisa (Brian) Crowley, Renee (Rick) Spicka, and Brenda (Dan) Weidner, 21 grandchildren, and siblings **'67 Judy O'Malley**, **'70 Mary Clausen**, & **'87 Tom Peters**.

## In Loving Memory



'44 **Margaret (Engler) Straka** passed away on January 6, 2022 at the age of 94. She attended several country schools in the Stuart area before becoming a boarder at St. Mary's Academy & graduating in 1944. She was married to Alfred Straka in 1946. She & her husband enjoyed traveling and attending their grandchildren's activities. Margaret is survived by her children, Janette (Ron) Asher, Janene (Steve) Peterson, and '69 **Dan ('69 Mary Donohoe) Straka**; 9 grandchildren; 27 great grandchildren; 8 great-great

grandchildren; brother, Dr. John (Dottie) Engler, '46 **Eileen (John) Schmit**, and Helen Stokley; and sister-in-law, Marilyn (Lou) Liable. Margaret was preceded in death by her husband, Alfred A. Straka and brother, '43 **Leonard Engler**.



'54 **Irene (Reutter) Brotsky** passed away on January 30, 2022 in O'Neill. After retirement, Irene spent much of her time traveling to spend time with family and attending her grandchildren's events. Irene is survived by 4 of her children, Russell (Roxie) Brotsky, Marie (Greg) Caspers, Maggie (Terry) Krugman, and Tom (Zoe) Brotsky. She was preceded in death by her sons Jay & Don & her brother Jack Reutter.



The \$10,000 Raffle & Vegas Night is back!!! Tickets will go on sale April 1st. Purchase your ticket for a chance to win anywhere from \$200 to \$10,000 in the \$10,000 Raffle (need not be present to win the raffle.) Ticket also grants entrance for TWO to Vegas Night/\$10,000 Raffle at the KC Hall on Friday April 29th, including appetizers, snacks, gaming & fun, and tickets to either turn in for more prize drawings OR trade in for 'chips' to play games (and hopefully earn more tickets!) Cash Bar will be available. **Only 250 tickets will be sold @ \$100 each. Contact the Parish Office at 336-1602 to purchase your ticket.**

## Corrections

I apologize for the inadvertent mistakes in the last newsletter. '47 **Sr. Regina Boyle (Alice Catherine Boyle)** died peacefully on November 6, 2020. Her sister '52 Elaine Ramold was not listed among the family. Also to be corrected, she was preceded in death by her sister '53 Rosalia Crawford. My most sincere apologies to **Jadyn Eby**, class of 2021 graduate, on 2 glaring errors in the Spirit Newsletter for January-February 2021. We inadvertently left out Jadyn's name as the junior attendant for Snowball in February 2020, as well as forgetting to include her as "not pictured" from the Class of 2021 picture on the same page.



Our local alumni who have babies are given a "St. Mary's Future Alumni" onesie as a gift from St. Mary's! If you're looking for a gift—they're perfect & we almost always have a few extra. Call Jennifer at 402-336-1602

## Thank You

Ordinarily, we include a listing of all those who have donated to St. Mary's in the last 6 months. Because this newsletter is so delayed, there was simply not space to include this. Please know how grateful we are for your continued & generous support of our school, church, staff, students, and families. *We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers. 1 Thessalonians 1:2*

### We want to hear from you!

Please let us know if you have recently been married, had a child, moved, been recognized for an accomplishment, or have any other fun updates for us! Contact Jennifer Wallwey, Director of Development, with your information and photos.



# ANNUAL ALUMNI WEEKEND

## JUNE 26-27, 2022

*This year's Alumni Weekend will be held Friday June 26 & Saturday June 27. Our 10 classes this year are **2012** (10 years), **1997** (25 years), and **1972** (50 years.) Each year, the alumni weekend is to be arranged by the honor classes. The 25 year class (**1997**) handles the banquet decorations, speaker, and clean up. The 50 year class (**1972**) is in charge of the mass. The 10 year class (**2012**) is responsible for the social before the banquet dinner. Please contact Peg Gray at 402-340-4308 to make sure arrangements are lined up, and she will get you details. **Please Note:** If your class would like to make special arrangements for seating together or assistance with finding a place for other gatherings—please do not hesitate to ask!*

### **Friday, June 26**

6-8 pm Wine & Cheese Social in the St. Mary's High School commons

### **Saturday, June 27**

5:00 pm Alumni Mass at St. Patrick's

6:00 pm Honor Class Pictures on the church steps for classes of 1972, 1997, and 2012

6:00 pm Social in St. Mary's Commons—*School will be open for your trip down memory lane.*

6:45 pm Banquet Dinner in St. Patrick's Parish Hall in basement of St. Mary's High School

*Contact any of the Alumni Banquet committee members for further information:*

*'70 Peg (Hammond) Gray 402-340-4308 (grayp1970@hotmail.com)*

*'73 Ann (Hershiser) Wrede 402-336-3948 (awrede73@q.com)*

*'62 Mary Lois (Jansen) Mlnarik 402-336-1664 (mlmlnarik@q.com)*

*'79 Linda (Ziska) Schneider 402-340-7923 (lschneid91@gmail.com)*

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Name & Guest Name \_\_\_\_\_ Year graduated: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State \_\_\_\_\_ Zipcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

***Alumni Banquet tickets are \$30/each. Please reserve by June 20th.***

**Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ tickets at \$30/each      Total enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_**

*Checks should be made to St. Mary's Alumni Association. Return registration form and check to:*

St. Mary's Alumni Association

c/o Peg Gray

PO Box 12

O'Neill, NE 68763



We appreciate the generous year-round support from our alumni and friends of St. Mary's. Without that, we simply could not exist. The tuition we charge for St. Mary's is only a portion of what it actually costs to educate a child at our school so we do rely on others to keep things moving forward. Here are some options as to how you can give back!

- 12 x 12— This program is a monthly recurring donation, automatically taken from your account. We suggest \$12/month (hence the 12 x 12) but you can give whatever you'd wish. This account is a big help to us, as it is non-designated money we can use as needed. You can sign up online at **stmarysoneill.org/support**.
- Gifts to St. Mary's or St. Patrick's Foundation are placed in an account where we only withdraw a percentage of the interest twice a year.
- We are always happy to receive gifts for scholarships/grants to offset our students' tuitions each year. As our scholarship awards will be on May 18th this year, we would like to receive those by May 9th.
- Many of our teachers have 'wish lists' that you can give to, with specific amounts listed for items they are 'wishing' for. You can contact the Parish Office for more information on specific items.
- As with anything, there are always specific projects that may require some added expenses. Some of our current projects include 1)HVAC system at St. Mary's, 2)repairs & restorations at St. Patrick's church, 3) Operation Tribute memorial plaque(s) for our SMH veterans.

Your gifts make a difference, just as someone else's generosity made a difference to you. You can send in a check, or even give online at **stmarysoneill.org/support**. If you would like to send it in, please return the form below to the Parish Office with your donation.

We also have options for you to give St. Mary's shares of your stock, or plan for future giving with your will or living trust, life insurance policies, or a charitable trust. Give me a call or drop me an email & we can talk about options! Thank you for all you do!

Jennifer Wallwey  
 Director of Stewardship & Development  
 402-336-1602, [jmwallwey@archomaha.org](mailto:jmwallwey@archomaha.org)

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Maiden Name \_\_\_\_\_

Graduation Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email : \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**I'd like to donate to St. Mary's!** *Just a reminder—all gifts are tax deductible!*

- I would like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ towards undesignated expenses at St. Mary's.
- I would like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ towards St. Mary's Foundation.
- I would like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ towards St. Patrick's Foundation.
- I would like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ towards scholarships (merit-based) for students.
- I would like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ towards grants (need-based) for students.
- I would like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ towards wish list items for teachers.
- I would like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ towards the following project(s):
  - HVAC System for school
  - St. Patrick's repair/restoration
  - Operation Tribute
- I would be interested in setting up a recurring donation. Please contact me.
- I would be interested in setting up a recurring donation for the 12 x 12 program. Please contact me.

**Given in honor of :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Given in memory of:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please return form to: **Jennifer Wallwey, Director of Development**  
**301 E Adams, O'Neill, NE 68763**