



# THE SHAMROCK

ST. PATRICK PARISH & ALUMNI NEWS

VOL. 26 No. 2 SPRING 2013

## Proud To Be an Altar Server

by Marin Pline (Class of 2013)

When I was a small child, going to Mass wasn't the most exciting activity to participate in. There were instances, though, in which my attention was caught and my focus was strong. The priest would approach the ambo before Mass even began and announce, "We need two more altar servers." It sounds strange, but it seemed to happen a lot. My eyes would quickly scan the congregation, searching for the brave "big kids" that would answer the call to serve. I looked up to these older members of the Church and prayed that one day I could wear those cool white robe-like things. About five years later, my dream was fulfilled and ever since then my life has changed, both as a young adult and as a Catholic.

Signing up for altar server training in fifth grade was a no-brainer, but I admit I was not expecting the factual overload I received, along with homework. Ten other class-

mates also signed up for the training; seven years later, five seniors remain, including one who joined the "ranks" a year later. The commitment was big, the job had a lot of details, and the expectations were high, seeing as we were taught by the deacon himself. Since then I've served well over one hundred and fifty Masses (and counting). The learning hasn't stopped and the experience keeps getting better.



Brittini Wilcox and Allison Hodge assist Deacon Don during a school Mass.

As previously mentioned, Deacon Don trains the altar servers, teaching us a plethora of facts related to altar serving duties and Church history. I learned that those "robes" are actually called albs, a term coming from the Latin for "white." It was also important to remember that even if it looks like pink, it isn't; it is rose. When I was trained, there were three possible positions for serving. It was important to be familiar with the order

### Restore & Renew



St. Patrick Parish is at the beginning of a very crucial campaign to raise the needed funds for restoring and renewing our parish facilities. The economic downturn of 2008 hit the parish in the same way that it hit a lot of families---necessitating that some important maintenance and projects be put on hold. Now, it's time to get started—to restore and renew our beautiful buildings.

During the last capital campaign to replace the boiler, one thing that we heard over and over was that too much money was spent on unnecessary mailings. We heard that message loud and clear, so this time we will keep the mailings to a bare minimum. That's why The Shamrock is being used to spread the message! The newsletter is printed for us at no charge by the diocesan printing office.

Parishioners will find capital campaign information on pages 11-13. Non-parishioners are welcome to read it too, for the information it includes, but you are not being solicited for donations.

However, there is one thing that every reader can do—pray for the success of this campaign. We are blessed at St. Pat's to have the facilities available to us which we use every day, and are grateful to the people who came before us for their sacrifices. Please pray that our parishioners will embrace the same sacrifice to demonstrate our gratitude for what we've been given.

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# Ich Bin Ein Berliner

by Charles Leik (Class of 1961)

In 1956, President Eisenhower proposed a peaceful solution for a war-ravaged world. That solution? Give everyday citizens of different countries the opportunity to meet and get to know each other, and the result will be understanding, friendship, and lasting peace. Out of this vision came the "People to People" movement. Starting with the first traveling delegation in the early 1960s, People to People Ambassador Programs began to break down cultural barriers by providing short-term travel opportunities with the personal, behind-the-scenes access that Eisenhower envisioned.

It was the summer between his sophomore and junior years at Aquinas College when Charles Leik became an ambassador in the program.

It was June 1963 when I awoke to a pleasant June breeze coming through an open window and fluttering the curtains. It took a moment to realize that I was the guest of Herr and Frau Rauschenbach in a divided Berlin—a city on the front line in the chilliest years of the Cold War. It was only two years earlier that the Soviet client state of East Germany had constructed the infamous Wall to prevent their citizens from escaping to the West.

I had arrived at Brussels from New York two days earlier after a charter flight (my first ever) in a Boeing 707. I traveled by bus through West Germany and then across 100-miles of East Germany to the besieged city of Berlin that was divided into four zones—Russian, American, British and French—that were intended to demonstrate the solidarity of the WWII allies in the Nazi capital.

I was in Berlin under the auspices of People-to-People whose titular head was General Eisenhower and which was devoted to increasing international understanding. The Rauschenbach's son Thomas had picked me up the previous evening and each young American ambassador of goodwill was paired with a German host family. I would be in Berlin for a week and then travel on my own throughout Europe for eight weeks. Another participant, Ed Novak of Nebraska and I did just that by hitching through nine countries that summer. But, that's another story.

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# Retiree's Outdoor Hobbies Touch Many Lives

When Diane Huhn was cooking a meal for the families of Marines last summer, and working with a limited budget, she knew who to call for help. Diane phoned Tony Bennett (1961) and asked if he had any extra vegetables that she could pick from his garden to use for salads and trays. Tony responded, like he always does, "Come on out and help yourself!"

Since his retirement from the State of Michigan in 1997, Tony's acreage and generosity have become well-known in the Portland/Ionia area. His garden covers three acres, and Tony works 8-10 hours a day, weeding, watering and keeping out the critters. The bountiful harvest of vegetables is shared with family and friends as well as the local food bank. When the gourds, pumpkins, and decorative corn are ready in the fall, they go to daycare facilities, scout troops and schools to use in craft projects or for decoration. Every year he says that he's going to cut back—but so far he hasn't.

When November arrives and the garden is finished, you would think that Tony would be ready for a rest. Instead, he emerges himself in another hobby, one which takes six weeks of preparation and leads to four weeks of holiday joy. Tony and his wife Judy cover their yard and adjacent fields with a Christmas display that attracts hundreds of viewers. It takes 400 extension cords which are fed from 18 outdoor receptacles to light the scene: 75,000 lights and 200 illuminated figurines. The lights are strung through trees, along fences, around his pond, and outlining two old wagons. The figurines are grouped into scenes which include the nativity scene, a choir of angels, toy soldiers, dozens of lighted Santas, elves, and snowmen. The lights are on every day in December from 5:00-11:00 p.m. Nearly every evening, the narrow country road on which they live is filled with bumper-to-bumper traffic, as people come from miles around to marvel at the display.

Tony believes that the secret to enjoying retirement is to keep busy, and he certainly does.

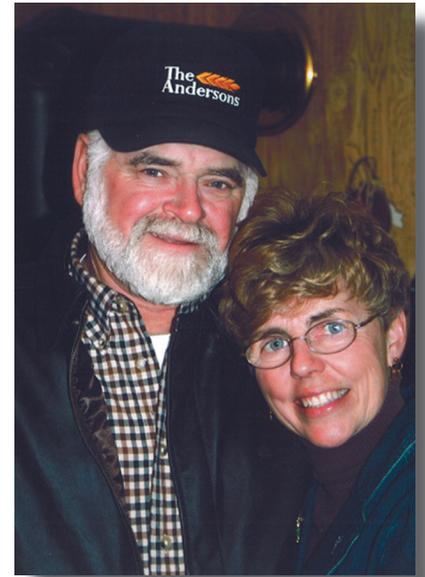


Tony's Broom Corn grows 9-10 feet tall. It is one of nearly three dozen vegetable crops that he plants.

# In The Spotlight

## Tom and Nancy Thelen

by Sue Van Lente



*Over the past decade or more, I fell into the habit of attending the same Mass and sitting in the same pew every Sunday. I didn't know the family who always sat in front of me, but from my vantage point, I watched them, shook hands with them, began to say hello to them in places other than church, and finally felt like I got to know them a little. Then last year, when we ended up in the same "small prayer group" after the Parish Mission, I found out that I didn't really know Tom and Nancy Thelen at all. Their lives are so rich and so fascinating. They have so many stories to tell—stories that reveal a faith-filled life that is an inspiration to everyone who meets them.*

Nancy Gibbs was a city girl, who grew up in Lansing and graduated from O'Rafferty High School. Nancy loved spending time at her Grandma Dilly's home in Mulliken because she discovered at an early age that she was really a country girl at heart.

When they visited their grandmother, Nancy and her sister were drawn to the neighbors' farm where there were horses. Most young girls go through a stage of horse-love, but for Nancy, this wasn't a temporary infatuation; horses would play a role in her life for decades to come.

During her senior year of high school, visits to the farm became even more interesting, because the farmer's nephew and his friends were often there as well. Tom Thelen was already out of school, and while he had a full-time job at Fisher Body, his second job was at his Uncle Paul's farm. Tom also loved horses and enjoyed taking his friends from the factory to the farm to go horseback riding. It was the most natural thing in the world for the city girls to join that group of riders.

In the fall of 1967, both Tom and Nancy were in the wedding party of two of their friends, and soon after, they began making wedding plans of their own. Tom purchased a 20-acre farm on Staley Road, a few miles north of Portland. They spent the summer of 1968 fixing up the house, married in September, and began their life together. Forty-five years later, four children and fourteen grandchildren later, the Thelens still live in the same house on the farm which has been expanded with additional acreage and buildings. The farm is known as Riverview Dairy.

While they have been full-time farmers their entire married life, both Tom and Nancy also held other jobs, both full and part time, to make ends meet. Oftentimes it was still necessary to sell cattle to help with the cost of tuition so that

their children could attend a Catholic school.

Though Tom and Nancy are both officially retired now, they are anything but still. In addition to the work she does on the farm, caring for the calves, Nancy acquired a part-time job that has given her a brush with fame.

Through her sister Judy, who lives in Colorado, Nancy was introduced to nationally known horseman, Chris Cox, whose *Chris Cox Horsemanship* show airs on the RFD network three times a week. Nancy is part of the entourage that accompanies Chris as he travels to different areas of the country putting on clinics know as Tour Stops.

Nancy also sings, and a few years ago picked up a guitar and began taking lessons. Now, her guitar is never far away. In fact, when she flies, the guitar is her carry-on. Nancy's voice—she talks as fast as she moves—is such an integral part of who she is, that when she was struck by a rare neuropathic disorder known as trigeminal neuralgia a few years ago, it was a devastating blow. For several months Nancy could not sing, and could barely talk. Fortunately, the disease went into remission, but it flares up now and then, and will for the rest of her life.

Nancy doesn't allow the disorder to keep her from doing all of the things she loves. Though she experiences excruciating pain with little or no warning, she slows down a little until it passes, then is back to living life to the fullest.

She thinks nothing of hooking a horse trailer to her pickup and heading cross country to Colorado, often accompanied by a grandchild.

In between trips, she loves pampering the workers who are employed at the farm—treating them to hot McDonalds coffee every morning and cooking them special meals.

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# What's Happening?

## BIRTHS

Dan and Melinda (Simon, 1997) Graham welcomed a son, Daniel Eugene Jr., on 12-12-12! He joins sister, Loisa Linda Ann, "Lola." This is the thirteenth grandchild for the proud Papa Mike Simon.

Glenn (2003) & Malena Schrauben had a son, Makai Louis, born on January 2, 2013. The family resides in Portage.

Kelly (Schrauben 2001) and Justin Mattila had a son, Owen Matthew, born on February 9, 2013. The family resides in Pewamo.

To Charlie and Emily Burns, a daughter Morgan Elizabeth on October 26, 2012. She joins sisters Libby, 5, and Reese, 2.

To Andy and Erin Martin a daughter, Audrey Elizabeth on January 24, 2013. She joins sister, Olivia, 3.

To Burt (1995) and Stacy Brown a son, Arlo Burton on September 25, 2012. He joins sister Annabelle, 5 and brother Ethan, 3.

To Josh and Gina (Solgat, 2001) Huhn of Pewamo a son, Zachary Robert on May 16, 2012. He joins brothers Bradley, 5 and Will, 4.

To Jason (2001) and Lindsay Solgat of Sunfield a daughter Savannah Leigh on January 7, 2013. She joins brother Blake, 6 and sister Karleigh, 2.

To Chris (Huhn, 1993) and Craig Forist a son, Mason David on January 5, 2013. He joins sisters Jamelyn and Alaina.

To Mike and Angela (Fox, 1998) Kolp a son Colton Michael on September 6, 2012. He joins sister Caelyn, 21 months.

To Jeff and Ellie Thelen of Pewamo, a son Camden James on October 30, 2012. He joins brothers Landon 8, Nathan, 6, Claire, 4, and Loren, 2.

## WEDDINGS

Heather Wieber (2007) and Dennis Good-enough were married July 7, 2012, at St. Patrick Church.

Scott Wieber (2005) and Katie Kreiner were married September 15, 2012, at St. Patrick Church. They reside in Middleville, MI.

Michael & Jaci (Hamberg, 1993) McCracken were married Sept 14, 2012 in Traverse City.

## ENGAGEMENTS

Danny Hoppes (2008) and Katelyn Scheurer will be married on June 29, 2013 at St. Patrick Church.

## ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to Ambrose and Kathy Fox who celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on September 1, 2012. Their family hosted a celebration in their honor, beginning with a mass in their intention, followed by a dinner and an open house reception on September 9th.

Congratulations to Dave and JoAnn Spitzley of Mulliken who celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on January 14, 2013.

## OTHER HAPPENINGS

Glenn J. Simon (1986) has been named vice president of Lansing-based Granger Construction Company. Glenn has worked for Granger since 1995. He and his wife, Cathy (Snitgen, 1986) live in Westphalia and are parents of five children.

Marvin Schafer turned 90 on December 4, 2012. He and his family attended Mass at St. Patrick Church followed by a dinner.

Vearyl Schrauben turned 90 in November. An open house celebration was held in her honor at the K of C Hall in Portland.

## IN MEMORY OF

Sister de Porres Tatro, CSJ entered eternal life on September 8, 2012. Ruth Tatro was born in Bay City, Michigan, on June 1, 1920, the daughter of Samuel and Olive (Brancheau) Tatro. She received the name Sister dePorres at her reception into the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph on January 8, 1940. She took her final vows on January 9, 1945. She taught in several places in Kalamazoo, Detroit, and Portland, Michigan, but lost her heart to St. Francis Home in Detroit where she spent 38 years. Before retiring to Fontbonne in 2003 she lived with her sister in Mount Morris, Michigan and assisted with her needs. Her ministerial experiences spanning 50 years are a testimony to her dedication and flexibility. When she moved to Fontbonne Manor, Sister dePorres continued her ministry in a variety of ways. During the summer months she especially enjoyed spending hours on the campus cutting the grass. She took great pride in keeping the cemetery well-manicured. Sister dePorres

was a gracious, cheerful, generous woman who possessed a great sense of humor and a wit to match. At the very core of her life was her desire for prayer rooted in a loving God and she nurtured this desire all her life. Her unwavering trust in God and her gift of self are reflected in her favorite hymn, "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace".

Thomas John Kozachik, age 51, of Ionia, passed away unexpectedly September 14, 2012. He was the son of Dr. Martin J. and Mary Ann (Nickels) Kozachik. He graduated from Portland High School in 1978 then went on to graduate from Western Michigan University in 1983. Thomas loved to hunt and fish and was an avid fan of MSU. He worked for the Michigan Department of Corrections in Ionia for 26 years and retired in December 2011. Thomas is survived by brothers and sisters, Dr. Jean Kozachik of Traverse City, Kenneth (Barbara) Kozachik of Kentwood, Carol Delaney of Grand Rapids, David Kozachik of Hudsonville, Phillip Kozachik of Traverse City, and Eileen Cannon of Portland, as well as many nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his parents and sister-in-law Gerri Lynn Kozachik.

Lawrence Hoffman, age 85, passed away on Friday, October 5, 2012. He was the son of Gus and Vera (Houghton) Hoffman. Lawrence retired from the Department of Corrections after 32 years of service. He was a skilled carpenter and wood worker. He enjoyed hunting, trapping, fishing, golfing, snowmobiling, going to the cabin, bowling, and Sunday morning coffee, doughnuts, and euchre with his family. Lawrence was a veteran of the U.S. Navy, serving at the end of World War II. On October 29, 1949 he married Laurine Huhn, and she preceded him in death on May 19, 2006. His brother, Vernon Hoffman also preceded him in death. Surviving are his children, Neal (Colleen) Hoffman of Pewamo, William (Sharon) Hoffman of Portland, Barry (Lu) Hoffman of Portland, Barbara (Gary) Winowiecki of Sault Ste. Marie, Gregory (Karen) Hoffman of St. Johns, Christine (Jim) Surdenik of St. Johns, Constance (Christopher) Brown of Portland, Diana (Mark) Simon of Portland, Gayle (Tony) Thelen of Portland, and Lisa Hoffman of Grand Blanc; 33 grandchildren; 13 great grandchildren; sister-in-laws, Ruth Huhn and Elizabeth Huhn of Portland; numerous nieces and nephews.

Virginia I. Swistara, age 90, passed away on Wednesday, October 31, 2012. Virginia was a member of St. Patrick Catholic Church and enjoyed playing cards with friends and neighbors. She was preceded in death by her husband, Leo and son-in-law, Jeff Brown. Sur-

living are her daughter, Susan Ann Brown of Portland and her son, Gary (Anita) Swistara of Lansing; three grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Elizabeth Ann "Betsy" Sykes, age 61, of Midland, MI passed away on Wednesday, October 31, 2012 after a long illness. She was born in Lansing, MI to Benjamin T. Sykes Jr. and Dorothy (Karnath) Sykes. Betsy was raised by Guardians, Nick A. and Rosa Smith and foster parents, Ron and Gen Lehman of Portland. She graduated from St. Patrick High School, Class of 1969. She served with the U.S. Air Force in Germany, then worked for several companies during her lifetime. She is survived by her sister Linda (Ed) Smith of Fowler, MI, several nieces and nephews, brother-in-law Howard "Howdie" Graft and life long family friend Annette Fetzer. She was preceded in death by her parents, grandparents, Ben and Della Sykes, brother Leon (Butch) Sykes, sister Carol Graft and former husband Phillip Stump.

Medford E. Bailey, age 80, of Lyons, MI passed away on Thursday, November 15, 2012. He was born in Huntington, West Virginia the son of Delmer and Mabel (Hill) Bailey. Medford was a U.S. Navy Veteran and Life Member of the Portland V.F.W. Post #4090. He was a retired long time area contractor. He loved his family, animals, and living and boating on the Grand River. Preceding him in death were his parents; brother, Donald Bailey; sisters, Donalta Webb and Texa Miller. Surviving are his wife of 61 years, Monica; children, Edward (Susan) Bailey, Richard Bailey, and Sandra (Keith) Huhn; four grandchildren; four great grandchildren; and brothers, William Boyd (Janet) Bailey and Clarence (Virginia) Bailey.

Leo Louis Rockey, age 82, passed away on Tuesday, December 4, 2012. He was born in Pewamo, MI the son of Joseph and Elizabeth (Tannery) Rockey. Mr. Rockey was a member of the Portland V.F.W. Post #4090, and was a veteran of the U.S. Army, serving during the Korean War. Leo farmed his whole life, loved being on his tractor or Gator in the field, and was retired from General Motors. Preceding him in death were his parents; wife, Caroline in 2007; siblings, Louis, Margaret, Dorothy, John, Raymond, Robert, and Julia Marie. Surviving are his children, Carol (William) Mitchell, Karen (Tom) Graft, Bob (Bonnie) Rockey, Ann (Junior) Miller, Dan (Jessica) Rockey, Barb (Steve) Wilcox, Kathy Rockey, and Lisa (Chad) Barker; 30 grandchildren; 41 great grandchildren; siblings, Harold (Judy) Rockey and Joan Rockey; sister-in-law, Revella Smith; several nieces and nephews. For those desiring, memorial contributions may be made to the Portland V.F.W. Post #4090, or to the St. Patrick Boiler Fund.

Frances E. Pohl, age 87, passed away on Wednesday, December 12, 2012. She was

born in Westphalia, MI the daughter of Mathias and Bertha (Schafer) Schueller. Mrs. Pohl was a member of the V.F.W. Ladies Auxiliary. Frances had a strong belief in her faith. She loved euchre, bingo, tending her roses, and spending time with her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Frances married Leon Pohl on October 29, 1946 and he preceded her in death in 1982. Also preceding her in death were her daughters, Nancy, Barbara, and Linda; son-in-law, Michael; sisters, Rose Thelen and Alma Thelen; brothers, Mathias Jr. and Joseph Schueller; granddaughter, Peggy Sue. Surviving are her children, David (special friend, Sheila) Pohl, Jane Honsowitz, Diane (Bob) Redick, Deb (Doug) Schneider, and Steve (special friend, Dixie) Pohl; 22 grandchildren; 23 great grandchildren; sons-in-law, George Chickering and Art Clark; sister-in-law, Sally Schueller; special friends, Norma, Connie, Rosie, Barb, Jim and Doreen. For those desiring, memorial contributions may be made to the St. Francis Retreat House, in memory of Frances.

Wayne Peter Thelen, age 60, passed away peacefully on December 25, 2012 at home after a long courageous battle with prostate cancer. Christmas Day, the most glorious day was Wayne's favorite holiday. He was the son of Robert and Viola (Blundy) Thelen. Wayne retired in July 2012 from the Delta Township Utility Department after 26 years of service. He loved hunting, horseback riding, and driving his team of ponies in the Portland and Eagle parades. Wayne especially loved spending time with his family and friends at their property up north near Marion, MI, horseback riding, camping, or just sitting around the campfire at home down by his pond. He loved life, and mostly, his family. Preceding him in death were his parents, Robert and Viola Thelen; brother, David Thelen; nephew, Brian Thelen; brother-in-law, David Martin; sister-in-law, Patricia Thelen. Wayne is survived by the love of his life and soul mate of 24 years, Deb (Wcislo) Thelen of Portland; loving daughters, Nicole (special friend Josh Gardner) Thelen of Portland, Tracy (Tom) Wirth of St. Johns, and Shannah (fiance Jerry Beach) of Bay City; grandchildren, Carly and Nolan Wirth of St. Johns; siblings, Jan Getzen of East Lansing, Robert (Arlene) Thelen of Portland, Marlene (Wayne) Dick of Lyons, Judy Martin of Portland, Donald Thelen of Portland, Mary Baker of Battle Creek, and Gail (Richard) Hill of Lenox; numerous loving nieces, nephews, and cousins; in-laws John and Patricia Wcislo of Portland; sister-in-law, Donna (John) Abbate of Punta Gorda, FL; brother-in-law, John (Bethany) Wcislo of Wichita, KS.

Donna J. Jenkins, age 88, passed away on Thursday, December 27, 2012. She was born in Ypsilanti, MI the daughter of Edward and Virgil (Merrill) Yeomans. Mrs. Jenkins was involved with the D.D.A., Portland Rivertrail De-

velopment, and the Chamber of Commerce. Donna loved playing Scrabble, traveling, her flower garden, casino trips, lighthouses, Lake Michigan sunsets, and spending time with her huge family. She was active in newspaper work, particularly advertising and writing "Bits & Pieces" for the R & O; owned a lingerie business; and enjoyed trips to the Holy Land, Hawaii, and several other states. Donna celebrated life on a daily basis, and never turned down an invitation to go on a new adventure. Preceding her in death were her parents; husband, John Jenkins. Surviving are her children, John (Marilyn), Monte (Marylyn), Char (Ed), Val, Barb (Dave), Steve (Cristy), Dore (Jeff), Brian (Joanne), David (Gina), Eric, and Monica (Dave); 31 grandchildren; 42 great grandchildren; 8 great great grandchildren; and many special friends.

Trent Roger Bengel, age 14, surrounded by his family went home to celebrate eternal life with Jesus on January 12, 2013 after a 3-year courageous battle with brain cancer. Trent attended St. Mary's Catholic School, Westphalia, Michigan, then Pewamo-Westphalia Junior High School. Trent had a personality and a smile that was one of a kind. He was caring to everyone with whom he came into contact, whether you were young or old and was ALWAYS able to make you smile and feel good. On January 2, 2010 we found out Trent had a brain tumor. He never doubted his faith through all his scans, surgeries, treatments, radiation or hospital stays. Many times God used Trent's life to reveal his miraculous powers. Preceding Trent in death were his Godmother, Donna Heckman. Surviving are his parents, Randy and Terri (Boos) Bengel; sisters, Brooke and Alexia Bengel; grandparents, Don and Barb Boos, and Rich and Alice Bengel; aunt, Shelley (Dan) Fox; uncles, Pat Heckman, Rick (Tammy) Bengel, Rusty (Julie) Bengel, Godfather Roger (Genny) Bengel, Ryan (fiancee, Kerri) Bengel, and Reggie (Holly) Bengel; many cousins and friends.

Donald J. Remboski, Sr., age 79, beloved husband, father and grandfather passed away on Sunday, January 13, 2013. He was the son of Felix and Anna Remboski. Don was a resident of Portland for 46 years residing on the scenic and tranquil Grand River, and he was a "do it yourself" type of man. Don was a veteran of the U.S. Army and with the Army Corp. of Engineers, and he was decorated with the Good Conduct Medal. He worked as a Manufacturing Engineer at the Chrysler Corporation for 46 years. Surviving are his wife of 56 years, Susan (Kress); children, Donald (Barbara) Remboski, Jr of Ann Arbor, Stephen (Cherie) Remboski of Los Angeles, CA, Rita (Michael) Fujimagari of New Bern, NC, and Thomas (Linda) Remboski of Portland; five grandchildren; brother, Charles Remboski of Dearborn, MI; sister-in-law,

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# Exchange Student Program: A Life-Changing Experience

by Eva Pung, St. Patrick Parent

In July of 2010, I was eating lunch at work when my phone rang. When I answered the phone it was Mr. Hodge, who asked me a question that has changed our lives and set us on an adventure we would have never volunteered for. Mr. Hodge asked me if our family would take an exchange student from Germany for the upcoming school year.

My first question was, "Why us?" He said, "I asked the volleyball girls at practice last night who they thought would be a good family to take an exchange student. They all agreed that Tyler Pung's family would be a great family to host."

## STIC Team Makes a Difference

Some of the best things about St. Pat's High School are the traditions and programs that have endured from its early days. These are the glue that bind together the current students and all other students who have ever passed through the doors.

What we oftentimes give little thought to is how and when each of those programs or traditions began. Each of them was the brainchild of someone at some point in time, and the fact that they are still in existence speaks of their value.



Last year a new program was instituted at the school which will undoubtedly be one that is long-lasting and important in the lives of the current and future students. The program, known as STIC, is still in its infancy but has already accomplished more than its founders envisioned.

STIC is an acronym for Spiritual Teens in Charge/Christ and the members of the STIC team provide campus ministry for the staff and student body. Among the things that they do: organize and lead all school prayer services, create

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Left to right: Noah and Tyler Pung with exchange students Nicholas (from Germany) and Tom (from China).

I had no idea they knew us so well, but they were right. We are now in our third year of hosting exchange students.

Our first student, Nicholas from Germany, came in August of 2010. He was a wonderful addition to our family. Our sons, Tyler and Noah, couldn't wait to show Nicholas the school and church and to introduce him to all their friends. Nicholas fit in perfectly. He did well in school, had many friends, and loved the high school sports. The class of 2012 did a fantastic job of accepting him and showing him our American ways. The boys even took him shopping on Black Friday, leaving our house at 3:00 a.m. for a true American adventure. When Nicholas came home at 10:00 a.m. all he could say was, "You crazy Americans!"

When it was time for Nicholas to leave in June, his fam-

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# SPS School Board: First Year Provides Opportunities for Growth

by Jen Meredith, School Board President

This has been an extremely exciting and productive year for the SPS School Board. As you may recall, the School Board (formerly the School Commission) was installed in June and immediately got down to business by establishing standing committees, each of which is focusing on one or more school board objectives.

- **Strategic Planning Committee**, co-led by Keelie Honsowitz and Mike Russman, is working collaboratively with other parish committees to develop the short and long-term strategic plan for the school including technology and institutional/facilities advancement.

- **Policy Committee**, co-led by Jill Scheurer and Dr. Bruce Beachnau, in collaboration with Athletic Director, Pat Russman, is developing a standardized athletic policy handbook similar to the student policy handbook.

- **Marketing Committee**, co-led by Nikki Brown and Sue VanLente, under the direction of the diocese is refining our marketing and communications plan to attract new students from the surrounding areas, identify and improve retention strategies, and maintain our website which is an excellent marketing tool on its own.

- **Finance Committee**, co-led by Tammy Bengel and Nancy Wohlscheid, is consulting with the parish Finance

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## What's New With the PTO?

- The PTO has launched its own website, which can be accessed by going to the school website, [www.portlandstpats.com](http://www.portlandstpats.com) and clicking on the Parent Involvement tab. The website contains a full directory of information about the PTO, including up-to-the-minute information for officers, classroom reps, and committee members. You'll also find meeting schedules, minutes from past meetings, links to sign up for volunteer opportunities and much, much more.

- In addition to the new website, the PTO is now using [www.signupgenius.com](http://www.signupgenius.com) to allow volunteers to sign up online. This allows people to look at the available time slots, at their convenience, when they want to help out with events.

- The PTO hosted their second annual Meet/Mingle/Movie Day in February and also brought in renowned author, Rhonda Gowler Greene who has published over 20 children's books.



by Athletic Association President Dan Lawless

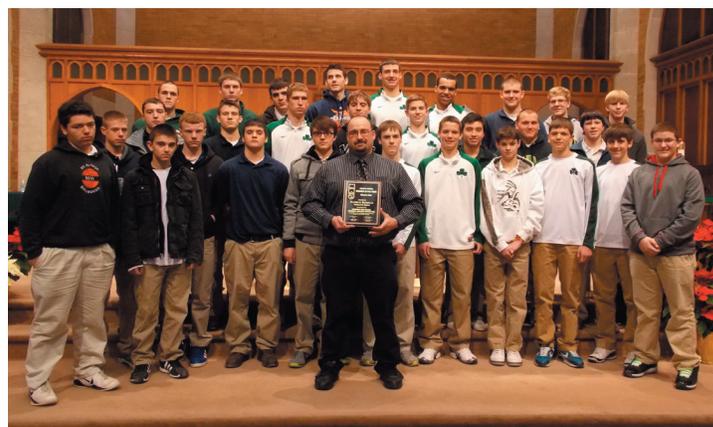
- When Athletic Director Pat Russman suggested that St. Pat's move to an 8-man league for football in the fall of 2012, he was fairly certain that the Shamrocks would find it to be a good fit and be successful there.

Pat was exactly right, for the Shamrocks had an undefeated regular season, qualified for the state tournaments and made it to within one game of the state finals. Their only loss was a heart-breaking loss in double-overtime to Deckerville, the eventual state champs.

"This was big for us, considering where we came from the past few years," said senior quarterback Collin Lay. "We fell a little bit short of our ultimate goal, but we really had a great season and a lot of fun. Hopefully, this will get the younger students excited about football again for the years to come."

The Shamrocks will play their first game of the 2013 season at Engadine in the upper peninsula on Thursday, August 29.

- St. Patrick football coach, Pat Russman was named Division 9 Regional Coach of the Year by the Michigan High School Football Coaches Association.



Division 9 Regional Coach of the Year Pat Russman and his team.

- St. Patrick girls basketball coach, Al Schrauben, was one of 22 high school coaches from across the country to be selected as 2012 Coach of the Year by the National Federation of State High School Associations Coaches Association. The NFHS honors coaches in the top girls/boys sports (by participation numbers).

## PROUD TO BE AN ALTAR SERVER

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

of the Mass because at each service I could be responsible for a different role. Sitting before an entire watching congregation, my focus was drawn at all times, listening for cues to act and avoiding a mistake that everyone would be sure to see. This sharp focus (and the front row seat) led to better comprehension of Scripture and the Eucharist, something that is helpful to a maturing young Catholic.

Altar serving evokes a sense of responsibility and leadership in the few youth who choose to step up in faith. As an eighth grade "Guardian Server," I was asked by Deacon Don to help train the incoming "First Year Servers." I was able to pass my knowledge on to a younger group, teaching by example the proper techniques for serving. Having brought up four successful classes of new servers, I hope to keep the legacy of elite servers at St. Patrick Parish going and going for years after I graduate this spring.

Every year during training, the older servers are asked the important question of "Why do you choose to serve?" While some joke about getting to go to Cedar Point every other year, my answer has a serious note. I enjoy the feeling of being a role model for younger members of the

parish, just as the altar servers many years ago were for me. I suppose everyone is entitled to their own opinion on the topic. One "Prefect Server" explains that she chooses to serve because she likes to be close to the Mass as it makes her feel important and keeps her attention. As I recently discussed altar serving with Samantha Teachworth, a fifth grader considering signing up for training, she said, "I think it's great that the servers get first dibs on the Eucharist." Laughing, I replied, "The padded chair isn't too bad either."

Over the course of my seven years of altar serving, I have had the chance to meet some great people. The sacristans are always in a good mood no matter how early it is, and they always take time out of their preparation period to ask us how we are doing and they are sure to tell us to have a good day once Mass has ended. Father Larry and Deacon Don maintain a serious attitude about the service, but frequently they joke with the servers, lightening the atmosphere with a good sense of humor. But what is really spectacular is the one-on-one interaction with visiting priests. Every priest is unique, and meeting and celebrating Mass with a different one every now and then opens my eyes to the beauty of the Eucharist, as each performs the same actions in his own way. After altar serving three consecutive weeks with Father Weber in

August, he not only remembered my name, but complimented me on my skill and dedication as a server. It is moments like these that push me to be the best altar server I can possibly be.

Finally, it is a joy to altar serve because the atmosphere is one that boosts self-confidence. The parish's reaction when the servers are thanked always makes me blush. I feel respected and appreciated--- feelings that teenagers don't always experience. Deacon Don has a great system for awarding the servers based on service, giving us special medallions to be worn during Mass as a physical representation of all our hard work. The continuous faith-building provides altar servers with knowledge and experience to teach the congregation the special aspects of the Mass. With each changing season and the recent release of the new Roman Missal, the altar servers become familiar with differences and try to show the parish by example how to fully participate. We know everyone is watching, so it's important to remember to be on our best behavior, that basic necessity all kids need to be reminded to do for success in the future.

As a ten year old, I admit I didn't expect to serve through my senior year. Looking back now, I can't imagine ever giving it up. To think that in a few short months it will all be over is difficult to ponder, as altar serving has become part of my life. In seven years I have seen new servers come and old servers go; both of my siblings have become servers; I have been to Cedar Point three times; I have received a bronze and a silver Jerusalem Cross medallion (lovingly called waffles by all of the servers); and I have learned more Church vocabulary than I know what to do with. Letting it all go will be hard, but the memories and accomplishments will surely last a lifetime.



## STIC TEAM

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

and show videos (both serious and funny) to help educate and inspire, use music to share their faith, and give witness to their classmates.

One of the highlights of their first year was when they organized and took charge of a retreat for middle school students from St. Pat's and Ionia Ss. Peter and Paul. The retreat focused on seeing themselves in God's image, as He created them, and included a time of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

Students who attended the retreat were fulfilled and renewed, as evidenced by their words of gratitude when it ended. The retreat received such good reviews that this year two additional Catholic middle schools, Pewamo St. Joseph and Greenville St. Charles will attend the 2nd Annual STIC retreat.

Mr. Hodge initiated the campus ministry team by asking teachers Mary Lee and Ben O'Hearn along with Youth Ministry Leader David McHugh and Liturgical Music Leader Therese Jandernoa to work with interested students. "My thought was that the students at St. Pat's might respond better to events organized by other students instead of those organized by the staff," Mr. Hodge said. "The response has been great. These teens give their time and talents and are wonderful mentors to their fellow students."

New members are chosen for the STIC team by class nominations with input from current team members. Once they are part of the team, they are given the opportunity to remain the following years. The team currently has eleven active members and one past member who continues to help out as needed.

Junior Emily Bengel says that when she was nominated to be a STIC member she was pretty nervous at first because she didn't know what to expect.

"Now I really like being part of the team. It's fun, and it feels like I'm doing something that will make a difference," she said.

Sophomore Delaney Harte agreed. "I enjoyed my first year so much and we got so much positive feedback that I wanted to come back this year for another chance to help my fellow students dive deeper into their faith."

STIC is making a difference in the lives of the Shamrocks. It is a young program and it is still finding new ways to be effective, but it is sure to be around for a long, long time.

## LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

ily came to America to meet us. They stayed with us for three days, before heading off for their own American adventure. Nicholas flew back to the U.S. in April of 2012 to join St. Patrick's senior class for spring break in Alabama; we loved having him back for ten days. We still hear from Nicholas and his family on a regular basis. Tyler will even text me from college, to let me know how Nicholas is doing in Germany.

In January of 2012 we took our second exchange student. His name was Qi (Tom) from China. Tom was already a freshman at St. Patrick's (in Noah's class) and needed to find a home for the 2nd semester. Noah explained to me that we needed to take Tom in because "we are really good at this."

Noah helped Tom with everything. Tom, in return, taught Noah about computers and technology. It wasn't long and the two of them had a business fixing computers. They even fixed Mr. Hodge's laptop. The Class of 2015 wrapped their arms around Tom and took good care of him. Many of them still stay in contact with him today. Noah and Tom Skype on a reg-

ular basis and if we ever have a technology question, Noah is on the phone or computer with Tom asking for his help.

When Nicholas came back for spring break in 2012, he picked our third exchange student for us. Jakob (Jake) from Germany joined our family in August 2012. He is a junior at St. Patrick's and is a great asset to our family. Jakob is having fun and enjoying his American experience. He ran cross country, is playing basketball, and wants to play baseball. The Class of 2014 is wonderful to him also.

While we have been blessed with three very nice exchange students, I think we are also very lucky to host these kids. They have taught us as much as we have taught them. We consider each of them to be a true family member, and we treat them as our own children and love them just as much. The bond that is built by the time we share with them is unbreakable.

The hardest part of hosting an exchange student is letting them go. We all dread the day Jakob has to leave, but we know it won't be a final goodbye. We will stay in touch, and hopefully we will go to Germany someday to see both our boys. We would love to see both our boys. We would love to get to China to see Tom, as well.

I would like to commend our sons for opening up their lives to exchange students. They have done an excellent job teaching, showing, and caring for these kids. This adventure would have never been a success without the loving, compassionate, and patient children we have. Thank you Tyler and Noah.

And a thank you to the volleyball girls who nominated us. This adventure would have never happened without you!

We're always looking for people to write about in *The Shamrock*. If you have an idea, send it to [shamrockeditors@gmail.com](mailto:shamrockeditors@gmail.com).

## St. Patrx Youth Ministry: Mission Trip to Chicago

by Emilee Fox

On Monday July 30, 2012 a group of high school students from Portland St. Patrx Youth Ministry headed to Chicago for a week. It wasn't a typical teen summer vacation that would be filled with shopping and sightseeing; it was a mission trip to help out at St. Francis de Sales High School. The group was filled with the desire to volunteer in any way the school needed, all while sharing the Gospel and helping out fellow Catholics.

The youth, accompanied by Youth Minister David McHugh, and three other adult chaperones worked to help beautify the school, inside and out. The teens did everything from landscaping to washing windows to scrubbing lockers to setting up a book sale—activities that wouldn't seem to have much impact but in reality were helpful beyond words in getting the school ready to be up and running in the fall.

St. Francis de Sales School president, Ray Nedohon, was very grateful for the group from Portland, assuring them that without their help, projects such as these would not have happened in the foreseeable future of the school.

St. Francis de Sales is home to many students whose families are struggling financially but striving to keep their kids in a Catholic school. Poverty doesn't stop the students there from opening their hearts to what the school has to offer. The students and staff at St. Francis de Sales continuously told the St. Patrx group how thankful they were to have volunteers to help out.

Devin Ryan, who graduated from St. Pat's in June 2012, felt humbled to have been given the opportunity to help.

Devin said, "I am very grateful to have had a final mission trip like this and I won't forget it. The Saint Francis de Sales community is one of the most welcoming groups I have ever met. This trip will stick out in my mind forever."

While the manual labor would seem to be what a mission trip would be about, it didn't end there. When the daily work was done, the St. Patrx teens joined the teens from St. Francis for some friendly competition and social interactions. Volleyball, softball, a field day, and a trip to Navy Pier were fun, yet necessary ways of reaching out to the Chicago school community.

Aside from the labor and fellowship, the youth group from Portland also helped raise money for the school through praise and worship concerts led by Catholic recording artist, Noelle Garcia and All In Ministries, a group of musicians dedicated to using their gifts and talents in

music and teaching to lead others to Christ. The music group partnered with the youth from St. Patrx for the week with a tour designed to raise support, awareness, and resources for the East Side Chicago Catholic High School. \$5,000 was raised for the school.

The students are proud to know they made a difference for fellow Catholics by doing things we take for granted on a daily basis. Many things were accomplished on the short mission trip to Chicago. The youth all returned

safe and are now bringing the impact the mission trip had on their lives back to Portland. As Mother Teresa once said, "We cannot all do great things, but we can do small things with great love." And great, loving things are exactly what St. Patrx Youth Ministry accomplished!

For more information on St. Patrx Youth Ministry, contact David McHugh at [davidmchugh@portlandstpats.com](mailto:davidmchugh@portlandstpats.com). For more information about All In Ministry, contact Noelle Garcia McHugh at [saviorose@aol.com](mailto:saviorose@aol.com) or visit their website [www.allinministry.com](http://www.allinministry.com).



Students from St. Patrx Youth Ministry plant hostas on the grounds of St. Francis de Sales Catholic School in Chicago.



# ***Restore & Renew***

## *Capital Stewardship Campaign*

**Not Equal Gifts, But Equal Sacrifice**

**April 2013**

## **We're on our way!**

Much planning and study has occurred during the past year at St. Patrick Parish to ensure we address all our needs, maintain fiscal strength, and most importantly, continue our ministries and Catholic presence for years to come. In a perfect world, we would be able to sit down face-to-face with each of you to explain our findings and the need for this capital campaign. Obviously, that is not possible.

On the weekend of April 13 & 14, at each of the Masses there will be a brief presentation about our ***Restore & Renew*** Capital Stewardship Campaign. Following Mass you will be given an opportunity to ask any questions you may have.

Parishioners unable to attend those Masses will be given additional opportunities the following weekend, when the same presentation is done in the Parish Hall following all of the Masses. No financial pledges or gifts will be requested or received at these presentations—they are informational only.

Parishioners, please plan to be present for one of these presentations. Your attendance is very important. We want to share as much information with you as we can about the needs of the campaign. Members of our Contact Team will be making courtesy phone calls after spring break to remind you of the Information Weekends.

In addition, we ask all of you to pray for the success of the campaign. Our buildings were provided to us by the generations who came before us, and it is in their honor that we maintain them to the best of our abilities. Pray, too, about your blessings and how you are using them for the work of our Lord through this parish. Eventually, everyone will be asked to make a sacrificial commitment, over and above current giving, to be paid over the next three years. Everyone's participation is needed for our success.

Thank you for your prayers and your support. Together, we can do it!

*Each of us is a manager of God's gifts and resources. God has given each of us something unique to share for His work. Being a good steward is about living as a disciple of Christ—it is your faith in action.*

*Father Larry  
Bruce and Diane Beachnau, Co-Directors  
Mark and Dawn Thelen, Co-Directors  
Zack and Julie Wight, Co-Directors  
Ted and Tracy Alberta, Co-Directors  
Bill and Esther Durnwald, Co-Directors  
Bill and Connie Vallier, Co-Directors  
Mike and Sue Fox, Coordinators*



### Schedule of Events

**April 13/14 Information Weekend\***

Presentations at all Masses. Question and answer session following Mass.

**April 20/21 Make up meetings\***

Presentations, question/answer sessions in Parish Hall following all Masses.

**May 4/5 Commitment Weekend**

Pledge cards available in back of church.

**May 20/25 Contact Week**

Parishioners who have not yet made their pledge will be contacted by parish volunteers as a gentle reminder.

**June 1/2 Announcement Weekend**

Up-to-date financial information about the campaign presented at all Masses.

\*If it is necessary to schedule additional meetings, they will be announced in the bulletin and on the parish and school websites.

**[www.stpatrickportland.com](http://www.stpatrickportland.com)**

# Background

Back in 2009, the Finance Council stood in front of the people of St. Patrick Parish and told about the “perfect storm” affecting our parish. During the depths of the 2008/09 economic downturn, we had significant expenditures, including replacing the boiler. We tapped into savings and took out a loan to pay for the new heating system. We deferred as many expenditures as possible that were not absolutely critical. The good news is that we weathered the storm, and through the generous contributions of our parishioners, we paid off the loan. However, many needs have quietly continued to build and we have not yet been able to replenish our cash reserves. We must now address the deferred needs and repairs of our parish before more serious problems develop.

# Situation Today

## **COOLING**

For many years we have discussed the need to cool our parish buildings. Providing comfortable and healthy space for worship, education, and ministry programs is needed for ongoing effective ministries of this parish.

## **CHURCH RESTROOM**

It’s almost an embarrassment that our church has no public restrooms for the convenience of everyone and especially for those who are mobility challenged.

## **SECURITY**

Learning from recent tragedies, we must ensure the safety of our children and our staff with facilities that can be locked and secured more quickly and completely than our 1950’s locks allow.

## **DEFERRED MAINTENANCE**

**Church:** The church is the center of our parish where we worship, celebrate Mass and receive sacraments and instructions. Our beautiful church needs sight-line improvements, improved lighting and sound, new sanctuary flooring, handicap accessibility, brick and flashing repair, and fresh exterior paint.

**School:** The school needs roof repairs to secure flashings so the roof life is not prematurely shortened. Other needs include extensive brick repair, cleaning, caulking, and painting; ceiling replacement; plumbing upgrades; improved lighting; and carpet replacement. Also, the kitchen desperately needs an upgrade including a fire suppression system and upgraded cafeteria restrooms.

**Annex Building:** The day care and preschool are feeders for our school. The leaking roof needs to be repaired. The siding that is falling off needs to be replaced.

**Rental Units:** The several rental units owned by the parish are in serious disrepair, needing roofing, siding, and multiple repairs and upgrades to improve safety and prevent structural damage.

**Father Flohe Field:** Parking areas need to be paved to reduce maintenance costs, reduce the need for street parking, and improve safety. An overhead door is needed for the main building so the bus can be parked indoors to maximize its life. The restrooms need upgrading and new doors.

**Technology:** Technology continues to advance necessitating an upgrade to our switching and wireless capacity to improve connectivity and reduce costs for purchasing new hardware.

## **REPLENISH SAVINGS**

Like any other business or home, our parish needs a financial cushion for unexpected expenditures and revenue shortfall. We must replenish our savings which was used to pay off the loan during the economic downturn.

## **UNEXPECTED EXPENSES & CAMPAIGN COSTS**

With any project, there will be those unexpected things that are uncovered during repairs and restoration that cost more than anticipated. We must expect these costs and fees to ensure our needed projects are completed.

# The Results

**Restore & Renew** allows us to continue our journey to the Lord with properly maintained and effective facilities for ministry as well as a stronger financial base to protect us from unexpected expenses. All of this will enable us to minister to each other and those who come to our doorstep; to learn and be taught; and to worship, pray, and be comforted. It will continue the important mission and vision of this Catholic family named St. Patrick Parish which started with sacrifices of a few devout Catholics in the 1870's. We continue the legacy!

## Estimated Costs

Cooling—entire campus . . . . .	\$300,000
Church restroom . . . . .	\$ 10,000
Diocesan obligations (includes one year of CSA, \$112,000) . . . . .	\$200,000
Security system—entire campus . . . . .	\$ 35,000
Deferred maintenance . . . . .	\$320,000
Replenish savings . . . . .	\$250,000
Unexpected costs and cost of campaign . . . . .	\$135,000
<b>TOTAL . . . . .</b>	<b>\$1,250,000</b>

## How will we raise \$1,250,000?

To reach our goal, everyone in our parish family is needed. The following chart illustrates the types of three-year pledges (over and above regular giving) needed to reach our financial goal.

Total 3-year Gift	# of Gifts Needed	156 Weekly Payments	36 Monthly Payments	3 Annual Payments	Cumulative Total
<b>Tier 1</b>					
\$30,000	1	\$192	\$883	\$10,000	\$30,000
\$20,000	3	\$128	\$556	\$6,667	\$90,000
\$10,000	5	\$64	\$278	\$3,333	\$140,000
\$7,000	10	\$45	\$194	\$2,333	\$210,000
<b>Tier 2</b>					
\$5,000	20	\$32	\$139	\$1,667	\$310,000
\$4,000	60	\$26	\$111	\$1,333	\$550,000
\$2,000	100	\$13	\$56	\$667	\$750,000
\$1,500	150	\$10	\$42	\$500	\$975,000
<b>Tier 3</b>					
\$1,000	200	\$6	\$28	\$333	\$1,175,000
\$750	90	\$5	\$21	\$250	\$1,242,000
\$500	10	\$3	\$14	\$167	\$1,247,500
\$400 or less	Remainder	\$2 or less	\$11 or less	\$133 or less	\$1,250,000

www.stpatrickportland.com

*While several dozen parishioners are helping out with the Restore & Renew Campaign, these are the ones who have volunteered to serve as the Campaign Co-Directors and Coordinators. If you have questions, please don't hesitate to contact any of them.*

*Bruce/Diane Beachnau 517-281-1524*

*Mark/Dawn Thelen 647-7721*

*Zack/Julie Wight 517-449-6597*

*Ted/Tracy Alberta 647-2538*

*Bill/Esther Durnwald 517-282-7065*

*Bill/Connie Vallier 647-2225*

*Mike/Sue Fox 647-6674*

*We thank them for their leadership. Please pray for them as they lead our parish through this important campaign.*

# Reunion News



St. Patrick's Class of 1967 held their 45-year class reunion on Saturday, October 13, 2012. The evening began with Mass in memory of the eight deceased members of the class. Fourteen classmates attended and enjoyed a social hour and dinner at the Wagon Wheel American Grill.



The *Class of 1992* held their 20-year reunion on September 29, 2012 at the Oakwood Lounge in Pewamo. Twenty-one classmates attended. A big highlight was seeing two classmates decked out in their high school clothing—Suzie (Supina) Cherney wore her Varsity Volleyball coat and Mike Thelen was sporting his Varsity Football Coat (it was a hoot!). Everyone had a great time!

## Reminder to Reunion Organizers

Classes who graduated in years ending in 3 and 8 should be planning reunions to be held in 2013. As soon as you have any information (date, place, organizers, etc.) be sure to send it to *The Shamrock*. And, after the reunion, don't forget to send a *Reunion Report* along with a photo. The information will be posted on the Alumni page of the school website and also included in the next issue of the newsletter.

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### SCHOOL BOARD EVOLVES

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

Council in development of the school budget, long range financial planning, and a universal fundraiser calendar for the parish.

- **Mission Effectiveness Committee**, co-led by Joyce Kransz and Jennifer Davlin, successfully led prayer services while Father Larry was on sabbatical and is developing a policy calling for a prayer before all home St. Patrick athletic events.

The SPS Board recently approved the recommendation that a Director of Student Relations position be added to the SPS administration team, to begin with the 2013-14 school year.

As you can see, there are a lot of exciting changes taking place with the School Board. So, how do you get involved? The Board is actively looking for energized and committed people who have a strong desire to devote their time and talent back to a school that gives so much to its students. If you would like to be considered for this ministry, please feel free to reach out to any of the current School Board members. We value any ideas, comments, and suggestions you would like to share. We appreciate the commitment you have made to Catholic education and we are committed to making this a very successful year at St. Patrick's.

Class of 1963, Save the Date: Saturday, September 14, 2013, for your 50-year Class Reunion. See more information on page 15.



## *From the President's Desk by Tony Thelen (1981)*

### Thank You!

When two amazingly generous donors made an offer that each of them would match all donations in 2012 up to \$100,000, they were hopeful but uncertain if they would have to come through with the full matching amount.

We are extremely happy to report that the contributions to the FFF in 2012 were very, very close to the \$100,000 challenged amount! That means the foundation netted nearly \$300,000 as a result of these generous, anonymous benefactors. This is a very BIG DEAL for the foundation and ultimately for the current and future students and parents of St. Patrick School. A healthy, forward-looking school is important to the parish and to the community.

On behalf of the Father Flohe Foundation, I would like to extend our sincere thank you to those that contributed to the Foundation over the past year, to those who remembered the Foundation as part of their memorial services, and to those who remembered the Foundation in their estate planning. Because of your generosity, the Foundation was able to provide approximately \$230 toward the tuition of every student attending St. Patrick's School for the 2012/2013 school year. Your continued support is greatly appreciated and goes a long way to ensure the continuation of Catholic education at St. Patrick's.

### *Class of 1963*

On Saturday, September 14, you will be the Guests of Honor at a celebration held in your honor at St. Patrick Parish Hall. Invitations and complete information will be mailed.

Hope to see all of you there!

### **The Father Flohe Foundation at a Glance**

*(Data through June 30, 2012)*

- Since 1988, the Foundation has received gifts from donors of approximately \$1,754,000.
- Since 1989, the Foundation has provided over \$932,000 to the School.
- The Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization (contributions to Foundation are tax deductible).
- The Foundation awards the Fr. Flohe Education Bell Award annually to an alumnus of St. Patrick School who in their life has exemplified the high goals and accomplishments that a graduate of St. Patrick'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 awards the Msgr. Zerfas Scholarship each year to a student who will be attending a Catholic college or university.
- The Foundation provides funding for the Shamrock Newsletter.
- Since 2003, the Foundation has coordinated and provided a celebration for each of the graduating high school classes in honor of their 50th Reunion.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

Donelda Stechschulte of Owosso; brother-in-law, William (Ellen) Kress of Chesaning. For those wishing, memorial contributions may be made to the Fr. Flohe Foundation, or to the St. Patrick Athletic Association.

Geraldine "Jerry Hoppes", age 87, passed away on Tuesday, January 15, 2013. She was born in Fowler, MI the daughter of William and Helen (Long) Halfman. Mrs. Hoppes worked at Fisher Body and Ionia County Memorial Hospital. She enjoyed working in the yard, quilting, sewing, and baking Grandma cookies. She married Leon M. Hoppes on September 11, 1948, and he preceded her in death in 2007. Also preceding her in death were her twin brother, Gerald Halfman; sister, Kathleen Foy. Surviving are her children, Judy (Duane) Huhn, Connie (Doug) Smith, Cathy (Tom) Klein, Nancy (Gary) Shortz, and Ken (Mary Jane) Hoppes; ten grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; in-laws, Alice Kelly, Jim (Sharon) Hoppes, Joe (Alice) Hoppes, Larry (Dee Dee) Hoppes, Tom (Jill) Hoppes, Bill Trierweiler, and Oscar Townsend; many nieces and nephews.

Carl M. Spitzley, age 94, passed away on January 16, 2013 surrounded by his family. He was born in Westphalia, Michigan to William and Seraphine (Martin) Spitzley. He married Anna Zimmerman of Westphalia, MI on September 20th, 1943. Carl served heroically in WWII in the Fourth Infantry, 12th regiment and saw combat in the Battle of the Herten Forest where he was wounded and awarded the Purple Heart. After the war, he returned to the Spitzley Hardware Company with his father William and his brother Jim. He was also employed by TRW in Portland where he retired in 1980 after 26 years of service. He retired from the hardware business in 1981. He was a faithful member of Portland St. Patrick's Parish and a 75

year member of the Knights of Columbus where he was a Fourth Degree Knight. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife of 54 years, Anna, daughter Carol and son-in-law David Teachout, grandson Matthew Teachout, father William and mother Seraphine, brothers James and Thomas. He is survived by children John (Judy) Spitzley of Hudson, WI, Steve (Karen) Spitzley of Portland, MI and Mary Ellen Spitzley of Portland, MI; brother William; sister Alice L'Huillier; seven grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren. Donations can be given to Hospice of Lansing, Portland High School Athletics, or the charity of your choice.

Robert E. Sunday, age 82, died January 20, 2013. Bob was born to Edward and Anna (Heyer) Sunday in Portland Michigan. Bob is survived by his wife of 62 years, Rita (Weber). Bob was a retired union carpenter, and an honorary member of the Portland VFW club, U.S. Army veteran. Bob helped build the Portland High School and helped remodel St. Patrick's Catholic Church. In his spare time he enjoyed woodworking and RV camping with his family. Bob will be missed by his 12 children: Kenneth Sunday of Lyons, William (Jean) Sunday of Grand Rapids, Debra (Dan) Trinter of Las Vegas, Nevada, Richard (Linda) Sunday of Portland, Patti (Steve) Townsend of Ada, Eric (Dorothy) Sunday of Lexington, Kentucky, Sandra (Steve) Lehman of St. Johns, Valerie (Michael) David of Alto, Vicki (William) Mead of Okemos, John Sunday of Portland, Sue Sunday (Steve Eissinger) of Redmond, Washington, and Kay Udry (special friend Rob Lisk) of DeWitt. Also surviving Bob is a sister, Rita Mason of Belding; brothers Leon (Alice) Sunday of Portland, Gerald (Gertie) Sunday of Portland, and James (Marsha) Sunday of Grand Ledge. Bob is also survived by 23 grandchildren; 11 step-grandchildren; four great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews. Memorial donations may be made to the American Diabetes Association or American Stroke Association.

Michael James Stegenga of Portland, MI passed away on Friday February 1st on his 56th birthday. Mike enjoyed woodworking; refinishing antiques; working in his garden; hunting and fishing with his friends. Mike was preceded in death by his father, Jack Stegenga and his grandparents. Mike is survived by his daughter Laura (Troy) Sanderson; mother, Laura Stegenga; sister, Beth (Doug) Stiffler; brother, Bill (Sharon) Stegenga and nieces and nephews.

Bradley Foltz, age 57, passed away on Saturday, February 16, 2013. He was born in Hastings the son of Stanley and Carla Foltz. Brad attended M.S.U. and graduated from Aquinas College in 2004 along with his wife almost to the day of their 25th wedding anniversary and began the career of his life - working with students with technology, speech and communications. He started the Key Club, Broadcast, and followed sports whether helping out with wrestling, track, volleyball, taking part in pep assemblies or playing in the water with the football team on their annual summer visit to the cottage. Brad was a proud member of the Portland Honor Society - voted on by the students. He was preceded in death by his father, Stanley. Surviving are his wife, Louise; sons Clay (Faith) Foltz and Derek (Erin) Foltz; Perfect Pappou to his beloved granddaughters Destiny and Lenna June; mother, Carla; sisters Kim and Tammy (Chuck); brother, Dave (friend, Diane); nieces and nephews Emma, Damon (Charity), Deanna and JayJay; Goddaughters Olivia Keusch and Amy Nelson; several cousins, aunts, an uncle, students and the Portland Public Schools family and his Wednesday night band members. For those wishing, memorial contributions may be made towards a scholarship fund being established in Brad's name for Portland Schools.

*Receive their souls, oh Holy One.*

*Present them now to God Most High.*

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## TOM AND NANCY THELEN

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

Retirement has given Tom more time to develop his spiritual side. He is still available to help out on the farm, especially during the planting and harvesting seasons, but he also has time now to read his bible, and pray the rosary daily, and attend Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on a regular basis.

Compared to Nancy, Tom is the homebody who now has time to hunt and fish, plant a garden, and can the vegetables that he harvests. He is also famous among family and friends for the pies he bakes.

Tom and Nancy's family values and morals are high, and this has been passed on to their children and grandchildren. They believe in being honest, working hard, doing things right the first time, giving everything you do your all, helping one another, and thanking the Good Lord for the things in your life. Tom and Nancy have faced good times and bad, joyous occasions and difficult days, but their faith never wavered, prayer pulled them through.

We never know what God has planned for us, but we do know that it was much more than fate that brought this city girl and country boy together. He knew what he was doing!

## ICH BIN EIN BERLINER

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

In 1963 it was only 18 years since the Red Army had taken Berlin block by block, Hitler had committed suicide in his bunker, and WWII ended with Berlin and Germany in ruins. There still remained heaps of debris to confirm the devastation of 1945.

My host family was obviously upper middle class as they owned a car, lived in a large duplex home, and spoke fluent English.



Herr Rauschenbach, an attorney, had been on the Eastern Front during the war; I thought it best not to ask many questions about those times.

President Kennedy was scheduled to visit Berlin during my time there. Kennedy, who had faced down the Russians down during the Cuban Missile Crisis the previous fall, was immensely popular, and West Berliners were excited about the visit. The opposite was true with the East Berlin and East German officials who went to lengths to discourage their population from listening to West Berlin radio and TV. For example, my host family reported that the East Germans aired a racy film while Kennedy spoke.

Back in the States it was becoming a hot summer over Civil Rights and older readers will recall the name of Bull O'Connor, the police chief of Selma, Alabama, who turned fire hoses and police dogs on demonstrating African Americans. I was embarrassed to see on East German TV Kennedy's speech about freedom and democracy in German translation against the footage of Bull's dogs attacking Blacks, and I understood enough German when the commentator said to the effect, "That's

what Kennedy means by freedom and justice." Powerful propaganda!

Berlin was where American and Russian tanks had actually pointed their guns at each other at the Wall which ran through the heart of the city; if the Cold War became Hot, it would be in Berlin. This was an exciting place for a 20-year old interested in world affairs to find himself.

It was just dumb luck that my visit coincided with that of the President. I wasn't at the location where Kennedy spoke his famous "Ich Bin ein Berliner" to hundreds of thousands of cheering Berliners. They understood he wanted to convey solidarity with these German words which literally means "I am a jellyroll," as apparently a "Berliner" in local parlance is like the jelly-filled Bismarks we used to purchase at Ralph Cotton's bakery.

I didn't witness Kennedy's famous words since I had met three other young Americans who had a VW and proposed that we drive to East Berlin. Our American passports gave us that privilege denied to the Germans. We had an uncomfortable wait at Checkpoint Charlie while the East German police suspiciously examined passports, extended a wheeled mirror under the Beetle to check for contraband (on the return trip for fleeing East Berliners) and made certain that we didn't have new tires or batteries to sell in the East.

We soon found ourselves at Humboldt University and officials offered us a school tour. We guardedly accepted although we surmised our guide was a committed Communist. Wisely we refrained from political topics and were impressed when our genial host offered Nancy, a music major from Kansas State, the opportunity to play from an original composition of a great master like Beethoven or Mozart. A museum custodian took the priceless document from the safe and Nancy carefully played from the original.

It was later that day when we re-

turned to Checkpoint Charlie that I witnessed East Berliners at their side of the death strip looking towards the observation platform where Kennedy had stopped earlier that day. I'll always recall my realization of how fortunate I was as an American to speed through to West Berlin whilst the East Berliners could only dream of a life in the West.

Kennedy spoke the next day at the Free University, which had been financed in part by the Ford Foundation, and I was in the audience. It was the first and last time I would see him in person. Five months later West Berliners lit candles in their windows when they heard of the events in Dallas.

I was fortunate to be at the fault line of Soviet and American power at this critical period in the Cold War and to only witness a "war of words." Not even the most experienced diplomats and certainly not I could have imagined that the fall of the Wall and German reunification would occur in our lifetime. But 26-years later, in autumn 1989, the Wall and East Germany quickly passed into oblivion. "Never say Never!"

I visited my daughter in Berlin in summer 2001, and we walked from what had been East Berlin across the death strip towards Checkpoint Charlie. The former East Berlin was one large construction zone as the Germans reclaimed their capital. We had dinner on the eastern side of the Brandenburg Gate, and there was a popular museum at Checkpoint Charlie highlighting heroic escapes over, under, and through the Wall. The events of my youth were now in a museum! I felt old!

My son and I were in Berlin in August 2011 on the 50th anniversary of the Wall's construction. We had our photos taken at a mock sentry station with a mock GI at Checkpoint Charlie. It is now a popular tourist destination.

I am fortunate to have personally witnessed Berlin's turbulent history over these 50 years.



Since this issue of *The Shamrock* focuses on the Renew & Restore Capital Campaign, it is only fitting that the words on the puzzle list should all apply to the campaign. There are 28 words in the list, and the directions are the same—find all of the words, then take the letters that are left over to spell out a quote. Lots of luck, and when you uncover the answer—read it a couple of times and really think about it!

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

**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, 2013. 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: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

CAMPAIGN  
 CAPITAL  
 CHURCH  
 COMMITMENT  
 COOLER  
 COSTS  
 FACTS

FLASHINGS  
 GIFTS  
 INFORMATION  
 LIGHTING  
 MAINTENANCE  
 OBLIGATIONS  
 PLEDGE

RENEW  
 REPAIRS  
 RESOURCES  
 RESTORE  
 RESTROOM  
 SACRIFICE  
 SAVINGS

SCHOOL  
 SECURITY  
 STEWARDSHIP  
 TALENT  
 TECHNOLOGY  
 TREASURE  
 VOLUNTEERS



Dozens of readers did the Word Search puzzle in the fall issue of *The Shamrock* and almost everyone had the correct answer: ***People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.*** The winner, chosen by random drawing from all correct entries, is Gladys Stiffler, who received a cash prize of \$50. Congratulations, Gladys—and thank you to everyone who entered the contest.

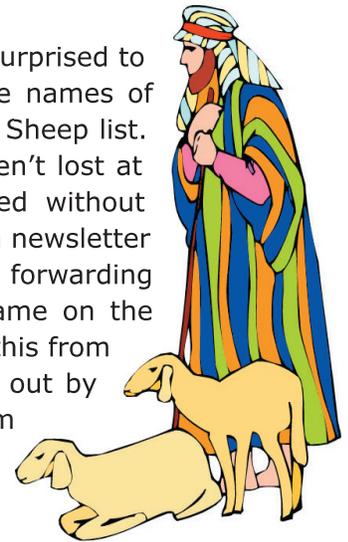
# Upcoming Events....

DK/Kindergarten Screening.....April 19, 2013  
 Shamrock Auction.....April 20, 2013  
 First Communion ..... May 4, 2013  
 Graduation ..... May 19, 2013  
 Parish Festival.....June 21-23, 2013  
 Class of 1962 50-Year Reunion.....Sept 14, 2013  
 Fall Festival .....October 13, 2013

Next issue of The Shamrock----Early October.  
 Send in your news as soon as possible:  
[shamrockeditors@gmail.com](mailto:shamrockeditors@gmail.com)

# 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 on the Lost Sheep list. To prevent this from happening, you can help us out by using the form at the bottom of this page to let us know when you move.



- |                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1956 Duane Irrer       | 1980 Angie Young       |
| 1959 Ed Bengel         | 1981 Mike Binder       |
| 1967 Ron Cook          | 1983 Kirk Noren        |
| 1968 Carolyn Rowe      | 1990 Staci Schrauben   |
| 1974 Mark VanderHoff   | 1991 Frank Wright      |
| 1974 Donna Cook Bishop | 1992 Shelley Smith     |
| 1975 Susan Thelen      | 2000 Carl Gensterblum  |
| 1978 Judy Cook Kranz   | 2001 Julie Chamberlain |
| 1979 Michael Hendricks | 2007 Marki Stimpson    |

If you are planning a reunion or wedding, or have another reason for needing a list of your classmates, contact Amy at the Parish Office Building (517-647-6505, ext. 410) or [parishoffice@portlandstpats.com](mailto:parishoffice@portlandstpats.com)).



## The Shamrock

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Please make note of this new e-mail address.  
 Mail addressed to the former address will not be received.

E-mail: [shamrockeditors@gmail.com](mailto:shamrockeditors@gmail.com)

Website: [www.portlandstpats.com](http://www.portlandstpats.com)

(Click on Alumni Information)

*The Shamrock is published two times annually and mailed free of charge to all St. Patrick's alumni, St. Patrick's parishioners, donors to the Father Flohe Foundation, and upon request. The members of the editorial staff are:*

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There's no crystal ball to help us keep track of you.



So, please tell us when you move!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

If you are a graduate of St. Pat's, please list your maiden name and year of graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

Send to The Shamrock, 140 Church Street, Portland, MI 48875; fax to (517) 647-7807; phone (517) 647-6505, ext 410; or e-mail to [parishoffice@portlandstpats.com](mailto:parishoffice@portlandstpats.com).

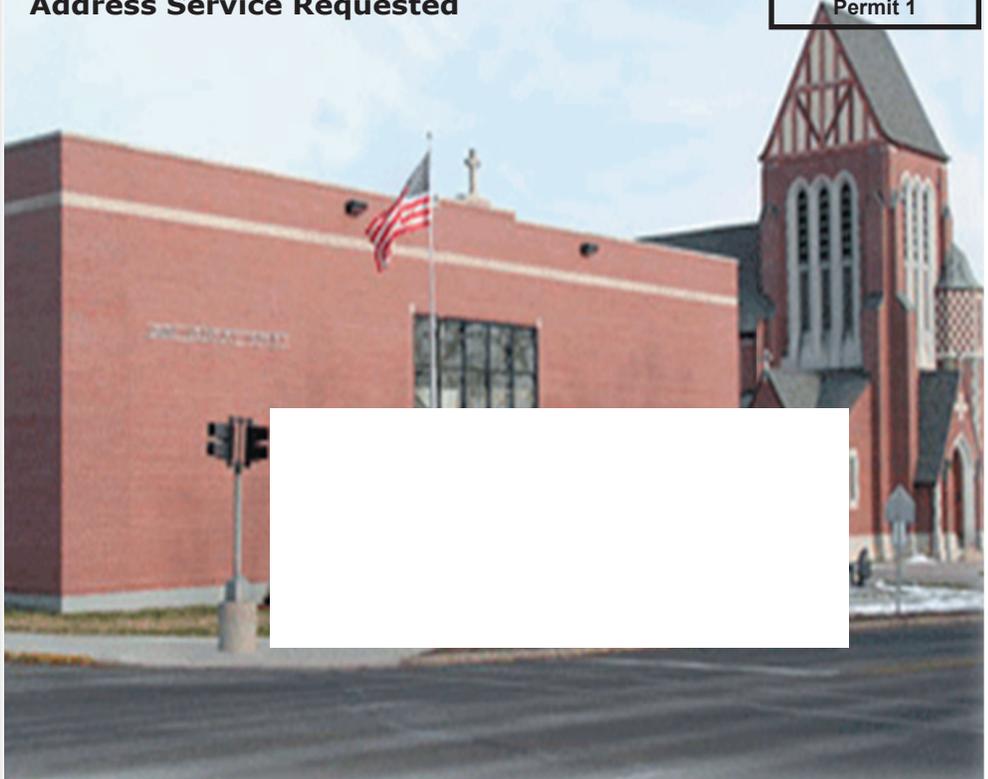
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We would like to thank Diocesan Publications and their staff for printing this newsletter for us!