

The IRISH LENS

Spring 2025



PIECING TOGETHER PASSION & LEARNING



Academy of Our Lady / Spalding Institute All-Class Reunion

October 11, 2025



Faith. Family. Friendship. Decades later, those three “Fs” continue to bind the alumni of the Academy of Our Lady/Spalding Institute (AOL/SI) together. It’s time to celebrate our traditions, our history, and the legacy we leave to today’s Catholic community at the inaugural All-Class Reunion on October 11, 2025.

All AOL/SI graduates from the early years through the final graduating class of 1988, as well as those enrolled at the time of consolidation, are welcome. All former AOL/SI teachers, coaches, and staff are also invited to attend.

Our reunion begins with an Open House at Peoria Notre Dame (PND) High School from noon until 2:00 p.m. where PND students will lead people on a walk down memory lane of Alumni Hall. Filled with AOL/SI memorabilia, this unique area of PND boasts generations of class photo composites from every year dating back to 1895, including a wall honoring Venerable Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, who graduated from Spalding Institute in 1913. Alumni may also visit the grotto of Our Lady of Grace, built and dedicated in 2022.

Athletic awards and trophies earned throughout the years have found a home at PND, and the athletic department plans to unveil Spalding Institute’s 1924 basketball team’s national championship banner at 1:00 p.m.. This is the only team in school history to ever earn a national title. Additional banners earned throughout the years are on display, as well. The opportunity to purchase old yearbooks will also be available.

From 2:00-4:00 p.m., alumni have the opportunity to gather and take photos on the steps of the Academy and Spalding and to visit the Archbishop Fulton Sheen Museum located in the Spalding Pastoral Center.

An All-Class Reunion Mass begins at 4:00 p.m. at the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception followed by dinner and a party at the Embassy Suites River Ballroom in East Peoria from 5:15-11:00 p.m.

For complete details please visit aolsi-peoriaalumni.com. We highly encourage all to register by May 31 so the committee can meet its commitment to Embassy Suites.



A MESSAGE FROM FR. MCSHANE

Our mission here at Peoria Notre Dame is to form disciples of Jesus Christ. Perhaps nothing more clearly witnesses to that mission than the students who choose on their own accord to enter the Catholic Church. This year, 11 students have made such a decision!

Throughout this 2024-25 academic year, these students have received instruction and formed a community through the OCIA classes held on Fridays during advisory periods. Each of them has been led by God to this decision to become Catholic in their own way: some through friendships, others through the witness of teachers, still others through campus ministry or a particular teaching of the Catholic Church that attracted them to the faith. Their stories testify to the culture of Catholicism that we desire to build here at PND, an environment of faith that can be absorbed and “caught” just as much as it is taught. As the chaplain, it fills me with awe and gratitude that God is doing such amazing work through our school and in the hearts of our students.

These 11 students (Julia Mingus, Semaiah Mouro, Haven Mouro, Alanah Law, Jolie Mingus, Autumnne Williams, Ryleigh Bennett, Kaelyn Krulac, Sophie Howald, Sydney Hull, and Gianna Cowan) received the sacraments and became Catholic at the Easter Vigil Mass on April 19. To say they were excited would be an understatement! And the PND family shares their joy! Please pray for them, and continue to pray for our high school as we strive to live out our mission to form disciples of Jesus Christ!

ARCHBISHOP FULTON J. SHEEN

GRADUATE OF SPALDING INSTITUTE, 1913



A LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

What started as an idea to balance the number of academic days in each semester evolved into a wildly successful learning experience for students and teachers alike during the first two weeks of January. The concept of winterim isn't new to PND—Bergan High School annually held a winterim period throughout the 70s and 80s. The newest iteration, however, would not have been fruitful or aligned with our mission statement had it not been for the teachers and students who embraced the experience of authentic learning and dove headfirst into trying new things. From rock climbing to calligraphy to service projects to Ignatian spiritual exercises, students learned new skills, integrated their faith into their crafts, and gained valuable knowledge beyond a typical high school curriculum.

Personally, I enjoyed winterim for two reasons: (1) the opportunity to teach a creative writing class reminded me of the brilliance and creativity of our students and (2) the pass-fail grading system gave students the chance to try new things without fear of failure by prioritizing effort over perfection. We're looking forward to continuing winterim next school year and beyond, and we're grateful for the opportunity to innovate to serve our students and our mission to form disciples of Jesus Christ.

Jacqueline Kelley



A LETTER FROM THE COO



I am always so grateful when reflecting on the incredible momentum surrounding Peoria Notre Dame. Our dedicated stakeholders (parents, alumni, and donors) continue to provide our school with amazing support that allows us to continue to be the best high school in the Peoria area. At the center of what we do is our mission: To form disciples of Jesus Christ in a community of Catholic faith, knowledge, and service. I truly believe that the strong foundation of faith within our PND families is what allows our students to thrive in academics, arts, service and athletics.

One of the more powerful signs of this mission at work is the recent decision of 11 of our students to become Catholic during the 24-25 school year. I am especially grateful to witness God working in such a powerful way in our school. Please continue to keep PND in your prayers.

Ant M. Am...

MARCH FOR

By Jack Conley (PND '16), Campus Ministry

One apostolate overseen by PND's Campus Ministry team is our pro-life club, Teens for Life. It's the only true club that we oversee in the sense that most of the club activity is extracurricular, or outside the school day. Students give their Tuesday mornings before school to learn about pro-life issues and plan for various events, two of which are the state and national-level pro-life marches. We're blessed to take kids off-campus to Springfield in March and Washington D.C. in January to advocate for pro-life policies. This might seem like a moot point, as the majority of our students are minors and cannot vote, nor even fill out witness slips for the various bills being kicked about the state and federal legislature, but that's not the point. It is certainly true that other events throughout the year might have a more tangible effect on the pro-life cause, like the diaper drive for a pregnancy resource center during Respect Life Month. But the marches do something really important for the students, namely, they provide an experience of communion.

The unfortunate reality for many young people today, whose attention is spent in large part online, is that being pro-life can feel isolating. A lion's share of the messaging on social media is discouraging and belittling to those who would advocate for the dignity of all life, and so participating in TFL, and certainly public advocacy for the pro-life cause, can make students feel like they're painting a target on their backs. The state and national marches can take that apprehension and recontextualize it. When a few guys start singing the Salve Regina on the metro en route to D.C.'s National Mall, it's hard not to feel a bit more understood. When a kid steps on to the stairs of the Capitol building in Springfield and sees a drumline and hears cheers from other high school groups that, if heard in the gym, would put the fear of God into the Irish Nation, it's hard not to get excited. And believe me, while I love the green men and pink ladies' leadership in cheering for us to beat Richwoods, there's also something undeniably awe-inspiring when those cheers are a more fundamental and universally-resonant invitation to celebrate life together. The joyful witness of thousands of people, many of whom are young, and many of whom are Catholic, at these events helps to emphasize how good life is, and that witness is contagious. Students come back more confident and secure in their convictions and know that they are not alone.

One other thing that I think makes these marches really powerful is the fact that they are more pilgrimage than they are mere activism. Everything that we do is always in reference to the author of life, on Whom we base our belief in the inherent dignity of each human person. The trips are couched within prayer and the sacraments, without which all our activity would be reduced into "a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal." These events remind us that we are truly a church "on the march," as it were, toward our eternal home. Ask a student about his or her experience and thank you for all your support in making events like this possible!

Springfield, IL



Washington, DC

Winterim Reflections

This winter, PND embarked on a new adventure with a two week learning session called winterim. Faculty were given the task to find a topic they are passionate about and create a course for students to learn about new hobbies, activities, and interests. During the two-week winterim, students enjoyed a morning class and an afternoon class. Some of the class offerings included crafting, leadership, sports, professional growth, and world affairs.



Diversity of Topics

I took two very different courses. In "Global Governance: Model UN" with Assistant Principal Wiggers, I learned that international resolutions in the United Nations are very convoluted, and each country has its agenda, which makes it difficult for any resolution to be passed.

Every day during "Cooking and Hospitality Basics" with Fr. McShane, we were cooking something different. One day, you could be kneading pasta dough or grilling burgers. My favorite part of this course was the Iron Chef competition.
-Senior Jackson Roe

Community Collaboration

The Gems of the Prairie quilt guild was very proud to support Peoria Notre Dame with its winterim quilting class. It was very rewarding to work with students who are engaged and energetic learners. It was heartwarming to see their progress and to be a part of this! This project was a bright light for the Gems, in not only contributing our time to the class, but also teaching the next generation of quilters.
-Volunteer Pam Knollenberg



✓ Donate quilts to the NICU at OSF Children's Hospital of Illinois

Sharing Interests

I had the awesome opportunity to teach our rock climbing course. It was really exciting to share something I'm passionate about outside of school with the students!

-Admissions Dir. Annie Carroll

Finding new Passions

Strum and Hum taught me everything a beginner needs to know about the guitar. I enjoyed it so much, it actually made me want to start the guitar, and honestly some piano. Since then, I have been playing consistently.

-Freshman Luke Fady

Exploring World Views

Winterim gave me an opportunity to delve into topics that sparked my interest, specifically, influential events that shaped American history. Through Mr. Lacher's Conspiracy Theories course and Mr. Mulcahey's Psychology of Cults course, I have gained a better understanding of the hidden realities behind official narratives.

-Senior Claire Coulter

Growing in Faith

Behind the Scenes of the Mass was truly eye opening for me. I feel like this class was my first true come-to-Jesus moment I've experienced.

-Junior Elizabeth Shane

Some of the classes offered include:

- The Intersection of Space and Place
- Current Events & Affairs
- Cooking & Hospitality Basics
- Latin American Legacies
- Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius
- Intro to Audio Recording & Production
- Exploring Alternative Energy
- The Psychology of High Performers
- Behind and In the Scenes of Theater Productions
- Where Art Meets Geometry
- Discipleship & Drama: Studying "The Chosen"
- Floral Design & Natural Dyeing
- ACT & SAT Prep
- Learning the Fundamentals of Chess
- Mastering Investing Moves



Upcoming REUNIONS

**AOL/SI All-Class Reunion -
October 11. Details on page 2.**

AOI/SI '65 - August 15 at Donnelly's and August 16 at Timberlake Club. Contact Mike Baumgardener at mikeb1947@att.net.

AOL/SI '71 - August of 2026.
Contact Dan Callahan at
callahan53@aol.com.

AOL '75 - July 18 at Jimmy's Bar and July 19 at Kellehers.
Contact Patrick Faley at
fuzzman57@yahoo.com.

AOL/SI '85 - July 10 and 11.
Contact Maureen Gebhards at
mogegebards@yahoo.com.

BHS '75 - August 9 with
Mass at PND at 4:30 and
dinner following at the Ivy
Club. Contact Ann Dierker at
a.dierker@comcast.net.

**BHS '80- September 13th
at Oliver's in the Heights.
Contact Mike O'Brien at
mobrien@phdservices.net.**

BHS '85 - July 11 at Jimmy's Bar and July 12 at the Betty Jane Brimmer Center. Contact Karen Shadid at KarenS@pipco-co.com.



PND '05 - Plans are in the works. Contact Caroline LaHood at cehclahood@gmail.com.

PND '00 - June 7 at 5:30
at Olympia Bar and Grill.
Contact Fred Rubaker at
fred.brubaker@gmail.com.

Composites

We are so grateful to the generous alums who have pledged to donate in order to restore their class composite to Alumni Hall. We only have the following classes to complete: AOL '29, the first half of AOL '64, AOL '68, SI '68, BHS '75, and BHS '85. Unfortunately, the school does not have an AOL '29 yearbook. If you are in possession of one of these yearbooks, the Alumni Office would be grateful to borrow it in order to recreate the composite.

If you would like to contribute to recreating these composites, please email Alumni Director Tara Shane at t.shane@pndhs.org.

Alums, are you missing a yearbook? Did yours get damaged in the basement? Are you regretting your decision not to order a yearbook in high school? Now is your time to reclaim the past! We have old AOL, SI, BHS, and PND yearbooks for sale. There is especially an abundance of yearbooks from the last 20 years. If you would like to purchase an old yearbook, please contact Alumni Director Tara Shane at t.shane@pndhs.org.



GOING THE DISTANCE



How a high school 'non-athlete' earned marathon running's greatest prize.

By Tom Dermody

As a Bergen student in the early 1980s, Amy Shank Hall (BHS '85) could be found making music with the band and choir, performing on stage in musicals, discussing the latest book club novel, and once starting a fire in the chemistry lab. But sports?

"I was not athletic," recalls Amy, now 58. "Not ever."

How times have changed! This year, Amy joined an exclusive athletic group by becoming one of only 223 distance runners from the United States to have completed all seven Abbott

World Marathon Majors' Six Star Medal – marathon running's greatest prize.

Long Road Marked by Faith

"When I think about it, it's with a sense of awe," admits Amy, who since 2017 has been dean of nursing at Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. "I've been very blessed."

Like a marathon, her road to running prominence has been long and in her case marked by faith – the faith of others in Amy and her own faith in God.

Amy's first step was a simple thought at age 40: "I need to get healthier."

By that time, she had gone on from Bergen to earn a nursing degree from St. Louis University. That was followed by a master's degree in nursing practice from the University of Illinois Chicago and, in 2000, a PhD in nursing science, also from St. Louis University. She had been a nurse at OSF Saint Francis Medical Center in Peoria, taught for 13 years at the Saint Francis Medical Center College of Nursing, and in 2006 moved with her husband Greg (BHS '82) and their two sons to Evansville, Indiana, where she

taught and chaired the nursing program at the University of Evansville.

The Evansville school had an athletic training program. When faculty were invited to serve as clients for training purposes, Amy volunteered.



"I had always been active but hadn't really worked out a lot," she said. Her new training regimen would help her drop 30 pounds during a time when the TV weight-loss show "The Biggest Loser" was popular. On that program, contestants participated in a marathon as a final challenge.

"If those people can run a marathon," she thought, "I could at least run a 5K."

So she did, but afterward was unconvinced running was for her. "It hurt so much."

Step-By-Step Challenges

But running would become part of her normal workout routine and Amy eventually was able to jog continuously for an hour. A family friend suggested she consider a half-marathon.

"Do you know how far that is?" was Amy's incredulous response. "There's no way."

But Amy found a way. And as she neared age 50, a friend from Evansville gave her a new challenge – running a full marathon. Amy's response was the same.

"People who run marathons get injured, and I don't have time to be injured," she told a friend.

Again, she reconsidered and found herself running in the Pro Football Hall of Fame Marathon in Canton, Ohio. She finished in five hours, in part because as a nurse she felt compelled to stop and provide first aid to a fellow runner in need.

When she accepted her current dean of nursing job in Baton Rouge, Amy began training with a Varsity Sports running group. And that led to another challenge: "I think you could qualify for Boston," a group member told her.

"I thought she was crazy," admits Amy. But qualify she did, with a time of 3:55 in the Illinois Marathon – a race that finishes at the 50-yard line of Memorial Stadium in Champaign.

Racing, Serving Around the Globe

“Every mile, I start praying for another person, so it distracts me. I think of what they're going through and it gives me strength.”

Her first Boston Marathon was in 2018. That experience led Amy to set the next lofty goal.

After learning about Abbott's Six Star Medal and its major marathon requirements, she asked her friends, "Wouldn't it be cool if we did that?"

The pandemic of 2020 delayed the dream for a time, but soon Amy resumed her quest. Through her career, she has been a frequent traveler – leading study abroad classes, serving on medical mission teams, and spending a semester in London. The major marathon pursuit became a new way to learn about various cultures around the globe.

So in 2022 she ran Boston and New York City. She completed two more major marathons in 2023 – Berlin and Chicago. Last year she added London and Sydney, with Tokyo in March completing the seventh major race. In all, she has run 20 marathons since age 50 -- the latest being Boston (for the fifth time) on Easter Monday.

Sometimes she races for time, her best being 3:46:59 in the



London Marathon. Other times she runs for fun, relishing the experience, pausing to pet dogs along the route, or dancing in water sprinklers.

As she ran in Tokyo, Amy wore two faith-related items. Around her neck was a medal given by the Sisters of Mercy after her recent visit to their GirlsTown campus for impoverished and abused young females in Chalco, Mexico. While on a medical mission there, Amy also provided advice to the Sisters as they prepare to build and open a nursing school.

The medal features an image of Father Aloysius Schwartz - founder of the Sisters of Mercy and a sainthood candidate - on one side, and Our Lady of Guadalupe on the other.

"Every mile, I would hit that medal and start praying for the Sisters," she said.

Meanwhile, on her wrist was a prayer bracelet bearing the names of people she had pledged to pray for during the race. It's a practice Amy began with her second marathon.

"Right before I run them, I put out on social media that I need people to pray for," she told The Irish Lens. "I dedicate every mile to at least one person. I get (many) responses, so I clump people together who have similar requests," such as cancers or family situations.

"I credit those people with getting me through the race," she continued. "Every mile, I start praying for another person, so it distracts me. I

think of what they're going through and it gives me strength."

She also prays during her 35 to 50 miles of training each week - often with her 16-pound rat terrier dog Brooklynn running with her.

Is there a new challenge down the road? "Maybe running a marathon on all seven continents," said Amy. "I only have three left!"

High School Memories

Amy Shank Hall credits her experiences at Bergan High School, and especially chemistry teacher Sister Margaret Suerth, OSB, for much of her career success as a teacher, nurse, and university nursing school dean.

"Sister Margaret was really, really tough," she recalled. "We were in honors chemistry. It was so hard."

But after graduating and beginning studies at St. Louis University, "all of my friends were having a really tough time in chemistry and I was just flying through it," said Amy. "It never got difficult for me. I feel like Sister Margaret really prepared me well."

She also learned critical thinking skills that helped her in other classes, such as math, as well as through an anxious moment in the Bergan chemistry lab.

"One day I lit the lab on fire, and that was not a good day with Sister Margaret," she admitted. "But we got the fire out, so it was all good."



The faith and community service aspects fostered at Bergan - and later at St. Louis University, OSF Saint Francis, and the Methodist-based University of Evansville - all prepared her to land her current role as dean of nursing at Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University in Baton Rouge.

"I interviewed there and felt totally at home," said Amy. "It's so good to be back at a Catholic university that honors St. Francis. Back where I started, where I fit in. I 'think Franciscan' very well."

The editor of an international nursing textbook used around the world, "Fundamentals of Nursing," Amy is grateful her career has blended her two passions - teaching and nursing.

"You touch so many families and patients, but you also touch students and make an impact on their lives as well," she said. "It's a super cool thing."

SPORTS UPDATE

- Girls basketball competed in the IHSA State finals for the second year in a row where they came in runner-up for the 2A championship title. The team ended their season with a record of 33-5. Lexi Baer, Julia Mingus, Cora Heinz, Alli Stickelmaier, and Emy Wardle were named All-Conference, with Julia Mingus as All-Conference Player of the Year. In addition, Mingus and Baer were named All-State.
- Boys wrestling team set a new school record with 11 sectional qualifiers. Senior Ian Akers, senior Joe Culp, and junior Brady Mullens qualified for state where Akers placed 3rd in his class. Akers was named All-State and All-Area.
- Senior girls wrestler Autumnne Williams placed third at state for the second year in a row. Williams was named All-State and All-Area.
- Boys swimming placed 4th at the IHSA Sectional meet. Seniors Jake Heberer and Chase Mohrman were our first state qualifiers in 7 years. Heberer and Mohrman were both named to the PJStar All-Area team.
- The dance team received their highest score in team history at the Clinton IDTA competition. In addition, they qualified for IDTA state. Senior Claire Coulter performed her solo routine and ranked 4th in her pool of contenders. She, along with teammate Margaret Church, were named to 8 Count Audio's All-State.
- Boys basketball finished 5th in the Big 12 Conference despite a challenging schedule and multiple injuries. Junior Jack Wilderman was 2nd Team All-Big 12 Conference.
- Cheer placed 5th at the Big 12 competition and finished the season cheering the girls basketball team to the championship game.

W I N T E R S P O R T S





Peoria Notre Dame is seeking nominations for our annual alumni awards presented during Homecoming week. This year we are seeking nominaitons for both our Fulton J. Sheen Distinguished Alumni Award and the General Wayne A. Downing Public Service Award.

Nominees for the distinguished alumni award should demonstrate the following traits: 1. Loyal to Catholic education, 2. Active in the Catholic community, and 3. Successful in personal and professional life.

Please provide the full name of the nominee, his/her school and year of graduation, and supporting credentials. For the distinguished alumni award, this should include the nominee's accomplishments and service to our school and other worthy organizations. For the public service award, supporting credentials may include branch of service (military or first responders), rank, and accomplishments or awards.

The winners will be asked to attend the all-school Mass during Homecoming Week to receive the award. Posthumous nominations will be considered if the nominee has passed within the last year. All nominations will be considered for two years.

Nominations are due by July 31, 2025. Send your nominations to the Alumni Office, Peoria Notre Dame, 5105 N. Sheridan Rd. Peoria, IL 61614 or email Alumni Director Tara Shane at t.shane@pndhs.org.

Name_____ School and year of graduation_____

Address_____ City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Email_____ Cell Phone (_____) _____ - _____

☐ Fulton J. Sheen Distinguished Alumni Award ☐ General Wayne A. Downing Public Service Award

****Please remember to include supporting credentials!****
Nominations without all of the proper elements will not be considered.

My Name_____ Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____ Cell Phone (_____) _____ - _____

My email_____ My relationship to the nominee_____

REMEMBERING MONSIGNOR BEEBE

By Tim Irwin (AOL/SI '72)

Monsignor Charles Beebe, PA, died on January 22, 2025, having served the Catholic community for nearly 50 years. He was born on June 23, 1944, the son of Joseph and Marion (Ellert) Beebe in Passaic, NJ. The family relocated to Lacon, Illinois when he was a boy. Father Beebe was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Peoria on June 6, 1970, and assigned to St. Bernard's in Peoria.

He joined the faculty of Academy/Spalding in the fall of 1974 as full-time teacher and chaplain. He provided weekend assistance at Immaculate Conception Church in Manito. After Father Beebe completed a degree in school administration at Bradley University, he became an assistant administrator at AOL/SI in 1983. He made the transition to Peoria Notre Dame in 1988. He left PND in 1991 to become pastor and principal at Sacre Coeur Parish as well as the vicar for the Pekin Vicariate.

In 1993, Father Beebe was named a Prelate of Honor thus becoming a monsignor. This same year, he became pastor of St. Jude's Parish in Peoria, as well as the episcopal vicar for permanent deacons for the diocese. His expertise as a pastor and an educator helped prepare many men to serve our diocese as deacons. He famously said, "Rule number one for permanent deacons—the pastor is always right."

Monsignor Beebe became pastor of St. Philomena Parish in 1999. The diocese assigned newly ordained Father Charles Klamut, presently pastor of St. Anthony's in Bartonville, to the parish. "Monsignor Beebe helped 'break me in' as a newly ordained priest," said Father Klamut. "He was so kind and patient with me as I bumbled my way through those rookie years. I also had some health challenges and he was very patient and considerate of my troubles.

Some things that stood out for me were Monsignor's love of liturgy and his passion for being an educator. He truly loved his work in formation for the diaconate classes.

Monsignor Beebe was a loyal and committed friend. I remember how much he cherished his close friends such as Deacon Greg Serangeli and Sister Diane Vande Voorde and his priest friend Vic from New Jersey (now deceased), his classmate from seminary."



In 2003, Monsignor Beebe became pastor of St. Joseph in Roanoke and St. John in Benson. In 2011, he was elevated to the Protonotary Apostolic, the highest grade of monsignor in the church. He was granted senior status in 2016. Monsignor Beebe was a member of the Knights of Columbus #3507 Schlarman Council, 4th degree, in Pekin; the Phi Kappa Phi Honorary Fraternity; N.C.E.A. (National Catholic Education Association); and Oblate of St. Benedict.

Monsignor Beebe was a kind and compassionate man. He mentored many fellow priests, as well as deacons, sisters, and lay teachers throughout his nearly 50 years of ministry. Through them, his ministry continues to invite people into a relationship with Jesus.

Wings...

Michael Sierra (SI '66) died 11/9/24
MaryAnn (Staab) Manock (BHS '71) died 11/9/24
Brian Tippet (AOL/SI '79) died 11/17/24
Steven Crusen (SI '72) died 11/18/24
Mary Ann (Miles) Lankton (AOL '54) died 11/20/24
Charles Grawey (SI '46) died 11/23/24
Helen (Fandel) Vicare (AOL '67) died 11/24/24
Helen (Joseph) Couri (AOL '45) died 11/26/2024
Sr. Mary Dries (AOL '62) died 11/26/24
John Grow (AOL/SI '84) died 11/30/24
Maryrose (Savage) Armato (AOL '71) died 12/1/24
Susanne (Cusack) Nelson-Helms (AOL '55) died 12/2/24
Anne (Hickey) Rutledge (AOL '56) died 12/2/24
Dennis Powers (SI '52) died 12/10/24
Kathleen (Sullivan) Southy (AOL '67) died 12/14/24
Thomas Gavin (SI '63) died 12/16/24
Leo Burke (SI '72) died 12/19/24
Jeff Langfel (AOL/SI '79) died 12/21/24
Jerry Jones (SI '58) died 12/31/24
Mary Ann (Centers) Aeschliman (AOL '56) died 1/2/25
John Nauman (SI '52) died 1/2/25
David Bullock (SI '53) died 1/7/25
Dorothy Fandel (AOL '63) died 1/7/25
Ellen Stables (BHS '73) died 1/8/25
David Konvalinka (SI '59) died 1/9/25
Judith (Everetts) Gallagher (AOL '59) died 1/10/25
Lonny Leibel (SI '61) died 1/13/25
Charles Karpowicz (SI '59) died 1/18/25
Donald Sayre (SI '73) died 1/22/25
David Armitage (SI '55) died 1/23/25
David Crusen (SI '73) died 1/29/25
Michael Doyle (AOL/SI '81) died 2/7/25
Sharon (Schuh) Bayer (AOL '56) died 2/11/25
Thomas Everetts (SI '56) died 2/15/25
Jan Edward Blank (SI '57) died 2/16/25
Phyllis (Castle) Bateman (AOL '57) died 2/17/25
Marjorie (Cramer) Hunsader (AOL '52) died 2/19/25
Patricia (McFarlane) Harris (AOL '51) died 2/19/25
Mary (O'Brien) Cutinello (PND '89) died 2/21/25
Sarah Suwalski (PND '91) died 2/25/25
John Leyland (SI '63) died 2/26/25
Frances (Riecker) Reatherford (AOL '54) died 2/27/25
Timothy Gorman (SI '56) died 3/3/25
Junetta (Carrigan) Sanders (AOL '48) died 3/6/25
Margaret (Newcomer) Maurer (AOL '51) died 3/14/25
Colleen (Gaetz) VonBehren (AOL/SI '80) died 3/16/25
Shirly (Hagan) Frericks (AOL '52) died 3/16/25
Mary Kay (LeTourneau) Kemp (AOL '59) died 3/17/25
Carol (Wiltz) Reams (AOI '58) died 3/18/25
Timothy O'Donnell (SI '70) died 3/25/25

Rings, & More Exciting



Jana McMurray (PND '17) married Logan Hollis on 11/30/24 at St. Philomena Church in Peoria.

Marisa Henderson (PND '15) married Aaron Ruggiero of Lombard, IL on 6/23/23.



Brock William Holzgrafe was born to Blake and Carla Holzgrafe on 10/8/24.

Patrick Shane (PND '00) was promoted to a Commander of the U.S. Navy Supply Corps on 2/1/25.



PND senior Ian Akers has been accepted into the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, NY for the start of the fall semester.



Things

Nicholas Shadid Starkey was born to Luke and Tricia Shadid (PND '11) Starkey on 10/24/24.



Mitchell Gray (PND '15) married Cassidy Sanneman at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Peoria on 11/2/24.



Matthew Kouri (PND '14) married Mary Devereux at St. Roch in St. Louis, MO on 5/25/2024.



Photo by Matt Dayhoff of the Peoria Journal Star.

Long-time PND golf coach Mickey Schallau and PND girls basketball coach Layne Langholf were honored by the Greater Peoria Area Sports Hall of Fame in March. Coach Schallau was named to the Hall of Fame for her 50 years of service to golf athletes of AOL/SI and PND. Coach Langholf was recognized as the male Coach of the Year for 2024.

Photo by Matt Dayhoff of the Peoria Journal Star.



CHEERS TO ANOTHER GREAT GALA!

You can always hear cheers coming from our gym while people are watching an athletic event. However, on March 29, the gym was converted into “Cheers,” a look-alike of the former TV sitcom. This year’s theme for our gala was selected partially for its tagline, “where everybody knows your name.” At Peoria Notre Dame, we know each other, we support each other, and we pray together in an environment which advances our mission of forming disciples of Jesus Christ in a community of Catholic faith, knowledge, and service.

More than 250 people, including Bishop Lou Tylka as well as area priests and Sisters, gathered to share the neighborhood feel of saying “Cheers to Catholic secondary education.” The evening opened with a one-minute video combining the beginning of the former TV show with images of past celebrations from our school. The program included a silent auction, a game at “Norm’s Place,” and a live auction. It continued with a video showcasing alums from a variety of decades and careers. Each person shared how they felt their Catholic secondary education served as a foundation for their life. If you were not in attendance but would like to see the video, it is available at pndhs.org/alumni/. Later in the evening, attendees had a surprise as the real Norm (actor George Wendt) made an appearance with a personal video message.



*With more
than \$315,000
raised, it was
our most
successful gala
to date!*

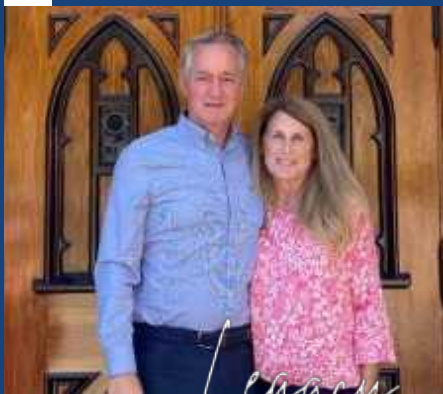


Our Fund-A-Need this year supports our tuition assistance fund. With the State of Illinois’ failure to renew the Invest in Kids Act, contributions are needed so that all families who want their child to receive a Catholic secondary education can experience the environment of Peoria Notre Dame. Consider supporting our students in this way by

sending a check in the enclosed envelope, or you can go online to <https://www.pndhs.org/giving-opportunities/>.

Thank you to the vendors, sponsors, donors and volunteers who helped make the evening such an enjoyable event. Twenty students assisted in a variety of ways including three seniors (Claire Coulter, Jake Heberer, and Addie Rezac) who spoke about an aspect of the Peoria Notre Dame mission statement. “Cheers” to our committee members who shared their talents to make the

evening such a success: Beth Alwan, Jenna Alwood, Jen Callaway, Michelle Ho, Theresa Mickels, Heather Randolph, and Jess Stickelmaier. If you would like to join the gala committee for next year or if you want to help at the gala, please contact Sarah Huenefeld at s.huenefeld@pndhs.org.



Gift a brighter future!



"Peoria Notre Dame sets up students nicely for the big wide world in front of them. Christian values and solid academic training will benefit all graduates for the rest of their lives. We want to join the mission of supporting PND's future and hope others will consider doing the same."



Paul and Jeri Gilfillan are lifelong believers in Catholic education. To help preserve the legacy of Catholic secondary education in the Peoria area for future generations, the Gilfillans have recently included Peoria Notre Dame in their estate plan. By doing so, they have become members of The 1863 Society.



"We met at the Academy of Our Lady and Spalding Institute, and we sent our three boys to Peoria Notre Dame. To this day, we appreciate everything Peoria Notre Dame has to offer all students. The sense of family and belonging to something bigger than us washes over us each time

we set foot on the PND campus, talk to staff members, or most importantly, interact with current students. We want this for our grandchildren.

Experiencing the impact of our Christian faith infused with our educational foundation, we could not have signed up faster for The 1863 Society. We literally signed a one page document called a codicil to remember PND after we are gone."

More Information

Adding Peoria Notre Dame to your estate plan may not require a complete revision of your will. A codicil can be an easy, cost-free way to add an amendment to a current will.

For more information, please contact Cindy Dermody, Director of Advancement, at c.dermody@pndhs.org or 309.691.8741.

THE 1863 SOCIETY ENROLLMENT FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

- ☐ I/We give permission to have our names published as a member of The 1863 Society.
- ☐ I/We wish to remain anonymous.
- ☐ I/We have included Peoria Notre Dame in our estate plans. ☐ Please contact me with more info.

Mail to: Peoria Notre Dame, 5105 N. Sheridan Road, Peoria, IL 61614

Peoria Notre Dame High School
5105 N Sheridan Rd
Peoria, IL 61614

www.pndhs.org
309-691-8741

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MAIL TO: Peoria Notre Dame Alumni Office
5105 N. Sheridan Rd. Peoria, IL 61614
Phone: 309.691.8741
www.pndhs.org
Email Tara Shane at t.shane@pndhs.org

Stay in touch with your classmates and friends! Update your information with the alumni office.

Name: _____

Maiden Name: _____

School Graduated: _____ **Graduation Year:** _____

Email Address: _____ **Cell Phone Number:** _____

Life events (check all that apply):

- ☐ I recently married
- ☐ I recently changed my address
- ☐ I recently changed jobs.

Spouse's name: _____

New Address: _____

New Job: _____

Today's date: _____

Wedding date: _____

**Update your information online! Use the QR code or visit
www.pndhs.org. Hover over "Alumni," and click on "Update Your Info."**

