



# THE SHAMROCK

ST. PATRICK PARISH & ALUMNI NEWS

VOL. 18 NO. 2 SPRING 2007

## BABY BOOMERS CREATED GROWTH

*In the last issue of The Shamrock, we told you the beginning of the story of St. Patrick Catholic School. It was the culmination of an idea formulated by the pastor, aided by the sacrifice of the parishioners and hard work of the entire community which led to its opening on November 19, 1906. Now we'll look at how St. Pat's developed through the decades of the 1940's, 50's and 60's. The country was changing, society was changing, too. Catholic schools everywhere, even in Portland, Michigan reflected those changes and were affected by them.*

As St. Patrick School entered its fourth decade of operation, one could safely say that more was the same than different. The school was still housed in the same two-story stone building, it was still operated almost entirely by the pastor and the good Sisters and the students still attended daily mass. "We went to mass every day," remembers Marv Fedewa. "But it was a Low Mass, which meant there was no homily."

Attending a Low Mass, did not lessen the fasting requirement. Students could not eat or drink after midnight if they wanted to receive Holy Communion in the morning. "Even the drinking fountains were off-limits," says Gladys (Trierweiler) Stiffler. "They were covered with white cloths until after Mass."

Outside, the games on the playground were not much different than the ones that had been played for the past thirty years. The boys and girls were still segregated and the priests and nuns continued to provide them with simple things to keep them entertained. One year, Father Kohler bought some balls and bats and distributed them to

the two groups. Occasionally, when the weather was nice, they would be herded across Grand River Avenue to play in the grove. And there, the students from St. Patrick's were given the warning that they were never, never, NEVER to leave the school property to play on the "Indian Trails."

The block that now houses the school and church looked much different in the 1940's. The present church had been built in 1926, so the original wood church had been moved back, to the northwest corner of the block. It was used as a parish hall for a few years, but burned down in 1931. Portions of the basement walls still stood during the 1940's and they became great hiding places during recess games of hide and seek.

There were also a few homes located within the block, and a large garden behind the rectory, which was tended by the priests and the housekeeper. Students from the 1940's remember the priests' grapevines—and the great temptation to pick and eat some of the luscious fruit hanging on them. The rule was, that no one could pick the

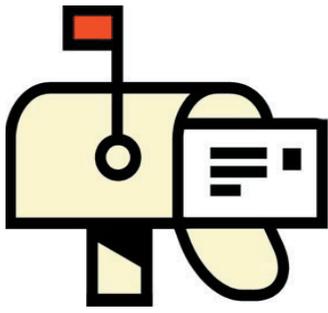
grapes until the priests had picked all that they wanted. Then, the kids could help themselves. Marv Fedewa remembers one fall day, in a year with an especially bountiful crop, Father Kohler dismissed school 20 minutes early so that every student had time to pick a few grapes before leaving for the day.

As the forties gave way to the fifties, Catholic Schools across the nation were experiencing a growth crisis. The Baby Boomer generation was entering school and the classrooms were bursting at the seams!

Father Louis Flohe had arrived in Portland in 1945, and by 1947 he addressed the issue of overcrowding by purchasing the rest of the property on the block where the church and school stood, with a plan to tear down the old school and replace it. The new, modern facility would be large enough to house not only the existing eight grades, but a new high school as well, allowing students to remain at St. Pat's through graduation.

The next years were a bit tumultuous and certainly challenging to

*(Continued on page 13)*



# Mail Call

It was very interesting to read your article about St. Pat's years ago. I started 1st grade at age 5 in 1927 and was warned by my older brothers and sisters about Father O'Rourke. Shortly after school started, Dick Morse seated on my left told me to pass a note to Mae Rose Schuller one seat ahead and on my right. Of course I got caught, called to the front of the room where Sister proceeded to slap the palms of my hands with a ruler. That wasn't the worst! When Father O'Rourke read my report card, I had a D in deportment! Father O'Rourke adjusted the paddle under his arm and told me in no uncertain terms that if it wasn't better by next month, we would be stepping out into the hall.

I also remember that during the depression there was not always enough coal to keep the school warm. We were allowed to keep our coats on and we would silently pray for recess to hurry up so we could get outside and run around to get warmed up. All was not bad though. When I was in the fourth grade, it was my turn to stay after school and clean the erasers. I had a bad tooth ache from a cavity and Sister asked why I was so quiet. I told her my problem, and when I finished the erasers she put on her robe and said, "Come with me. I have something for that toothache." So, we walked to the convent, which at that time was located just an alley width from the back of the church. She told me to wait outside and in a minute she came back with a piece

of homemade chocolate fudge about 2" square and ½" thick!!

We lived between Market and Canal Streets just below Alton Park, and by the time I got home, the toothache was gone!

St. Pat's had an orchestra several years before I went to school. It was trained and directed by Sister Conception. She was an all around musician. My older sister, Phyllis, played the viola, my brother George and Bob Bates played clarinets. I think Charles Mathews played trumpet and Florian Pung played drum. I can't recall any of the others. Sister Conception was a wonderful organist, and believe it or not, I still remember the hymn that she frequently played at communion time. I can play it on my electric organ.

The old white church building that stood on the corner of Center and West Streets was used as a hall for plays and recitals before it burned down. I remember one musical that Sister Conception directed was when I was in the second grade. Mark Lehman and I had to sing a little ditty about San Francisco and we had trouble trying to sing that big word!

I still have many wonderful memories of St. Pat's. It was and always will be a great school.

*Sincerely, Phil Koelzer  
8th Grade Class of 1936*

When we got our last issue of The Shamrock, we were surprised

to see our son's name on your list of Lost Sheep. He has been very busy lately and so it has even been hard for us to keep up with him.

Don is doing well and currently working on his rotations to complete his medical training. He took his first set of boards last spring and passed them. He still has quite a ways to go but he sounds as if he is enjoying his education and all the experiences he is encountering. We are grateful to St. Pat's for the quality of education that he received because it has made a world of difference in his ability to assimilate the education he is now getting.

*Thanks so much!!  
Tom and Lori Setter*



**If your children are school age or approaching school age, we would like to suggest that you consider sending them to St. Patrick's. We offer a full Catholic curriculum for DK through 12th grade students.**

**You and your child(ren) are welcome to visit the school, take a tour, spend some time in the classrooms and see for yourself what we have to offer. Applications are now being taken for the 2007-08 school year.**

**Call the school (517) 647-7551 and talk to Sister Patricia or Sister Maureen. They will tell you why Catholic Schools really are the Good News in Education!**

# In The Spotlight

## Marian Brown

*Marian was interviewed by The Shamrock last fall, with plans to Spotlight her in this issue. She was so excited and so full of stories about the school. Unfortunately, before she saw her name in print, Marian died unexpectedly at the age of 88. When we expressed regret to one of her daughters, that she didn't get to see the article, her daughter stated, "Don't worry, she'll still see it. She'll just be reading it from heaven!" So, Marian—here's your story!*



Marian Frances Barton was born in 1918, the only child of William O. Barton and Rose Nahrgang. She attended grade school at St. Patrick Catholic School, then graduated from Portland High School in 1936. She had many fond memories of her days at St. Pat's.

Her father owned a store in town, so when he went to work in the morning, she would ride in with him in his Ford. She had a tin lunch pail and was one of the few children fortunate enough to have a Thermos bottle for drinks. Usually her lunch consisted of just a sandwich, however, occasionally she would also enjoy a small jar of nutmeats that her father had picked from the nuts that he gathered each fall.

The school had an indoor bathroom, but you had to go outside to enter it. There was also a door on one of the upstairs classrooms that had glass in it, and when it was opened to a certain angle, you could see your reflection. Marian remembered that she and the other girls would stand in front of that window and primp, being ever so cautious not to get caught—because it was a sin to be proud.

Occasionally, there would be a spare nickel to spend at Owen's Drugstore for a lemon or strawberry Coke. On other special occasions, friends got together at each others houses, rolled up the rugs and while some played musical instruments, the others danced. It was at one of those dances that she met her future husband, Burton Brown. Marian was planning to meet a different boy at that party, but he didn't show up. Burton was undoubtedly one of the musicians that evening, and through some chicanery, he outsmarted a third boy who was planning to ask Marian out. Burton ended up escorting her home—and the rest is history. They were married in 1937 and became parents to 13 children. Burton died in 1985.

Marian's Catholic faith was very important to her, and she instilled that same love of faith in her family. All thirteen of her children attended St. Patrick's School and many of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren are attending yet today.

Some people have traits that make them unforgettable. Marian's beautiful white hair, her ever-present smile and her positive outlook on life made her very special in-

deed. She enjoyed camping, watching her clan make music, and an occasional Manhattan.

She leaves behind a legacy that the rest of us can only envy. In addition to her twelve surviving children, she leaves 46 grandchildren, 55 great-grandchildren and 11 great-great grandchildren!

*Her children have one final note: You've probably heard the phrase, "You're just like your mom/dad!" All of us would be proud to hear that! We love you, Mom and Dad!*

### Would You Like To Honor Someone In This Space?

If you would like to honor a special person by putting them *In the Spotlight*, contact The Shamrock.

You can write the article yourself, if you're comfortable doing that, or provide the information and photo and we'll do it for you.

Contact information can be found on page 18.

# What's Happening?

## BIRTHS

To Stacy (Burcham, 1991) and Nate Parker a son, Sean William on November 21, 2005.

To Terry (Schoenherr, 1994) and Ryan Fensom of Lansing a daughter, Isabella Marie on September 17, 2006.

To Justin (1999) and Dana (Schneider, 2001) Simon a son, Grayden Thomas on December 9, 2006.

To Pat (1991) and Stacy Russman a daughter, Isabella Ann on October 2, 2006. She joins one sister, Summer and one brother, Payton.

To Tanya Meyers (2005) and Grant Keilen (2004) a daughter, Brook Morgan on September 14, 2006.

To Mike (1987) and Ann Kissane a daughter, Isabelle Elizabeth on July 11, 2006. She joins siblings Michelle, 18, Alex, Riley and Leah, all age 4.

To Ross and Tracie (Chamberlain, 1998) Feldpausch of Fowler a son, Brady Lee on July 25, 2006.

To Todd (1991 and Jackie (Smith, 1993) Huhn of St. Johns a son, Jordan Steven on July 19, 2006.

To Keith Rider and Jamie Trimmer (1997) a daughter, Adia Elizabeth on December 26, 2006.

To Troy and Jodi (Pung, 1999) Thelen of Mulliken a daughter, Ayla Rae on October 4, 2006.

To Jeff (1992) and Ellie Thelen of Alto a son, Nathan Russell on September 17, 2006.

To Nick (1997) and Shelley Schneider of Grand Ledge, a daughter, Sora Lee on February 11, 2007.

To Jeremy and Sara (Meyers, 1995) Russman, a daughter, Erica Lynn, on February 13, 2007.

To Jim and Amy Jo (Fedewa, 1996) Johncox of Hudsonville a daughter, Sarah Elizabeth on January 10,

2007. She joins one sister, Rachel, 2 ½.

To Lauren Cross, daughter of Brent Cross (1987), a son, Dre Michael. Great-grandparents are Calvin and Jeannine Cross.

## ENGAGEMENTS

Brad Pung (1999) and Jenny Jones will be married on April 14, 2007.

Melissa Thelen (1998) and Corey Carpenter will be married on November 24, 2007.

Correy Selden (1995) and Amanda Adams will be married on May 26, 2007.

Readers tell us that the What's Happening pages are the first ones they read when their newsletters arrive. Be sure to let us know What's Happening in *your* life, so that we can let your friends know!

## WEDDINGS

Theresa Weller (2003) and Matt Knoop (2002) were married on September 16, 2006.

Craig Fedewa (1995) and Rebecca Boyd were married on October 7, 2006.

Andrew Platte (1993) and Kristen Davis were married on September 22, 2006 at the MSU Chapel. The newlyweds live in Okemos.

Angela Platte (1992) and Samir Rabahat were married on October 21, 2006 on the beach at Maui, Hawaii. The couple reside in Phoenix, AZ and are expecting a baby boy in July of 2007.

## ANNIVERSARIES

Jim and Mirla Moses celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary on October 16, 2006.

Ernie and Maria Rivera celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on September 9, 2006 with an open house. The couple were married on September 1, 1956.

Dave and Jean Snitgen will celebrate their 35th wedding anniversary on April 15, 2007.

Father Tom Boufford celebrated the 25th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood with an open house at St. Edward's Family Center in Lake Odessa on November 5, 2006.

## OTHER HAPPENINGS

Etta (Fedewa) Mayhew celebrated her 100th birthday on November 8, 2006. An open house was held on November 5 at St. Patrick Parish Hall. If you would like to wish her a belated birthday wish, send cards to her in care of Heartland Health Care Center, 814 E. Lincoln Avenue, Ionia, MI 48846.

Lyndsey Bos, who graduated from St. Pat's in 2006 was chosen by Independent Bank as its Athlete of the Year for the Portland Area. The award recognizes excellence in the areas of scholarship, citizenship, leadership and athletic participation. Lyndsey is the daughter of Ron and Kaye Bos.

CECA Vincent M. Karkau has been deployed to Iraq on March 9th, 2007. He is the son of Cynthia Rivera and grandson of Ernest and Maria Rivera. Please keep him in your thoughts and prayers.

Mike (1986) and Lisa (Schrauben, 1987) Lehman were recently honored by the Portland Area Chamber of Commerce as Citizens of the Year.

Luke Pung (1995) continues his two-year "working vacation" in New Zealand. Though he has traveled extensively, he is currently living in Rakaia on the south island, and is working on a dairy farm.

## IN MEMORY OF

Marian F. Brown, 88, died on November 30, 2006. She is survived by her children Janice Livingston, James Brown, Joan (Kenneth) Guy, Joel (Nelda) Brown, Jerrold (Judy) Brown, William (Pamela) Brown, Anne (Fritz) Russman, Thomas (Cindy) Brown, Christopher (Constance) Brown, Jon (Cami) Brown, Brian (Pat) Brown, Michael (Lisa) Brown, daughter-in-law Sue Brown, 46 grandchildren, 55 great-grandchildren, 11 great-great-grandchildren, step-sisters Janet (Marvin) Fedewa, Agnes Schneider, Mary (Joseph) Simon, Anna Thelen, and several nieces and nephews.

Adeline M. Smith, 89, died on February 10, 2007. She is survived by her siblings Rita Miller, Helen Rogers, and Tillie Hufnagel of Portland, and several nieces and nephews.

Raymond Gustafson, 47, died on December 8, 2006. He is survived by his wife of 22 years, Penny; parents Raymond and Janet Gustafson of Lansing; children: Katie Gustafson, Scott (Wendy) Huhn, Becky Huhn and Ken (Cheri) Huhn and seven grandchildren.

Garrett Christopher Goodwin died on October 16, 2006 at the age of eight days. He is survived by his parents, Chad and Jenny Goodwin; grandparents Chris and Cindy Click and Kevin and Linda Goodwin all of Portland; great grandparents Rose Marie Dye, Martha Keel, Betty Click, Dale and Gladys Stiffler, Carleen Delasandro and Ann Goodwin; many cousins, aunts and uncles.

Mable E. Smith, 82 died on December 10, 2006. She is survived by her children Ken (Marie) Smith, Steve (Debbie) Smith, Doug (Connie) Smith, Kathy (Tom) Russman, Annette (John) Pohl, and Darrel Smith, son-in-law Jim Miller, 21 grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren, brother Phil Koelzer, sisters-in-law Mary Lou Smith, Susan Smith, and Dorothy Goodman, brother-in-law Bill Simon, and many nieces and nephews.

Theodore Joseph Mayhew, 75, died on December 14, 2006. He is survived by his 100 year old mother,

Etta C. (Fedewa) Mayhew, sisters-in-law Carolyn Mayhew and Lucetta Mayhew, brother-in-law, Mike Heiler, and several nieces and nephews.

Reynold Hengesbach, 75, of Cosby, Tennessee (formerly of Portland) died on December 21, 2006. He is survived by his children: Terri (Gary) Schaaf, Mike (Gina) Hengesbach, Angela Hengesbach, Roni (Steve) Beck and Jim Hengesbach and ten grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, three brothers, two sisters and many nieces and nephews.

Helen A. Hoppes, 98, died on December 26, 2006. She is survived by her children Barbara (Charles) Diamond, Elaine Dorin, Joan (Gerald) Blundy and Robert (Carmen) Hoppes. Also 15 Grandchildren, 27 great-grandchildren and 5 great-great grandchildren.

If you have loved ones who are living in adult care facilities, please let us know. We'd like to publish their names and addresses so that old friends can visit or send cards.

Florelle Manning, 91, died on December 28, 2006. She is survived by her children Michael Manning, John Manning, Nancy (Larry) Schueler, and Steven Manning, 8 grandchildren, 8 great grandchildren, and her sister-in-law, Ruth.

Patricia Rose (Hill) Palmer, 89 died on December 30, 2006. She is survived by her brother Jerome Hill, sisters Marilynne Walton and Beverly Stidam, sons Robert and Thomas Little, daughter Melissa Thompson, and many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews.

Minerva T. Hernandez, 75, died on January 10, 2007. She is survived by her husband of 53 years Felix, children Mary Jane (Ken) Hoppes, Sylvia (Tom) Moore, and Felix III (Patricia) Hernandez, two grandchildren, sisters Maria Flores, Rebecca (Rosendo) Morales, and Bertha Lopez, numerous nieces, nephews, and friends.

Suzanne M. Crosby, 49, died on January 27, 2007. She is survived by her mother Theresa, step-mother Lois Sullivan, husband Ronald Crosby, children Robert Crosby and fiancée Cristina, Ronald (Leslee) Crosby Jr., Kristine Crosby, and Raymond Crosby and Jodie, grandchildren Cody, Ashley, Troy, Zachary, Raymond Jr., Melinda, and Alex, brothers Michael (Sue) Sullivan, Timothy Sullivan, and Patrick Sullivan, sister Maureen Williams, and many nieces and nephews.

Herbert "Unk" Schaffer, 87 of Oscoda, Michigan (formerly of Portland) died on January 27, 2007. He is survived by his wife Helen; his three children, James (Mary), Stephan (Deborah), and Mary Frances VanOstran, 5 stepchildren, 8 grandchildren, 13 step grandchildren, 4 great grandchildren and 2 step grandchildren.

Barbara (Hoppes) Schrauben, 60, died on March 2, 2007. Surviving are her husband, Bill Waldorf; sons, Michael (Angie) Schrauben and Randy D. Schrauben, four grandchildren, her mother, Patricia Hoppes, sisters Suzi Seal, Janet (Mike) Hyland, Patty (Gary) Bogard, Carol (Paul) Martin, Roxie (Rod) Wilkins, Sherri (Dean) Fedewa, Terri (Jack) Schrauben, Laurie (Jeff) Cathcart, step daughter, Sarah Elizabeth Waldorf and many nieces and nephews.

Richard Smith, 66, died on March 2, 2007. Surviving are brothers George, Joe and Charles Smith, sisters, Helen Simon, Ruthann (Alban) Hengesbach, Jean Van Ostran, Rosemary Simon and Julie (Dan) Leonard; brother-in-law Ford Scheurer, sisters-in-law Gail Smith and Christine Smith; great aunt Esther Schrauben of Portland; many nieces and nephews and cousins.

Agnes Gross, 90, died on February 26, 2007. She is survived by her sister, Florence Shindorf, sister-in-law, Kathileen Gross, brother-in-law, Ivan Wilcox and many nieces and nephews.

Esther Schafer, 1954 graduate of St. Patrick's School, died on November 29, 2006. She is survived by four brothers and five sisters and many nieces and nephews.



## STUDENTS LEARN SPANISH LANGUAGE

There's something special going on at St. Patrick School, a Spanish special to be exact! For the first time, Spanish is being offered to all of the students—DK through 12th grade .

The teacher, Señora Jennifer Leon, a native of Puerto Rico, moved to the United States in 2000 and began teaching English to bilingual students. Though Spanish is her native language, this helped her to refine her own knowledge of English as well as to fine tune her classroom techniques. This year she is helping the stu-



dents at St. Pat's, all the way down to the developmental kindergarten classrooms, become fluent in Spanish. Señora Leon says that it is exciting to be working with students within such a wide age range.

She not only brings a full command of the Spanish language into each classroom, but she also brings a

unique understanding of the Hispanic culture. In addition to teaching her students to speak Spanish, Señora Leon exposes her students to the varied cultural differences among Hispanic people. She hopes to continue to break down stereotypes and let her students recognize that even within the Spanish community, there are differences as well as similarities. She's helping her students explore the cultural world of South America, the Caribbean, Spain and Mexico.

Señora Leon recognizes the challenge that American students have in not being able to practice Spanish in their everyday environment, so she provides them with opportunities to practice the language in her classes. She believes practice is important for fluency. Her emphasis is on conversation with use of correct grammar in speaking and writing. she has the ongoing goal of speaking more and more Spanish with her students and the hope of eventually being able to converse entirely in Spanish within the classroom.

This should quickly become a reality. Her eyes light up when she speaks of how much her students are learning, especially the youngest. She says, "They are like sponges. It's amazing how quickly they absorb the language."

The students are lucky to be learning from a native speaker. Research shows that students who learn from a native speaker before entering adolescence can eliminate an American accent. Señora Leon predicts that with the continued study of Spanish, the youngest students at St. Patrick School could be bilingual, able to read Spanish and have entire conversations in Spanish ten years from now.

Just ask the students. They'll be the first to tell you that no only do they have una clase especial de español, but una profesora especial also.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY ST. PAT'S!

The people of St. Patrick Parish had much to celebrate on November 19, 2006. The day marked the 100-year birthday of the opening of St. Patrick Catholic School. The school opened on November 19, 1906 with an initial enrollment of 60 students in grades 1-8. The original school building was located on West Street, approximately half way between Grand River Avenue and Center Streets. Four Sisters of St. Joseph came to Portland in 1906 from Nazareth Convent near Kalamazoo to work at the school. Three of the Sisters

were teachers, the fourth was in charge of housekeeping.

One hundred years later, parishioners gathered to celebrate. Following the 11:30 Birthday Mass, they attended a birthday party at the Parish Hall. Father Larry King, who served as emcee at the party, reminded attendees of what was happening in the United States in 1906. "Theodore Roosevelt was President," he said. "The great earthquake hit San Francisco. The Wright Brothers received a patent for their new invention—the flying machine. And the people of St. Patrick Parish raised \$5400 to build a school so that their children could receive a Catholic education. \$5400 doesn't seem



like much today, but in 1906 it was a lot of money! It took tremendous determination and sacrifice to build that first school. And it has taken tremendous determination and sacrifice by many, many people to assure that the school would be here, providing Catholic education to our students for 100 years!"

Father Larry noted that while it has been many years since St. Patrick School had any Sisters on the staff, this year both the principal and the administrator are Sisters. To a round of applause, he introduced Sr. Maureen Fields and Sr. Patricia Ann Kidder. "It is only fitting, that as we enter our second hundred years of Catholic education in Portland, we do so under the leadership of these two fine women," he said.

Party-goers gathered on the steps of the school gymnasium for a group photo before participating in a celebratory balloon release. The crowd sang a rousing rendition of Happy Birthday, and at the end of the song, one hundred green and white balloons carrying notes written by St. Patrick's students, were released into the air. The brisk breeze, blowing from the north lifted the balloons up and over the steeple of the church.

"By the grace of God, St. Patrick School will be here for another 100 years," said Father Larry.

## SHAMROCKS GO TO FINALS AGAIN!

There were high expectations when the Shamrock girls basketball arrived for practice in August of 2006. This was the group, that five years earlier, Coach Al Schrauben had predicted would be his best team yet. They worked hard, played well, and were ranked number one in Class D for most of the season, pounding their opponents with an unbelievable defense.

The Shamrocks ended their regular season with a perfect 20-0 record, which included two wins over arch rival Pewamo-Westphalia. They went into the tournaments with hopes of another state title.

They performed magnificently in the first tournament games, winning the districts, regionals and quarterfinals. For the eighth consecutive year, the shamrocks from Portland St. Patrick's advanced to the MHSAA Class D Final Four. For the fourth consecutive year they faced the Pilgrims from Lansing Christian at the Breslin Center.

The semi-final contest between the two schools on November 30 was a game of tough defense on both ends of the court, resulting in a combined 29% shooting average and 36 turnovers. The Shamrocks hung on for a 36-33 win, setting the stage for a state final game against Frankfort.

The 2006 Class D Championship game on December 2 made the record books. Both teams exhibited tenacious defense—but both teams struggled offensively. The Shamrocks, who had averaged 56 points during the previous 26 games shot only 14% from the floor. They couldn't get the ball inside, and couldn't get the outside shots to fall. Frankfort struggled similarly and the final score 21-26 was the lowest scoring game in MHSAA Championship history.

Though they didn't bring home the state championship trophy, the 2006 team provided fans with a season that won't soon be forgotten. Congratulations, girls!





## Youth Group News

St. Pat's Youth Group had an amazing year filled with many joys and many challenges! In December, we introduced a new fundraiser/parish event called "Big Man for Christ." Two guys from each grade competed in talent, formal wear, and faith question categories to earn the title "Big Man for Christ." These students truly inspired the audience as they shared their heartfelt answers to challenging faith questions and showcased a plethora of unique talents – everything from balloon animals and caricatures to singing and swing-dancing! J.J. Moses won the title of 2006 Big Man for Christ, followed very closely by Cody Miller (2nd place) and Michael Simon (3rd). Our own Catherine Jandernoa also made it a fun event as she dressed up like a boy and competed under the alias "Chris Jandernoa"!

Some other activities that the students have participated in are: Rake and Run, Christmas Caroling, Hot Topic Nights, Why Catholic Nights, Eucharistic Adoration, Reconciliation, See You at the Pole, Stations of the Cross, Teen Life Night sponsored by Rock for Life, and many others. For Spring Break/Holy Week, about 35 of us will be taking a mission trip to Memphis, Tennessee. Originally, we had planned to go to Port Sulphur, Louisiana, but the organizations offering mission work need skilled labor at this time. The Holy Spirit provided, though, and we will be doing many wonderful things in Memphis as we work with MIFA (Metropolitan Inter-Faith Association), Missionary Sisters of Charity, and St. Mary's soup kitchen.

Upcoming, are DYMO camp, Steubenville Conference, Rosary Walks (as the weather warms up), and Dinner Theater in the fall. New this year is a Junior High Youth Group open to all 7th and 8th graders which will meet Mondays from 7-8pm. In the fall, Youth Group will split into two groups: Junior High (7th-8th grades) and Senior High (9th -12th grades).

We had a blessed year, but it was not without challenge, as we lost a very dear mentor, friend, and spiritual leader in Sue Crosby. The youth held a vigil for her, and it was a beautiful sight to behold as student af-

ter student relayed how Sue had touched their life in some way. She will be missed, but we know that she is in Heaven interceding for us at this very moment!

Youth Group will continue to meet during the summer! For more information on youth group activities, please visit our website at [www.youth.stpatrickportland.com](http://www.youth.stpatrickportland.com)! God bless and we looked forward to seeing YOU Sunday nights, 6:30-8:30pm in the multipurpose room!

## Volleyball Team Hosts Alumni

On December 29th, the volleyball players hosted an alumni game. All of the players from 2002 through 2006 were invited back to the "Pit" to show they "still got it". Thirteen of eighteen players were able to make it to the game. All of them had played for Coach Randy Hodge when they were in high school.

The alumni began the night by trying unsuccessfully to beat the current varsity team. Then they split into two groups, the older group was comprised of players from 2003-2004. The younger team was made up of players from 2005-2006. Even though the alumni teams were not successful in their bid to outplay the current team, they were able to hold their own. In the final game of the night, the 2005-06 team beat the 2003-04 team. There were a lot of stories shared about the good old days as well as a lot of catching up with old teammates over pizza and pop at the end of the evening.





It's been a while since we had a good, old-fashioned Word Search! This one contains the names of all of the people who work at St. Pat's School. You'll only be looking for the portion of the name that is in bold caps. Ignore the words that are in parentheses. When you are finished, you'll find 50 letters that are unused. Place them in order in the blanks below and see what it says! We have filled in the first and last letters in the phrase for you.

P S K E L L N E P S P R L A R E B S L S  
 A T G E A O L O H L E L N E E A A M A L  
 T A S R L T G E M M A N I N N V N E N O  
 R C R Y T L R E M I M T O N I L F E S H  
 U Y N I R W Y I L A S D T C E A I W D C  
 S R L O O N R A R I N N K E B W E Y E I  
 S U N O E T E I R O T I A I K L L M L N  
 M S D A B L E H C E S N H J N E D A L A  
 A S N O M P K A G I N W L O I S R K N M  
 N M B E U K E W M O R S E K F S S P H D  
 R A D N B D C O W O O D C O C K O V A O  
 I N G A K U N E R E H C S I E L F M K O  
 K O O C V I A E H L H O P N O D Y D L G  
 S I V A D E N R E T D I A N E S I M O N  
 M A R T I N W S H R A H O L M A N I R N  
 G Y D D E Y R A M C U P T I H T E O A N  
 H C I C N A R K R A S A T E D E D L C E  
 L L E W T A G A T D N H M B E N N E T T  
 I N G B U R N S W O R N O V U Y K S I T  
 P A T R I C I A O R E M M I R T N A J T

AMY SMITH (Rosanne) LANSDELL  
 AMY WEEMS (Father) LARRY  
 ANN MARIE PUNG (Dick) LAWLESS  
 (Lisa) ATWELL (Jennifer) LEON  
 (Ben) BANFIELD (Sue) LITTLE  
 (Anne) BENNETT (David) LOGEL  
 BOB TRIMMER (Erin) MARTIN  
 (Emily) BURNS MARY EDDY  
 CAROL KAHN (Sister) MAUREEN  
 (Kathy) COOK (Renee) NICHOLS  
 DAVE WARD PAT HECKMAN  
 (Laura) DAVIS (Sister) PATRICIA  
 DEACON DON PAT RUSSMAN  
 DIANE SIMON (Sarah) PLATTE  
 DON POHL (Joyce) PLINE  
 (Jane) FINKBEINER (Al) SCHRAUBEN  
 (Judy) FLEISCHER (Tiffany) SHERWOOD  
 (Joanne) GOODMAN STACY RUSSMAN  
 (Shelby) HENRYS (Becky) TIEDT  
 (Chuck) HOLMAN VICKI SIMON  
 JAN SIMON (Tricia) WOODCOCK  
 JAN TRIMMER (Bryan) YUVON  
 (Charlene) KAHLE  
 KELLY ARENS (Two teachers, Jennifer  
 KHRISTIE (Cook) Sanford & Sonia Buonodono  
 (Luann) KINSMAN are not included in the  
 (Agnes) KRANCICH puzzle.)

### ANSWER TO FALL PUZZLE

The fall puzzle was a format called **Letter Tiles**. It was a little harder than some of our other puzzles, but we still had nearly 30 correct entries. The answer was a quote,

"WISDOM IS THE REWARD YOU GET FOR A LIFETIME OF LISTENING WHEN YOU WOULD RATHER HAVE BEEN TALKING."

We credited these words to Aristotle, since that's what we found on the internet at [www.about.com](http://www.about.com). Two of our entrants questioned whether Aristotle was the real author...and they sent proof from another internet source, [www.coolquotes.com](http://www.coolquotes.com) which credits the quote to Doug Larson. So, we confess, we don't know for sure WHO said it!

The winner, randomly drawn from all correct entries was Danielle Long of East Lansing. She received a check for \$50.

### ENTRY FORM AND RULES

Send this entry form, by any of the means described on the back page, or drop in the collection basket in an envelope clearly marked SHAMROCK CONTEST. Entries must be received by May 1, 2007. Cash prize of \$50 will be awarded to the winner, who will be chosen by random drawing from all correct entries. You must be 18 or older to enter. Limit of one entry per person.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWER: D \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_, O!

If you prefer to keep your newsletter intact, just send the answer and your name and address on a separate sheet of paper.

## Upcoming Events....

Shamrock Auction.....April 21, 2007  
 First Communion ..... May 6, 2007  
 Graduation ..... June 3, 2007  
 Parish Festival ..... June 22-24, 2007  
 Class of '57 50-Year Reunion .....Sept. 8, 2007  
 Fall Festival ..... October 14, 2007

Next issue of The Shamrock—Mid October.  
 Send in your news as soon as possible!

# Come on Home!

## St. Patrick Parish Festival

3-on-3 Tournaments  
 5-k Race --- Raffles  
 Softball Tournaments  
 Veterans Salute  
 Chicken Dinner  
 Outdoor Mass  
 Golf Outing  
 Food Court  
 Elephant Ears  
 Euchre Tournament  
 Texas Hold 'em

Kids Games & Activities

Hazel, are you going to be able to get some time off in June?

Yes, Bertha, all of my classmates are coming to town for the Festival!

**Back by Popular Demand!**

The Gathering Tent!  
 Food, Liquid Refreshments, Entertainment!

**June 22-24, 2007**

For complete information visit our website:  
[www.portlandstpats.org](http://www.portlandstpats.org) and click on Parish Festival .

Raffle #C23768

## LOST SHEEP

Sometimes readers are surprised to find their own names or the names of their loved ones on the Lost Sheep list. Many times these people aren't lost at all, they have simply moved without letting us know. If we mail a newsletter and it comes back without forwarding information, we put that name onto the Lost Sheep list. To prevent this from happening, you can help us out by using the form on the back page to let us know when you move.



1960 Tom Geller	1979 Michael Hendricks
1961 John D. Pung	1980 Angie Young
1964 Jim Pung	1981 Frank Winter
1965 Terry Speckin	1984 Paul Grego
1972 Ken Brown	Tim Sheaffer
1974 Mark VanderHoff	1995 Brenda Hengesbach
1975 Susan Thelen	Ryan Kammers

## Come to the 5th Annual Shamrock Auction!



Take Me  ut To The Ball Park!

Raffles -- All night!  
 Live Auction -- Begins at 8 pm  
 Silent Auction -- Begins at 6 pm  
 Entertainment You Won't Want To Miss!

**Food! Beer! Pop!**

PRIZES! PRIZES! PRIZES!

Prizes are still coming in!

Vacation Get-Aways - Furniture

Jewelry - Tools - Lawn Furniture

One-of-a-Kind Classroom Projects

Visit Our Website for a Complete List!

Call Lisa Kemmis (647-7696) to Make a Donation!



**GRAND SLAM RAFFLE!**

Only 100 Tickets Available!

Tickets are \$100 each!

Win up to \$1500!

Call Tony Thelen

(517) 647-2296



Saturday, April 21, 2007 at the KC Hall!  
 Doors Open at 6:00 p.m.

Buy Your Ticket in Advance and You'll Be Entered in a  
 Special Drawing for a Special Prize!

Go to [www.portlandstpats.org](http://www.portlandstpats.org) and click on Shamrock Auction!



## Role of Catholic Schools Still Important

by Father Larry King

It was Elizabeth Ann Seton who established the first Catholic School in the United States, in Baltimore in 1810. The purpose of the school was to help needy children learn about the love of God and neighbor, as well to give them a well-rounded academic education.

In 1906, the people of St. Patrick Parish sought to be faithful to that same vision when they established St. Patrick Catholic School. Over the past hundred years, St. Pat's has sought to instill the love of God and neighbor through the good news of Jesus Christ in the students who attend our school. Have we done it perfectly? No, there have been some stumblings and bumbings along the way, because St. Patrick's, like every other institution, consists of imperfect folks. But despite those imperfections, St. Patrick School has done, and continues to do, many things right. As society changes, the values found at St. Patrick's and other Catholic schools might be more important now than at any time since 1810!

Why? Because, Christians today, are faced with a tremendous challenge. We face it at St. Patrick School every day. This challenge is the twisted value of secularism. Secularism professes that we have no need for God in our lives, and secularism is running rampant in our midst. This deadly philosophy is destroying the fabric of our society as it leads people to believe that they can be God.

St. Patrick Parish and School seek to challenge that philosophy, just as all Christian churches and schools do. St. Pat's School is an extension of what we preach in our church - love of God and neighbor. All institutions that stand up for and seek to live by those values--the values Jesus taught us--are noteworthy.

We celebrated Catholic Schools Week in January. During that week, Portland Mayor Jim Barnes presented us with a proclamation, recognizing the contributions that St. Patrick School has made to the community over the past 100 years. By the grace of God, and the determination of the people of Portland, may our school continue to make noteworthy contributions. May we strive to live by the same values that Elizabeth Seton professed--love of God and Neighbor--rather than the sick values of secularism.

## Students Hear Well Known Speaker

In October, Portland Right to Life brought one of the premier speakers in the country on the issue of abortion to St. Patrick School to speak to the high school students. Father Giacomo Capoverdi is one of seven priests based in Staten Island, New York, who work full-time under the guidance of Father Frank Pavone, National Director of Priests for Life. Father Pavone is nationally known and often appears on programs such as Larry King Live, Good Morning America, the O'Reilly Factor and other shows on the major networks.



Portland Right to Life President, Pam Brown, said it was important for the teens to hear the truth about the atrocities of abortion. "Though it has been legal in this country for 34 years, advanced technology and 4-D ultrasounds show indisputable images of babies just days old, and aborting them can no longer be tolerated," she said.

Though Father Capoverdi came to town to be the keynote speaker at the annual Ionia County Right to Life Banquet on Thursday, October 5, he stayed all weekend, and was busy the entire time. In addition to speaking to St. Patrick's students, he also said masses in Lake Odessa and Portland, joined a youth outing at the home of Tom and Sue Kreiner and cooked a special, authentic Italian meal for Pam and Bill Brown and their family.



## From the President's Desk *by Kevin Schrauben*

Thank You! Thank You! Thank You! On behalf of the Father Flohe Foundation, I would like to extend our sincere appreciation to those who contributed to the Foundation over the past year and to those who remembered the Foundation as part of their memorial services or in their estate planning. Because of your generosity, the Father Flohe Foundation was able to provide approximately \$30,000 in tuition assistance this year to students attending St. Patrick School. As we look forward to 2007, we ask that you please continue to consider the Foundation in your planned giving. Your continued support goes a long way to ensure the continuation of Catholic education at St. Patrick's.

### FATHER FLOHE FOUNDATION AT A GLANCE

*(Data through June 30, 2006)*

- Since 1989, the Foundation has donated approximately \$610,000 to the school. Donations are funded from earnings on investments. Contributions to the Foundation are held in perpetuity.
- Since 1988, the Foundation has received gifts from donors in excess of \$1.3 million.
- The Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization. Contributions are tax deductible.
- Each June, the Foundation awards the Father Flohe Education Bell Award to an alumnus of St. Patrick School who in their life has exemplified the high goals and accomplishments that a graduate of St. Pat's can achieve.
- The Foundation awards the Marie Leik Slowinski Scholarship each year to a student who demonstrates good study habits, steady improvement and hard work to achieve.
- The Foundation provides funding for the Shamrock Newsletter.
- Since 2003, The Foundation has hosted the 50-Year Reunion for all St. Patrick graduating classes.

### How To Support the Foundation

Cash Contributions • Life Income Gifts  
Life Insurance • Memorial Gifts  
Bequests

*Contributions can be made by mail, in the Sunday offerings or by dropping by the Parish Office. Please be sure that your envelope is clearly marked Father Flohe Foundation.*

*If you have any questions or would like a supply of contribution envelopes, contact Kevin Schrauben (517) 647-1892.*

### IT'S YOUR TURN, CLASS OF 1957!!

St. Patrick Classes of 1953 through 1956 have had their turn and can tell you what a good time it was. Now it's time to celebrate your 50-year Reunion! We have an excellent celebration being planned in your honor.

The date is Saturday, September 8, 2007. Members of the Father Flohe Foundation will be in touch to update you as to the specific plans.

Hope to see all of you there!

# Spotlight On Two More Distinguished Alumna!

**B**arbara Bauer Hutchings attended St. Patrick's Elementary School, graduating from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade in 1942. After high school graduation from Portland High School in 1946, she attended Aquinas College in Grand Rapids for one year. At that time she took a position with Michigan Bell Telephone. While working there, she met her husband, Gill. They were married in 1949. Inspired with Barbara's faith, Gill converted to Catholicism in 1960.

Barbara fondly recalls her days at St. Patrick's School, although she says that those days were very routine. There were four rooms in the school and the same kids in each class would attend school together for eight years. They were expected

to always walk single file in the hall without talking and they were not to talk in the classroom. School was very orderly and disciplined.

Some of Barbara's favorite pastimes were taking piano lessons from Mrs. Weber and visiting the library. Upon graduation from the eighth grade at St. Patrick's she went



to Portland High School, which she discovered was not as strict. She also worked at Kroger's. Customers would come into the store with their grocery list, the clerk had to go and get each item separately from the store shelf and return to the counter to record it on the grocery bag with the price before retrieving the next item and then total the grocery bill on the grocery bag.

The Christmas program was one of the highlights of the school year. They would sing carols to piano music and Father would come over to the school to hand out candy. There was a May crowning in the spring and it was a great honor to be chosen to crown the Blessed Virgin Mary with a wreath of flowers while the students sang Marian songs. Barbara remembers Sister ringing the school bell for a fire drill and having to climb out of the upstairs school window to slide down a tunnel and it was terrifying. The girls would have to hold down both sides of their dress as they slid down the tunnel.

Her Catholic upbringing, seeded at St. Patrick's, gave her many wonderful memories and brought much fruit to her family life. She and her husband Gill, raised four children who attended Catholic schools in

the Kalamazoo area. She retired from Western Michigan University and resides with Gil in Orlando, Florida.

**O**n November 7, 2006 the American Business Women's Association honored **Jo Ann (Young) Sheehan** as Woman of the Year. Jo Ann is a 1960 graduate of St. Patrick High School.

Jo Ann was born in 1942 in Missouri. Her father was in the armed forces at the time, so her mother brought her to Portland, where Jo Ann's maternal grandparents lived. She graduated from St. Pat's in 1960 and attended Davenport Business School where she received a degree in the secretarial field. Jo Ann worked for the State of Michigan until her retirement in 1997.

In June of 1968, Jo Ann married James Sheehan and they had one daughter, Kathleen Ann. James passed away in 1993 at the age of 54.

In 1986, Jo Ann, who suffers from retinitis pigmentosa was declared legally blind and turned to the Michigan Commission for the Blind for assistance in coping with her impairment. They gave her training in mobility and Braille. Jo Ann also went to Leader Dogs for the Blind and graduated with a Labrador named Sadie, who gave her the opportunity to be more independent. Sadie retired in 2001, after ten years of service and Jo Ann received a new dog, Misty, to take over where Sadie left off.



Jo Ann returned to college part-time in 1989 while continuing to work full time. In 1995 she received the Student of the Year award at Lansing Community College and in 1999, she graduated with an associates degree in business. She obtained her bachelors degree in community service from Sienna Heights University in 2003.

Although she is blind, Jo Ann is very active. Among many other things, she served as the first female president of the Briton Woods Lions Club, volunteers at the American Red Cross and at St. Vincent's Home.

Despite the challenges that life has handed to her, Jo Ann has a fulfilling life full of accomplishments. Congratulations to this very remarkable lady!

# Reunion News

## REUNION REPORTS

The *Class of 1961* celebrated their 45-year reunion in September of 2006 at the Portland Country Club. Twenty classmates (out of a class of 37) gathered for drinks and dinner interspersed with the usual reunion reminiscing. Sharon (Manning) Wright came the furthest, traveling from her home in Denver, Colorado.



It has been 35 years since the *Class of 1971* graduated from St. Pat's. On September 5, 2006, 23 classmates along with spouses gathered to enjoy an evening at the Wagon Wheel Oak Room. There was music from the seventies, plenty of reminiscing and lots of catching up. After dinner everyone enjoyed a lively game of "Game Show Trivia" with Chopper Schrauben as the game show host. Sharon (Gensterblum) Schneider won the top prize which was a set of placemats that were in prime garage sale condition...the very same placemats that were sold in 1971 to earn money for the class' senior trip.



The *Class of 1986* held their 20-year reunion at the Holiday Inn in Lansing on September 16, 2006. Twenty-nine classmates attended the event, traveling from as far away as Georgia and Oklahoma.



Sixteen classmates and their guests from the *Class of 1991* gathered at the Holiday Inn West on October 7th to celebrate their 15 year class reunion. It started out as a tailgate party for the MSU / UM football game and concluded with dinner, drinks, and a trivia game to see who could remember the most winners from the mock elections. Everyone had a good time catching up and reminiscing about old times at St. Patrick's.



## REUNION ALERTS

*Class of 1957* will be the guests of honor at a party hosted for them by the Father Flohe Foundation on September 8, 2007. For additional information, see page 12.

The *Class of 1962* will hold their 45-year reunion on September 29, 2007 at the Wagon Wheel Oak Room. Contact Peg Keilen at (989) 587-6835.

The *Class of 1967*—Jeannine Cross is looking for ideas or volunteers to help. She can be contacted at (517) 626-2286.

*Class of 1977* contact person is Kim Fedewa.

*Class of 1982* will hold their 25-year reunion at the Crowne Plaza in Grand Rapids on September 15, 2007. Call Dave Pline at (517) 647-2681.

*Class of 1987* contact person is Jonda Schrauben, 647-4849.

*Class of 1997* will hold their 10-year reunion on Saturday, May 6, 2007 at the Holiday Inn in Lansing. Contact person is Kim Weller, 647-4236.

*Class of 2002* reunion contact person is Ashley Kliewer, (517) 526-1818.

*Classes of 1972* and *1992* do not have any plans at this time.

## BABY BOOMERS FUEL GROWTH

(continued from page 1)

the staff and students alike. With the old school gone and the new one not quite ready for use, classes were held in various building and neighborhood homes.

The new school opened in the fall of 1951, a thoroughly modern facility, and home to the largest and best gymnasium in the entire area. The state-of-the-art gym was in constant use—by the new Shamrock boys basketball teams, by the Portland Civic Player, by parish groups who served dinners there and appreciated the adjoining kitchen facilities and by the students who regularly flocked there for Friday night dances.

In a past issue of *The Shamrock*, Donna (Snitgen) Sines recalled those events. “We used to have dances after every Friday night basketball game, alternating with Portland High School. We hired DJ’s like Eric O. Furseth. And, it was a challenge for the girls to see who could get more crinoline slips under their skirts.”

Another student of the fifties remembered that Father Flohe usually chaperoned those dances, and that he kept a watchful eye to make sure that boys and girls didn’t snuggle too closely during the slow tunes. “He insisted that he should be able to see a space between the two bodies.” He also enforced a “no shoes on the gym floor” policy, according to the same student. Sock hops were appropriately named!

It took forty years to outgrow the first St. Patrick’s School. It took just ten years to outgrow the new one. By the end of the 1950’s, the classrooms once again

were filled to capacity. “Our family moved to Portland in 1960,” says Kathy (Zimmerman) Schrauben. “There were nine of us, and our parents really wanted us to attend St. Pat’s. But, some of the classes there were so big that there was a waiting list to get in. We attended the public school for a year, waiting for space to be available.”

Once again, St. Pat’s was mirroring what was happening nationwide. Once again, Father Flohe addressed the situation with a building campaign. And, once again, the people of the parish responded. The new addition to the school, which added eight classrooms and a basement cafeteria, opened in 1961.

The 1960’s were a time of social upheaval across the country. Vatican II, which was convened for two years from 1962-64 caused its own upheaval within the church. Thankfully, it took several years for the combined impact of these two forces to show up, and the first half of the sixties continued to be good years for Catholic schools.

Nationwide, Catholic school enrollment reached its peak in 1965. In that year 5.7 million students, an astonishing 12% of the nation’s school-age children were enrolled in Catholic schools. It can be rather surprising to see the degree to which Portland St. Pat’s mirrored the country. The graduating class of 1965 was the largest in school history.

Sr. Joyce Herr was a teacher and principal at St. Pat’s for almost the entire decade of the sixties, and while she didn’t employ the same strict regiment of Father O’Rourke or Father Kohler, she didn’t hesitate to make her Shamrocks toe the mark. Students remember that she was always in the hallways during change of classes; she was in the cafeteria while they ate; and she mingled with them outside during lunch hour, simultaneously holding conversations while watching for too-short skirts, too-long hair and too-much horseplay. Any of these offenses could be a straight ticket to the office!

Times were good at Portland St. Patrick. The school was being staffed by more and more lay people, but the majority of the teachers were still nuns. The priests like Father Malewitz and Father Anderson were also on hand. They taught in the high school and/or helped coach the athletes. The Shamrock athletic program had grown, thanks to men like Unk Schaffer, Herm Schrauben, Sr. and Charles Mathews, who helped form the Athletic Association.

Tuition was low; expectations were high—and things were just about to change dramatically. In the next issue, we’ll see what happened at St. Pat’s during the 70’s, 80’s and 90’s.

# Alumnus Visits Exchange Student in Brazil

## YOUNG BRAZILLIAN WAS IN PORTLAND IN 1969

*Through the years, many St. Patrick's families have hosted exchange students. Some of those students have stayed in contact with their host families, some have not. In the late 1960's, Jake and Lorraine Weller and their family hosted a student from Brazil, named Carlos de Moraes. Today, Carlos is a very successful businessman in Brazil, where he and his wife, Carmen, have four grown children. In October 2005 Pat Weller visited Brazil and spent two weeks with Carlos and his family.*

Carlos and I have never been very good about keeping in touch. He doesn't like to write letters or use the e-mail, so when I do hear from him, it is usually just a short message to say "hi." For the 35 years in between the time he stayed with us and when we finally got serious about contacting each other, we probably had only three letters and two or three phone calls. Carlos has been back in the U.S. many times, but he usually visits the East Coast or California or Miami where one of his sisters lives. He has never been back to Portland. He says, however, he wants to come here sometime to see how the town has changed.

Eighteen months ago I spent two weeks in Brazil with Carlos and his family. I have always heard that the Brazilian people are the friendliest people in the world. Now that I have been there, I believe that to be true.

We stayed the first two days at Ubatuba on the Atlantic coast, where Carlos and Carmen have a beach house on the Bay of For-telaza. We spent two more days in the town of Ilhabela on the island of Sao Sabastiao (Brazil's largest Atlantic island). From there we went to their home in Sao Paulo. (Sao Paulo is the third largest city in the world behind Mexico City and Tokyo.) While we were there, he showed me a lot of the city. We would spend a portion of each day

seeing different things he thought were important, such as monuments, parks, important buildings, etc. as well as the places where he lived, went to school and worked. We also went to his office almost every day, which was fun for me and very enlightening. Carlos is a very successful and important man in Brazil. He is an economist and has worked for the national government from time to time. He's always busy working on big deals with other business people in Brazil and around the world.



Carlos also has a farm about 60 miles outside of Sao Paulo, near the city of Itu. He raises about 1,000 sheep on the farm for sale to restaurants. His goal is to make the operation completely organic so he can get a "green label" for the product. We visited the farm twice and once on the way back, I pointed out a city that we could see in the distance. He said he had a factory there. I don't remember what the factory produced. He owns a restaurant in Sao Paulo that is managed by one of his daughters, who is also the chef

there. Carlos also owns a resort in the northeast of Brazil, about 1,500 miles from Sao Paulo. The name of the resort is Hotel da Pipa ([www.hoteldapipa.com.br](http://www.hoteldapipa.com.br)), I would love to check that place out some time.

I had a wonderful time there. We spent both Sunday evenings with Carmen's family and they took me in like I was one of them. We went to a couple of parties and met lots of very nice people who are intensely interested in the United States. I was treated to a major league soccer game by the team doctor (Carmen's brother) and was very impressed by the passion the fans have for their teams.

While I was there, we looked through the St. Pat's yearbook from 1969 and he remembered lots of kids and teachers. He has a great fondness for Portland and St. Pat's. He has a photo album of pictures he took while he was

here and we looked at them, too.... was I really that skinny? His son and two of his daughters enjoyed seeing the pictures and hearing their dad talk about his visit. One thing that struck me was I never realized how much my parents meant to him. When Carlos first came to Portland he wasn't sure he wanted to stay, but he stuck it out and I believe he is very grateful that he did.

Everyone I met in Brazil helped make this the trip of a lifetime for me. I will go back someday.

# THE SHAMROCK

## GUEST EDITORIAL

### 2001 GRAD BECOMES LAY MISSIONER

I head out for my morning run around 6:00 a.m. and watch as the sun slowly touches the Andes Mountains, illuminating them in golden rays through the freshly pierced clouds. There are fluorescent orange flowers in full bloom, covering trees that I've never before seen. It's another beautiful day in Bolivia.

Several weeks ago I left my home, job and family in Michigan to pursue lay mission work in South America. The decision to join the Salesian Lay Missioners came after endless contemplation, conversations and prayer. The Salesians are an order of religious priests, nuns, brothers and lay persons that are sent all over the world to work mainly with children and young adults. As part of my mission in Okinawa, Bolivia, I will be working with a friend from MSU along with Sister Nora in thirteen communities surrounding Okinawa. There, we will be catechizing both youth and adults, working with youth ministry, tutoring mothers and students, developing food programs and working to provide necessary programs for the people.

I say I 'will be' because I do not actually arrive in Okinawa until mid June. First, I need to learn Spanish. Thus, I am enrolled in 5 1/2 months of language school at the Maryknoll Language Institute in Cochabamba, Bolivia. Here in Cochabamba, I am living with a host family of seven. I am blessed with a mother who cooks amazing Bolivian dishes from

scratch twice a day, every day, a father who likes to throw out random sentences in broken English to make me laugh, three older brothers (one of whom, thankfully, speaks a little English), a sister-in-law and a four month old niece who makes me feel at home and homesick all at once; all of whom live in the bedrooms next to mine. I venture off to class five days a week and endure four hours of nonstop Spanish. The remainder of the day is spent studying, sleeping, attending Mass and extra long meals at the dinner table.

Prior to arriving in Bolivia, I was warned of the culture shock that was inevitably going to hit. Each missioner experiences it at different times and to different degrees. After being here for three weeks, I can definitely affirm this statement. Trying to learn a new language is literally humbling yourself to the communication skills of a two year old child. Not only are you unable to understand simple conversations without having words repeated continuously at a completely unnatural speed but you also are unable to form a logical sentence in less than two minutes if at all! Doing the simplest tasks, such as buying a bottle of water, taking a cab or ordering food become strenuous tasks that exhaust the mind, leaving you completely spent at the day's end. None the less, after three weeks of being completely immersed in the Spanish language and Bolivian culture, I have seen dramatic improvements

in my speaking and comprehension. Although I kick myself constantly for not having taken Spanish at MSU, I am eternally grateful for those basic years in high school! Although I didn't realize it at the time, the basic verb conjugations and sentence structure I learned from Ms. Scrivener have been a tremendous aid in speeding this learning process along.

Although I am often frustrated and question my abilities, the mountains, the people and the poverty are constant reminders and confirmations that I did make the right decision in coming here.

Often times while sitting with my host family at dinner I have to ask myself, "how is this family any different than my family back home?" I think it is common for us to think of people living in third world countries as very different from ourselves. When another language is spoken, other customs are followed or culture is present, it's easy for one to dismiss the people entirely on account of a lack of understanding. Again, I'm reminded daily as my host father makes gaga noises at his granddaughter, my host brothers poke fun at each other and my host mother tries to push more food onto my plate that differences may be all we see at first but come a little closer and it's difficult to tell the Pung family in Portland from the Gamarra family in Bolivia.

Corie Pung, 2001

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Website: www.portlandstpats.org or  
www.stpatrickportland.com  
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Sue (Stiffler) VanLente	647-7483
Kathy (Zimmerman) Schrauben	647-7420
Cindy (Stiffler) Selden	647-4694
Jan (Schrauben) Simon	647-2028
Judy (Pung) Fleischer	647-5180
Sue (Gross) Fox	647-6674
Anne (Brown) Russman	647-4094
Nancy (Bauer) Ingram	

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...Please make the following change to the address file:

...Please add the following name to The Shamrock mailing list:

...Information on a Lost Sheep:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grad. Year \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**ATTENTION PARENTS:** If your adult children have established permanent addresses, but their issues of The Shamrock are still coming to your house, please contact us with their new information. See contact information in the box on the left, or fill out this form and drop it in the collection basket in an envelope, clearly marked SHAMROCK NEWS-LETTER.

**If you are planning a wedding or reunion, or have another reason for needing a list of your classmates, contact Jan at the Parish Office Building (517-647-6505) or [stpats@cablespeed.com](mailto:stpats@cablespeed.com).**