

The IRISH LENS

SPRING 2022

**PREPARING
TO LAUNCH**



BERGAN





NOMINATE



Peoria Notre Dame is seeking nominations for our Distinguished Alumni Award. Nominees should demonstrate the following traits: 1. Loyalty to Catholic education. 2. Activity in the Catholic community. 3. Personal and professional achievements.

Please provide the full name of the nominee, his/her school and year of graduation, and supporting credentials. The winner will be asked to attend the all-school Mass during Homecoming Week to receive the award.

Nominations are due by July 31, 2022. Send your nominations to the selection committee at Peoria Notre Dame, 5105 N. Sheridan Rd., Peoria, IL 61614 or email Alumni Director, Tara Shane at t.shane@pndhs.org.

Please include a summary that describes the nominee's accomplishments and service to our school and other worthy organizations. All nominations will be considered for two years.

Name _____	My Name _____
Address _____	My Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____	City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone (____)____-_____	Phone (____)____-_____
School and year of graduation _____	Email _____
	My relationship to nominee _____

A LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Peoria Notre Dame Family,

What does the future hold? It is a question that rattles constantly around each of our minds – sometimes with more insistence than others. Graduating from high school is certainly one of those moments – what will I do with my life, what career will I pursue, will I find the right person to marry, how many children will I have, will I be happy?...and so many more! It is a time of both excitement and trepidation.

When I graduated from high school many years ago, I had many grand dreams. I was going off to play college sports and eventually be a neurosurgeon. Eventually, I would get married and have children. Through many twists and turns, I ended up here, as a Religious Sister at Peoria Notre Dame. Certainly, it was not what I expected! If you would have told me that plan 20 years ago, I may have fainted! But...I would not change it for the world. I came to realize that just as I had a plan for my life, God also had a plan for me – and His plan was even better and more beautiful than my own. “‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ says the Lord, ‘plans for your welfare and not for your woe, plans to give you a future full of hope.’” (Jer 29:11) He has an adventure of love planned for us if we only have the courage to ask Him, “Lord, what do you desire for my life? What did you make me for?”

Many of our own graduates have probably had similar experiences of changed plans, twists and turns, ups and downs. Our goal at PND is not to simply prepare people for careers, but for life – both on earth and in eternity. As you read through these pages that feature the stories of some of our graduates, remember that God has a beautiful plan for each one of our lives. It is often surprising and unexpected – but always also exciting and beautiful. We are proud of each one of our graduates, not just for what they accomplish – which is often impressive – but for who they have become: men and women of faith, virtue, and character. While we are featuring just a few here, we have thousands of incredible graduates who have left these halls to make the world (and heaven!) a better place. I give thanks for each one of them and also for the thousands more to come in the future.

United in the Merciful Love of God,



Sr. Sara Kowal, SCTJM
PND Principal



A BRIGHT FUTURE

One of the primary purposes of Catholic education is to be a guiding light for young people - to set them on a path of faithfulness, leadership, service, and accomplishment. As we began the 2021-2022 school year, PND was blessed to have approximately 70 alumni, past and current parents, faculty, staff, religious, and stakeholders give back to the school by participating in a strategic planning process which will guide the school through the next five years.

The strategic planning process, which is being administered by Boston based Partners In Mission, began in September of 2021 with a kick-off meeting of PND stakeholders offering expertise in one of eight domain areas: academics, student life, Catholic identity, advancement, finance, facilities, governance, and enrollment. Five or six members made up each domain committee which met several times during the fall trimester to collect information about the school's current activities and status within the domain and write a narrative presenting the data collected.

All eight narratives were combined into one document which was presented to members of every domain as well as additional friends of PND.

The group was asked to read the narratives and fill out two surveys to determine the most important issues to focus on in each domain.

Under the leadership of co-chairs Karen Metzinger (AOL/SI '73) and Mitch Gilfillan (PND '02), the principal, and the Partners in Mission team, the strategic planning committee as a whole met for a weekend retreat in March to discuss the survey results and pinpoint goals for the strategic plan. Each domain developed one overall goal to work towards during the next five years with five objectives to accomplish the goal.

The next phase of the strategic plan is for the faculty, staff, and diocesan administration to review the goals and objectives for approval prior to the onset of the 2022-2023 school year. Once final changes to the plan are made and approval is received, the goals and objectives will be presented to the general public. Peoria Notre Dame faculty and staff will determine the measures needed to accomplish each objective laid out in the strategic plan.

We look forward to providing more details about the five year strategic plan in an upcoming issue of The Irish Lens!



A LETTER FROM THE CHAPLAIN

Who are you?

After so many generations of Catholic secondary education in Peoria, we are proud to have thousands of alumni achieving fantastic things in many and various disciplines, glorifying God with their lives. However, no matter what we do, our deepest identity, who we are, is found elsewhere. Who are you?

During this season of Easter, we reflect on the mysteries that define us. Throughout the world, on Easter Sunday, thousands of people had their lives redefined as they took the plunge and received the new life of Christ in the waters of Baptism. They were told, “If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God...since you have taken off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self.” (Col 3:1, 9b-10a) Our Baptism redefines us as brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ and children of God the Father.

Living this “new self, seeking what is above,” the motivation for everything one does is changed. The doctor no longer seeks a career in medicine for the good income, but first and foremost as a good service to the Father. The scientist enters her field to unlock the secrets of God’s creation and so better the lives of all people. The great athlete and the great artist both recognize they have been given gifts – they are not the source of their own greatness – and so seek to use those gifts to live a life that best sings the praises of the Gift-Giver. Many who have been “raised with Christ” choose to live lives that most directly serve God as priests and consecrated, brothers and sisters.

As members of the Peoria Notre Dame family, and more importantly as benefactors of the death and resurrection of Christ, may we always seek to live as men and women who have “put on the new self.” May we become ever more aware of the motivations of our actions, and so truly give glory to the God who loves us by living from our deepest identity in Christ.

May God bless you all,



Fr. Corey Krengiel
PND Chaplain



As our tradition when an alum passes away, a Mass will be said in our school chapel for their intention. Please email death notifications to Alumni Director, Tara Shane at t.shane@pndhs.org.

HEART OF
PND
COUNTY FAIR
39th annual Blue and Green Gala

A heartfelt thank you to those who attended the Heart of PND County Fair this year! This year's theme was all about celebrating the families and faculty that comprise the PND community.

Offerings included fair-themed appetizers, such as candied bacon, brisket nachos, mini doughnuts, and more; plus various games like a ring toss to win a bottle of wine, shooting hoops to win a Pop-A-Shot to take home, or throwing darts to pop balloons and win PND apparel and the chance to win Maui Jim sunglasses!

With it being the Solemnity of St. Joseph, we felt especially honored and blessed to have Bishop Lou in attendance! Energy was high, bidding was even higher, and all for a great cause. Senior Brady Culp finished out the night by speaking on behalf of the PND students to remind us all what the event is actually about - having some fun while fundraising to benefit the students of PND. This year's event raised more than \$116,000!

This year, our Fund-A-Need is to beautify our hallways. The existing lockers have only been "refreshed" one time since their original installation in 1966. Initially, we would like to clean and repaint the lockers, in addition to replacing the locks, updating the ceiling, and adding/replacing light fixtures in both junior and senior hallways. The estimated cost comes to \$120,000 OR approximately \$250 per locker. If funding is acquired, the plan is to have this work completed THIS summer!

If you are interested in donating to the hallway beautification project, please visit pndhs.ejoinme.org/WeekofGiving2022.



Empower Our Students!

If you pay state income tax in Illinois, you qualify to re-direct your taxes to provide scholarships for students at Peoria Notre Dame. The Invest in Kids Act, initiated in 2018, provides an option to shift dollars to scholarships rather than paying money to the state of IL. In addition to helping a child experience a Catholic education, you receive a 75% tax credit. Yes, this is true! Donors receive a 75% credit on their state income tax, so for every \$4,000 you give, your actual gift is only going to cost you \$1,000 as you will get \$3,000 back when you complete your taxes next year.

PND has 65 students on the waiting list to receive a scholarship through Empower IL, the program the Catholic Diocese of Peoria uses for the Invest in Kids Act. It is our goal to get these students off the waiting list, and help provide each donor with tax credits. Whether you can give \$1,000, \$10,000 or any amount, know that you are helping Peoria Notre Dame families such as this one:

"Hearing that our daughter had received the Empower scholarship was like an answer to our prayers. We want our children to have the advantages offered by attending Peoria Notre Dame, but the financial strain had us considering switching her to our public school. It was a great relief to know she could continue to attend thanks to the generosity of those who so selflessly gave to Empower Illinois."

Along with representatives from various schools in Illinois and recipients of Empower IL scholarships, I recently spent the day in Springfield. I was invited by the Empower IL staff to join them in talking to legislators and encouraging elected officials to support House Bill 4126 which will make small tweaks to improve the Invest in Kids Act. Meeting some of the recipients of scholarships reminded me that a Catholic high school education can transform a life. The bill has passed both houses of the Illinois General Assembly, and is expected to be signed by the governor.

To learn more about Empower Illinois, visit EmpowerIL.org or contact me at c.dermody@pndhs.org or 309-691-8741.

Cindy Dermody
Director of Advancement



Future PND Events

PND Golf Classic

Wednesday, Sept. 7 @ Country Club of Peoria

PND Alums Got Talent

featuring Broadway veteran Bart Shatto (BHS '83)

Saturday, Oct. 1 @ 7:00 pm in the Livingston Auditorium

Fall Phone-A-Thon

Monday, Oct. 3 through Friday, Oct. 7

12 Days of Christmas Cash & Car Raffle

Monday, Oct. 24 through Friday, Dec. 16

A NEW BLESSING

When the COVID pandemic began, Sister Sara, our principal, was outdoors looking to see where and how we could better use some outdoor spaces of our campus. While standing on our library patio, her eye immediately went to the area between the end of the building and the stairs leading to the business office entrance. Sister was inspired to believe that it would be a wonderful location for a Marian grotto.

With a name of Peoria Notre Dame, it is so appropriate for us to have a grotto which can be used by the entire PND community - students, faculty and staff, parents, alums, and donors. After prayer, and with appreciation to our donors, the grotto was built and then blessed by our chaplain, Fr. Corey Krengiel, on Sunday, May 8. In addition to being Mother's Day, it was also the birthday of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen. He dearly loved Our Lady and visited Lourdes more than 30 times.

The day began with a Rosary procession around our school campus and culminated with bringing the statue of Our Lady to her permanent location in the grotto. We were fortunate to have several family members of Archbishop Sheen present. They were able to share many memories of our famous alum.

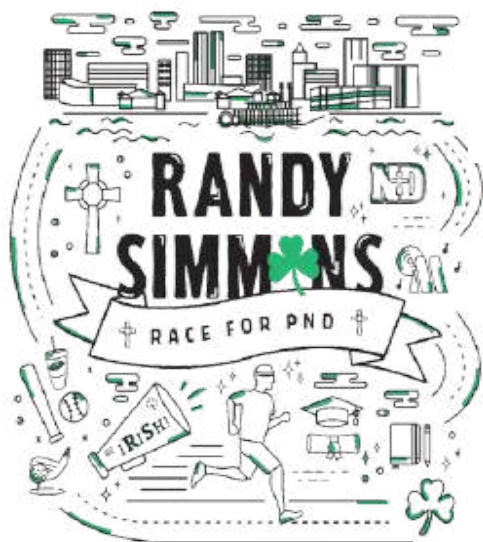
If you would like a holy card from the grotto blessing, please email Cindy Dermody at c.dermody@pndhs.org.



Contact us for your
Fountain of Grace
holy card!



R E U N I O N S



Save the Date!

August 20, 2022 • 6pm start

Scan the QR Code to sign up today!



[raceroster.com/events/2022/56441/
randy-simmons-memorial-5k-run](https://raceroster.com/events/2022/56441/randy-simmons-memorial-5k-run)

AOL and SI Class of 1967 will hold their 55th reunion on Friday, July 15 at Obed and Isaac's and Saturday, July 16 at the Lariat. Contact Janie Dickerson Smith for more information at mamabeever@aol.com.

AOL/SI Class of 1982 will hold their 40th reunion on July 22 at 6:00 pm at Kouri's Pub and July 23 at Country Club BBQ on Farmington Rd. at 7:00. pm More information can be obtained by contacting Nancy (Johnson) O'Brien at mnmplibrien@sbcglobal.net.

Bergan Class of 1982 will hold a 40 year reunion July 22 6-9 pm at W.E Sulivans. For more information, email Chris (Troy) Karpowicz at C.karpowicz@comcast.net.

A 50th +1 reunion for **Bergan Class of 1971** will be held the weekend of August 12 and 13. Email questions to berganclassreunion@gmail.com.

AOL/SI Class of 1977 will host a reunion weekend beginning Friday, September 16 during the PND Homecoming football game at Dozer Park followed by a celebration at Kellehers. Saturday night will feature a tour of Spalding at 1:00, Mass at St. Monica's in East Peoria at 4:00, and dinner at East Peoria Boat Club at 5:30. For more information, email Jim Crowley at jpcrowley99@gmail.com or Mary Jo (Daly) Murphy at maryjomurphy77@gmail.com.

AOL/SI Class of 1972 will hold their 50th reunion on September 16 and 17. For more details, email aolsi72irish@gmail.com.

Members of the **AOL and SI Classes of 1962** are excited to meet again for their 60th year reunion. The multi-day event will be held September 23 at the Knights of Columbus fish fry and September 24 with Holy Mass and dinner at the Ivy Club. Contact Frank Rezac for more information at 309-634-8297 or frankrezac@aol.com.

Bergan Class of 1967 will hold a 55th year reunion Friday, September 23 at Kelleher's Irish Pub and Saturday, September 24 at the Lindenhof. For more details, email Carolyn (Monser) Kraft at cmk9919@aol.com.

SI Class of 1957 will reunite on September 24 with Mass in the PND chapel and then dinner at the Lariat. For additional information, contact Bill Troy at bill1539@sbcglobal.net or 309-657-1699.



MANY OF OUR ATHLETIC TEAMS HAD SUCCESSFUL SEASONS THIS YEAR INCLUDING THE DANCE TEAM WHICH COMPETED AT STATE. ONCE AGAIN, THE CROSS COUNTRY TEAM WENT TO STATE. AND THE GIRLS GOLF TEAM WON THREE TOURNAMENTS INCLUDING THE BIG12 CONFERENCE TOURNAMENT.

Ten outstanding PND senior athletes and performing artists have signed letters of intent as they move on to higher education. We are proud to announce Ryan Sander will be playing in the marching band at St. Ambrose University. Abe Alwan will be swimming at St. Ambrose University. Jac Couri will be playing lacrosse at Benedictine College. Gillian McDaniel will be running track and playing volleyball at Milwaukee School of Engineering. Jenna Horst will be playing soccer at St. Ambrose University. Kayley Carew will be playing soccer at Maryville University. Delaney Cook will be playing basketball at Western New Mexico University. Joey Mushinsky will be wrestling at University of Mary. Danny Gutzwiller and Alester Dawson will both play soccer at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville. We are proud of these talented students!



FOUNDATION TO FRIEND

Ways you can give back to PND

With this magazine's theme of Peoria Notre Dame serving as a foundation for many alumni, we invite you to read the features of a few of our alumni who have built their career in a variety of disciplines. This may be a good time to reflect on what Peoria Notre Dame has meant to you.

12 Star Supporter

If you would like to give back to Peoria Notre Dame, you can do so in a variety of ways. One option is to join the growing 12 Star Program. The beauty of this program is that you can set the amount you would like to give each month. It can be a minimum of \$5.00, the cost of a coffee, or any amount you choose. You can set up your monthly donation by visiting pndhs.org/support-our-school. There will be no checks to write out and no envelopes to mail, and yet you will know that monthly you will be showing your thanks for the foundation you or your child has received.

Annual Gift

If you would rather support the school with an annual gift, you have this option by completing and returning the enclosed envelope or going on our website. Feel free to contact Cindy Dermody, Director of Advancement at c.dermody@pndhs.org or

309-691-8741 to discuss any questions you may have.

Grand Star Supporter

Annual donors of \$1,000 and more are automatically a Grand Star Supporter. We hope to be able to host an in-person event this year for these donors.

Estate Planning

We have many students in our school who would be good reasons for you to consider adding Peoria Notre Dame to your estate plan. If you feel as though Peoria Notre Dame has served you or your family by providing a great foundation, we would appreciate you adding the school to your estate plan. And once you do, let us know so that we can thank you.

Volunteering

If you like to give of your time, feel free to reach out to Sarah Huenefeld, our Special Events and Volunteer Coordinator at s.huenefeld@pndhs.org and she will be happy to match up your talents with our needs. There are always fun ways in which you can help.

And, there is a way everyone can help us, and that is to pray for our entire PND community. Thank you for praying for our students and our faculty and staff who work to fulfill the mission of the school.



Feature Story

LAUNCHING, LANDING, and Making an Impact

High school is not just a time of passing through until adulthood begins. It is a time of preparation for bigger things to come. It's a launching pad for the future - not only for the betterment of the student, but also for the betterment of the world.

It is exciting to see the growth of our students during their time at Peoria Notre Dame, and then it is awe-inspiring to learn how their experiences in high school set them on a path to success.

Our graduates have chosen fields such as medicine, athletics, academia, the arts, literature, business, military, and religious life. They have used our school as a "launching pad" for their career and are currently fulfilling their mission in various parts of the world.

One such alum is 1983 Bergan High School graduate Bart Shatto. Bart has had a successful stage career performing throughout the country with the Gold and Platinum Symphonic Rock Band Trans-Siberian Orchestra for close to 15 years. Shatto has also played roles on Broadway including the iconic character Jean Valjean in *Les Miserables*.



Shatto said being involved in the plays, musicals, choir, band, and speech at Bergan made him visible and revealed a passion in him that became his purpose.

It gave me confidence and a feeling of belonging. I knew I was on the right path. And the respect of my peers helped greatly.

Shatto, now living in New Jersey, said a solid Catholic education at Bergan afforded him opportunities he wouldn't have experienced anywhere else. "Once my siblings were out of high school in Bradford, my parents enrolled me at Bergan. The best decision they ever made for me," Shatto continued, "I was lost at first, trying to find my way and navigate my place in the world. Later, some of my best friends were honors students and valedictorians. I was around a lot of very smart and gifted people."



Peoria Notre Dame is truly one of a kind. You build legacy, friendships and integrity that will last a lifetime. Notre Dame always leads with education but remembers it's the character building that is priceless.

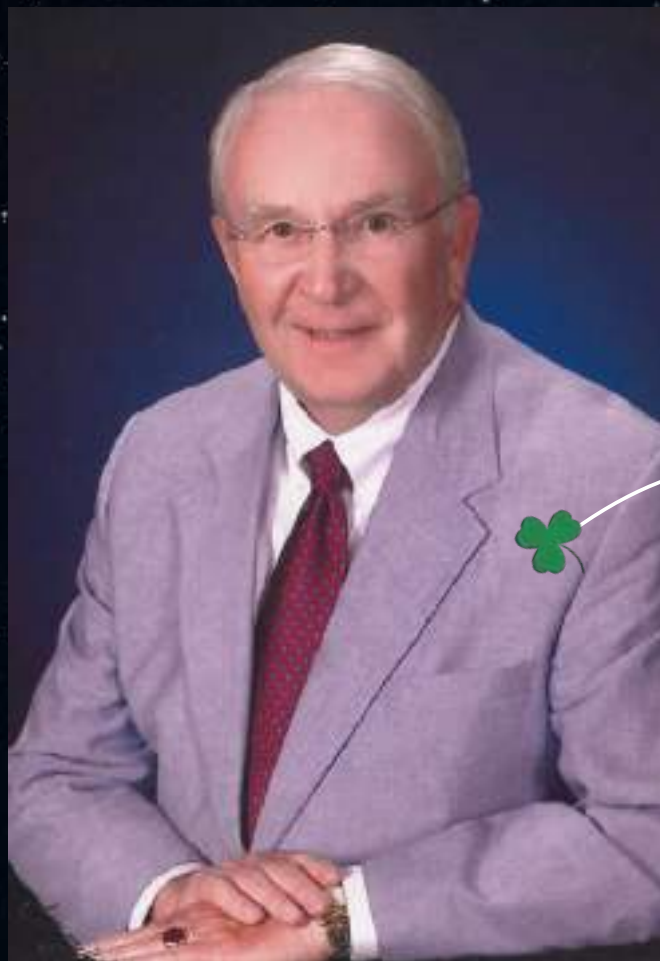
Arthur Johnson, SI 1953 graduate and former Chairman of the Department of Gastroenterology at Scripps Clinic and Research Institution in California, said he believes his Catholic education significantly impacted his career path and formed his character. "I think the Catholic values taught at PND are very important in our increasingly secular world."



Another alum who has launched a career in performing arts is PND 1997 graduate Liv Warfield. Now living in Chicago, Liv is a singer and songwriter who has performed with the legendary Prince and has been featured on "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon," "The Late Show with David Letterman," and "The Arsenio Hall Show." Warfield noted many PND teachers encouraged her and helped guide her during high school including current social studies teacher, Mr. John Cummings.

Warfield encourages students to "always surround yourself around people and friends who motivate you to be at your best. At PND, I was impacted by the importance of community. I respected the school so much for that."

The recording artist, who now has received multiple nominations and awards for her music, recalls PND's longstanding tradition of chicken Thursdays and the laughter she shared with great teammates during track and field.





Book illustrator and illustration teacher Sarah Klise who graduated from AOL/ SI in 1980 said while she didn't take a single art class in high school, there were many teachers who made a lasting impact. Sarah, who now lives in California, said she hopes she is having that same positive influence on her students. Sarah's advice is to "seek out people who will mentor you and build a support system. Rejection will follow, but so will small victories if you wait long enough."

AOL/SI 1979 alum, Msgr. Jeffrey Laible is the Vicar General for the largest diocese in the country, the U.S. Military Services located in Washington D.C.

While his father and uncle encouraged him to go into the military, Laible said "the priests that I knew in high school encouraged me to follow God's call to serve the Church as a priest."

Dr. Hannah Giunta-Stubb, PND 2004 graduate and medical fellow in Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine and Pediatric Pulmonology in Rochester, NY, said she is thankful for the high school teachers who nurtured her interest in biology, such as Mrs. Tallon. "I tend to remember the people who really invested in me during high school," said Dr. Giunta-Stubb. I will never forget Mrs. Crocker and Mr. Speck and all the Saturdays we spent at speech tournaments."

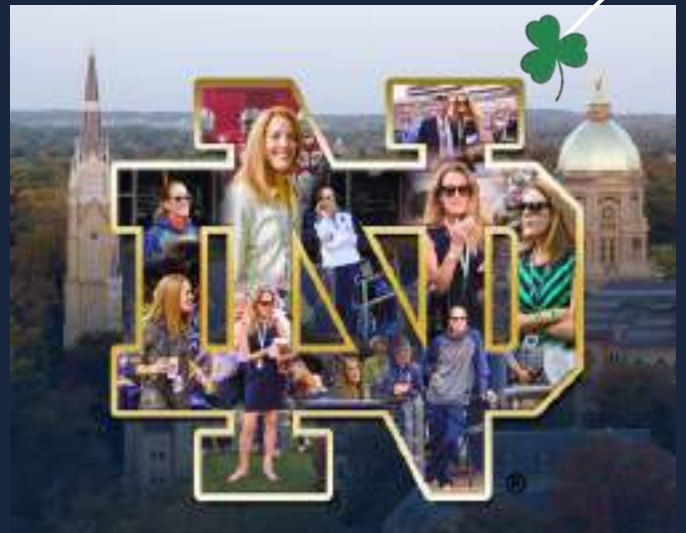


Catholic education emphasizes service to others, integrity, and an ongoing search for truth and good.

Sarah often illustrates books for her sister, Kate Klise, who is a well known children's book author, journalist, and AOL/SI 1981 graduate now living in both St. Louis and Portugal. Kate noted in high school, not every skill was learned in the classroom. "I was telling someone just the other day that everything I know I learned from working on the annual AOL/SI homecoming skits," she said. "From writing the script in a group to our crummy first drafts and lousy rehearsals to the importance of revising, it was all so subversively educational."

"My favorite activity was Student Senate. I feel like we spent all our free time going door to door, collecting canned goods. I loved those service projects that allowed us to work together in a way that felt meaningful and fun." Kate continued, "What I value most about my Catholic education is that the idea of service and giving back was always at the forefront."

Monica Cundiff, AOL/SI 1988 graduate and Illinois Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame inductee, agreed emphasis on service to others has made a lasting impact on her. "The guidance at Academy/Spalding to serve others that are less fortunate had a great impact on me to help others. Someone out there has many more challenges than I have." Cundiff, who is now the Associate Athletic Director at the University of Notre Dame, has delivered Meals on Wheels in South Bend for nearly 20 years.



SI 1967 alum Dr. Richard McQuellon is a Professor in the Department of Medicine at Wake Forest Baptist Health, Section of Hematology/Oncology in North Carolina. He has written two books about communications with cancer patients. He said his Catholic education helped shape concerns about social justice and care for others.

Peoria Notre Dame can open doors and shape conscience as well as influence students to make a difference in this world.



SERVING LUNCH AND LOVE

by Andy Hobin, MFA
PND '00
Professor of English at
Virginia Tech

Pat Matarelli – Mrs. Matarelli, I must say, because 22 years after graduating I still blanch at the idea of referring to any of my alma mater's staff or teachers by first name – was the first employee I encountered at Peoria Notre Dame. Some of us remember her not merely as the joyful keeper of order in The Commons, for Mrs. Matarelli (along with Jimmy – fabulous, ageless Jimmy) also ran the summer work program. Toiling on campus during a scorching August week in exchange for a generous little chunk of tuition assistance, a handful of us grimy, sweat-soaked Irish came to know sooner and better than any of our comparably comfortable peers that Mrs. Matarelli, luminary that she was, did not gladly suffer fools.

But this strictness, we knew or would eventually know, was born out of her desire to see the God-given potential that each of us held be realized, developed, and exploited. Tough love, we might call it, though back in the day (and still, really) it was called love, no superlatives necessary. A giving spirit like this is typically expected of a parent. Of an older sibling. A gentle teacher. A priest. And yet Mrs.



Matarelli could surprise you that way. I was still a Ritalin kid at the beginning of my freshman year in 1996, and much of the time I would have no appetite around lunch. I remember shuffling up to a cafeteria register one afternoon with only a cookie and an IBC root beer. Mrs. Matarelli looked at me with great concern and said, "That's a terrible lunch, Andy." She was right, of course, but I never forgot being moved by her sincerity. She barely knew me from my time with the summer work program, but she cared. Clearly, she cared. There are little gestures of kindness shown to us during the courses of our lives that stay tucked away in our memories because of some curious combination of effortlessness and substantial effect. That particular memory is mine. I try - not always successfully - to emulate that attentive kindness for my Virginia Tech students to this day.

Of course, you can't devote yourself to your students and not also delight in them, right? Mrs. Matarelli covered that base too, and ably. My younger brother, Mike, a squirrely and preternaturally gregarious athlete, would sometimes get himself booted out of Mr. Sullivan's homeroom so that he would get to sit on the pew parked outside the Dean's office next to The Commons. This - coincidence of coincidences! - put him in prime position to be first in the lunch line despite the stampedes of ravenous jocks dashing from the wings and the crush of band kids thundering up the stairs from down near the gym. Mrs. Matarelli couldn't help but get the biggest kick out of that. She knew better than any of us that we all fall short of the glory of God, and on Chicken Thursday, some more than others.



Mrs. Matarelli left us this year on April 21st, a few days shy of Divine Mercy Sunday. Consider mercy, the extension of loving forgiveness to those who don't deserve it, or who seem not to deserve it. (Pope Francis clarifies that although we believe that God is merciful, God Himself indeed is mercy.) How apt, then, that Mrs. Matarelli saw on us days that we were lovable and on days we were, well, capital-T Teenagers. Regardless, she gave us, in big ways and small, kindness on our good days and mercy on our bad. Why? Why us? And how could she have adored her job, trying though some days it doubtlessly was, so much that she remained a happy presence at school even though she retired back in 2017? Dear reader: you already know. When you think about what a treasure Mrs. Matarelli was to you, whether you remember her today or years down the road - because memories and stories are our transitory threads across time and generations - remember also that you were just as much a treasure to her.



Teacher Talk



2004 alum Kara (Hill) Girsch talks about what it was like to be a student and what it is like to come back to PND as a faculty member.

Why did you choose to teach at PND?

I know I received the best education in the area when I attended PND as a student. My mom, an alum of AOL, taught for 40+ years. We can't go anywhere without someone stopping her and thanking her. I want to be the same kind of positive force for every student who walks into my classroom.

What has changed at PND, and what has stayed the same?

We of course still have Chicken Thursday and Mrs. Matarelli cookies. Now, seeing my class' picture on the wall in Alumni Hall is surreal.

Tell us about a fun memory from your high school years.

I met Geoff on the first day of school freshman year. He doesn't remember sitting across from me that morning and saying hello by just kind of waving, but that is how it happened. It's a true story. We were married eight years later. Fourteen years and four Girschlings (kids) later, we are both back where it all started, this time as teachers.



Cleft PALate

PND Alums form friendships because of birth defect

Most parents of cleft palate babies don't know another family facing the same challenges with the diagnosis. But seven PND alums didn't have to look far for support when their children were born with cleft palates.

When Justin (PND '04) and Molly (PND '06) Reeser's son was born two years ago with a cleft palate, they reached out to Kyle Ihnken (PND '06) and his wife Evanne who had a 6 year old son with the same diagnosis. Soon after, Tyler and Molly Fiddes (both PND '06) and Nick (PND '04) and Lyndsay (PND '03) Mentgen connected with the Reesers when they were pregnant with cleft babies. With that, a sort of support group was formed.

Molly Reeser said having the group has been invaluable in their journey with a cleft palate baby.

"Even though our children each have different kinds of cleft palates and varying



challenges, we are able to share information and resources which benefit our kids and us as parents," said Reeser. "It has been nice to not only have support from fellow classmates, but also to have others around you who have experienced the same challenges."

The group, which has since added another couple from the Chicago area, meets virtually once a month to talk about their children's surgeries, progress in speech therapy, dental issues, and other difficulties along with the successes.

Now the friends are organizing a fundraiser to raise money for Smile Train, a not-for-profit organization which provides funding and resources for corrective surgeries and care of cleft palate children.

"This is the second year we have hosted this event. Last year we raised \$25,000 for Smile Train. We hope this fundraiser also raises awareness for cleft palates," Reeser said.

In addition to their upcoming fundraiser, the group of moms will be speaking to nearly 500 people at "Cleft Con" hosted by Smile Train on July 23.

Reeser said, "We are always open to helping other families dealing with a cleft. We want to make sure other families know we are here for them."

Fundraiser Details

July 9
3:00-6:00
Olympia Bar
and Grill



COUNSELING

GREATER FOCUS

Exciting changes have been made in the counseling department which have benefitted the students, the faculty, and the parents of Peoria Notre Dame. Two new counselors were added to the counseling staff. Michelle Baker joined the team at the beginning of the school year to provide a better focus on the emotional needs of the students, especially in these pandemic times. Michelle has implemented new programs for students and parents to gain a better understanding of psychological health among teens.

The new Parenting NowaDays group is a support group for parents which offers information on different topics related to their teens and provides encouragement for parents.

Alum Justin Cody (PND '01) came on staff as an additional counselor to provide greater service to the students of Peoria Notre Dame.

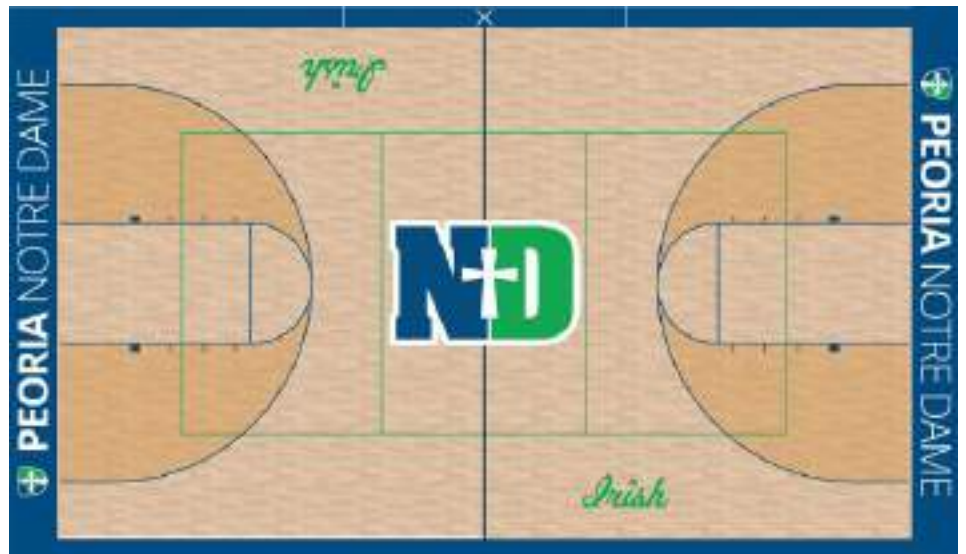
Our strong academics coupled with the encouragement and support our students need to succeed is a recipe for greatness which will change the world.



ACADEMICS

NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP

Senior John Frederickson was recently selected as a finalist for the National Merit Scholarship! John is one of only 15,000 finalists in the country who have been identified for a high GPA and outstanding PSAT score. We wish John the best of luck!



FACILITIES

BUILDING UPGRADES

Peoria Notre Dame just got the green light to move forward with much needed improvements to the gym. The project includes 1) repainting the gym floor (\$20,000), 2) installing athletic flooring in the hall outside the gym (additional \$10,000), 3) replacing the gym wall padding (additional \$10,000). We hope to reach our goal of \$40,000 by August 1. To donate to the gym floor project, contact Director of Advancement Cindy Dermody at c.dermody@pndhs.org or visit pndhs.org/gym.

This summer, PND will replace another section of the school roof. In addition, the fund-a-need project will begin, and workers will repaint lockers in the junior and senior hallways as well as replace locks, install new lighting, and update the ceilings.

Other upgrades to the facilities include digital screens throughout the school for announcements, updates, and reminders. In addition, smart boards will be installed in PND classrooms during the summer months. All of these technology updates are funded by a federal grant issued to private schools for technology upgrades.

Wings...

Russell "Leroy" McKinnie, SI '52, died 11/2/21
Robert J. O'Donnell, SI '63, died 11/2/21
Michael Rose, SI '63, died 11/5/21
Gerald I. Glore, Jr., SI '61, died 11/9/21
Mary E. Rogers, AOL '69, died 11/17/21
Edward E. Miller, SI '76, died 11/21/21
Paul M. Ruhaak, BHS '74, died 11/22/21
Michael Nash, BHS '67, died 12/19/21
Bjarne A. Hansen, PND '91, died 12/21/21
Stephen Mocilan, SI '64, died 12/21/21
Timothy Heinz, BHS '76, died 12/25/21
Patrick E. Smith, SI '63, died 12/31/21
Richard Humphrey, SI '60, died 1/1/22
James Lasher, Jr., BHS '77, died 1/1/22
Robert J. Becker, SI '56, died 1/6/22
Donna Correll, AOL '51, died 1/7/22
Lynne C. Copes, BHS '72, died 1/7/22
Esther P. Razo, AOL '46, died 1/11/22
Laurice Joseph, AOL '55, died 1/16/22
Peter Mahieu, BHS '66, 1/19/22
Carol Ann Schlicksup, AOL '63, died 1/19/22
Daniel Donahue Jr., SI '58, died 1/21/22
Robert H. Rahn, SI '53, died 1/21/22
Angela Statler, AOL/SI '80, died 1/23/22
David R. Vogel, SI '63, died 1/24/22
Edward J. Raya, SI '70, died 1/24/22
Kenneth McGann, SI '43, died 1/24/22

Anna Marie Storm, AOL '65, died 1/28/22
Carolyn McQuellon, BHS '80, died 1/28/22
John J. Waugh, BHS '77, died 1/30/22
James W. Kelley, SI '72, died 2/2/22
Victoria Deeb Casper, AOL '65, died 2/4/22
Patrick McGann, SI '45, died 2/7/22
Martin E. Kenny, SI '51, died 2/9/22
Kenneth Kocher, SI '53, died 2/14/22
William McLaughlin, SI '51, died 2/15/22
Susan Jean Widmer, AOL '58, died 2/28/22
Dennis Bohart, BHS '73, died 3/1/22
Christopher Cassidy, BHS '76, died 3/5/22
Arthur Savage, SI '65, died 3/8/22
Judith A. Gorman, AOL '58, died 3/9/22
Gloria Christian, AOL '51, died 3/9/22
George F. Lamprecht, SI '51, died 3/11/22
Robert Butler, BHS '67, died 3/12/22
Christine Swanson, AOL/SI '77, died 3/14/22
Richard Tomsovic, SI '66, died 3/16/22
Robert E. Maushard, SI '53, died 3/19/22
Mary Francis "Violet" Haberkorn, BHS '72, died 3/22/22
Arthur R. Cooper, SI '68, died 3/26/22
Patricia A. Johnson, AOL '49, died 3/29/22
Mary E. Diveley, AOL '51, died 3/28/22
Phillip Koeppel, SI '56, died 3/30/22

Mrs. Katie Scharle | 1931 - 2022

Many alumni will remember Mrs. Sharle for her 19 years of service as an English teacher at Bergan and Peoria Notre Dame. She was known for her love of the English language and enthusiasm for her faith. According to fellow faculty members, Mrs. Sharle was a wonderful mother to her daughter, Meg, who is a PND alum.

In addition to her time at Bergan and PND, Mrs. Sharle also taught at Our Lady of Angels in Chicago where she survived the internationally famous 1958 fire which fatally took 89 students and 3 nuns.

Mrs. Sharle passed away on April 15 in Portland, Oregon. Her shining light will be missed.

Rings &



Kelly Pabon (PND '96) married Ryan Boelkins in East Peoria on June 19, 2021.



Charles Ward and Serena Martin (both PND '15) wed November 6th at St Ambrose Cathedral in Des Moines, IA.



Christopher Neaveill (PND '13) and Lauren Schuler (PND '14) wed October 2, 2021 at St. Mary's of Kickapoo.



Marysue Ciccirelli (PND '13) married Drake Koelling at The Cathedral of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception in Peoria on December 18, 2021.

More Exciting Things!



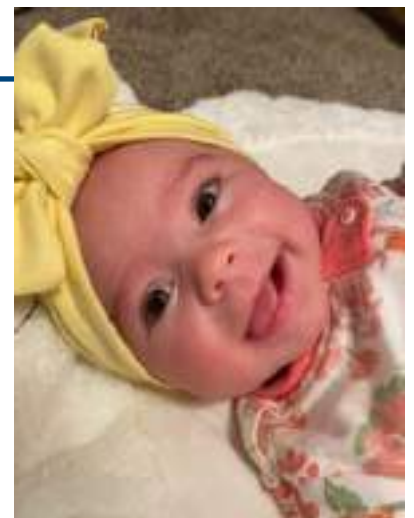
Jana McMurray (PND '17)
graduated from Illinois State
University in December 2021.

Samuel Baker Renick born
December 2, 2021 to Daniel
(PND '02) and Jenny (PND '04)
Renick.



Scout Julianne Evans
born January 26th,
2021 to Zo (PND '07)
and Dani Evans.

Gwendolyn Rose
Girsch born
December 23, 2021
to Geoff and Kara
Girsch (both PND '04).





Peoria Notre Dame High School
www.PeoriaNotreDame.com

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www.pndhs.org
Email Tara Shane at t.shane@pndhs.org

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Life events (check all that apply):

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

Spouse's name: _____

New Job: _____

New Address: _____

Today's date: _____

Wedding date: _____

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Hover over "Alumni," and click on "Update Your Info."