



## A principled principal

Pat Forbes' 40-plus years have been marked by unfailing faith

**P**rincipal Pat Forbes has meant many things to many people at St. Mary's-Colgan. From students to teachers to priests to administrators to parents, Pat has positively affected many lives during his more than 40 years of dedicated service to our schools.

His leadership and unfailing display of Catholic values have not gone unnoticed. Several of his closest colleagues recently shared their thoughts about working with Pat through the years.

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**Pat Forbes**

**P**at's greatest attribute, nearly all of his colleagues agree, is his faith.

"His faith – faith in God, faith in church, faith in our parish and its schools, faith in our students, parents and parish," says Tom Compton, high school teacher and counselor who has worked with

Pat for more than 20 years.

"I think his greatest attribute is obviously his faith," said junior high school vice-principal Wayne Cichon. "He never seems to forget that, no matter how bad a situation is."

High school vice-principal Chuck Smith concurs. "Education always comes first with Pat, and he is a man who lives his faith and carries this philosophy into the school and with the faculty."

Fr. Tom Stroot recognizes the roots of Pat's

*See Forbes, page 6*



*Alumni currently teaching at SMC include, front row, left to right: Janie (Pecnik) Burrow, Terri (Ellis) Tener, Denise (VanBecelaere) McLeod and Teri (Watt) Wachter; middle row: Nancy (Wilbert) Hicks, Donna (Orender) Landrith and Mary (Keegan) Askins; back row: Tom Compton and Mike Watt.*

## Stickin' around

Nine alumni opt to teach where they were taught

**S**t. Mary's-Colgan is a hard school to leave behind. We are fortunate that so many graduates feel that way. Currently, SMC is blessed to have nine alumni teaching in its classrooms. These teachers recently shared some of their thoughts about teaching at their alma mater.

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**Why did you choose to teach at SMC?**

**Donna Landrith:** The main reason I chose to teach at St. Mary's is because I cannot imagine teaching anything without having God be a

part of it. It is such a privilege to incorporate our Lord into everything presented to the children and to share faith throughout each day. We not only have religion class; we experience Christ and His blessings daily.

**Janie Burrow:** I always felt a closeness and oneness to St. Mary's even after graduating from Colgan. I had one of my pre-lab experiences in Mrs. Wilbert's second grade. This experience affirmed my desire to teach at St. Mary's.

**Mary Askins:** I chose to teach at St. Mary's because of the faith com-

*See Stickin', page 4*

# Diocesan leaders speak highly of SMC

Superintendents, bishops among those with great interest in our programs

When I was asked about past and present leadership at SMC, I thought not only about the numerous principals and teachers who are mentioned in this issue but I also thought of former pastors, diocesan school superintendents, and the bishops who have set the tone for Catholic education in the Diocese of Wichita.

St. Mary's-Colgan school system has a great reputation in the diocese. Catholic schools in the diocese serve more than 10,400 students in 33 elementary schools, 22 middle or junior high schools, 20 preschools, 19 latchkey programs, and 4 high schools.

## Pastor

The four high schools include SMC (Grades 7-12: 242 students); Bishop Carroll, Wichita (Grades 9-12: 989 students); Kapaun Mt. Carmel, Wichita (Grades 9-12: 843 students); and Trinity High School, Hutchinson (Grades 7-12: 261 students). Our K-6 enrollment at St. Mary's Elementary School is 293.

The superintendents, as I remember, include Msgr. Charles Regan, James Weinman, Dan Elsner (now president of Marian College in Indianapolis), and present superintendent Bob Voboril.

Each of them has given his own flavor of leadership to Catholic education in the



Fr. Stroot

diocese and specifically to SMC. Even though we are far from the Diocesan School Office, they have taken special interest in our schools and have been very supportive of our mission at SMC.

Mr. Voboril has said more than once that he enjoys coming to Pittsburg and appreciates very much the atmosphere of family, commitment, and tradition, and the evidence of a strong faith.

Mr. Jim Jerome, a retired public school superintendent who has been working in the Diocesan School Office as special services consultant, makes regular visits to our schools. He is one of our many cheerleaders and has helped us many times in our efforts to develop and maintain school quality and identity.

Bishops Mark K. Carroll, Leo C. Byrne, David M. Maloney, Eugene J. Gerber, and Thomas Olmsted have always taken an interest in Catholic education in the diocese as well as in Pittsburg. There have been numerous times in the past 15 years that Bishop Gerber and Bishop Olmsted would ask me how things were going at SMC and wanted to offer their help in supporting our efforts to develop and maintain a quality educational program.

At the present time we are without a bishop, but I am sure when the new bishop is appointed, he will soon hear about the special schools in Pittsburg and will be taken in by the spirit of family, tradition, faith, and unity that is the SMC school community. I feel very privileged to be a part of the leadership team, past and present.

## Fr. Albert Massmann, O.S.B. 1923-2003

Fr. Albert Massmann was born June 23, 1923, in Pittsburg to Albert and Abbie Cahill Massmann. He attended St. Mary's Grade School and graduated from St. Mary's High School in 1941.

After high school, Fr. Albert joined the Marines and served in World War II. Fr. Albert spent time in the Pacific Theater as an "aerial celestial navigator," where he was responsible for the accuracy of aerial bombardment. While resting after a difficult mission as a Marine navigator, Fr. Massmann entertained the idea of monastic life and the priesthood.

After his discharge in 1946, he went to the seminary in Conception, MO, operated by the Benedictine monks of Conception Abbey. Fr. Albert professed his first vows as a monk on September 12, 1950, and was ordained a priest on May 29, 1954. He served more than 50 years as a Benedictine Monk dedicated to Mount Michael Abbey and its various apostolates.

Fr. Albert earned his Master's in Mathematics from Creighton University and proceeded to teach at St. John's Seminary and Mount Michael High School from 1957-1975. In the mid '70s, Fr. Albert's kidneys became diseased and regular dialysis was required. Needing a transplant, one of his sisters proved to be



Fr. Massmann

a suitable match. The successful transplant surgery was performed. Fr. Albert was then given a "temporary" assignment to St. Gerald's Parish in Ralston, NE to rest and recuperate. Fr.

Massmann remained there for many years (1976-1989) and has long been remembered for his unique homilies and story telling, but mainly for his kindness and compassion.

In May of 2003, Fr. Albert was diagnosed with two types of cancer. He entered eternal life July 13, 2003, while at the Veterans Hospital in Omaha, NE. A Memorial Mass was held at Mount Michael Chapel on July 26, 2003.

## Congratulations, Football Panthers!

- State record (all classes)  
54-game winning streak
- Kansas State Champions  
Class 2-1A  
2000, 2001, 2002, 2003

# Sr. Mary Patrick: teacher, mentor, inspiration

The educational history of the Diocese of Wichita was borne for the greater part of the century by the devoted efforts of the Sisters of a variety of orders.

The Sisters of St. Joseph were blessed with a number of outstanding teacher leaders. One of the most devoted was Sister Mary Patrick O'Conner.

My first contact with Sister was when she led the Hispanic students at Our Lady of Victory School in Parsons. This was during the 1940s at the end of WWII.

Sister's students were a model of the elements you seek from those enrolled in our schools. They were eager to learn and aware of the religious opportunities available to them. Sister was never too busy to

care.

Sister led schools at St. Therese in Hutchinson and St. Mary's-Colgan in Pittsburg. In all locations Sister stimulated the growth of the intellect (Latin) as well as the Arts.

Her productions of "Camelot" and "Brigadoon" were not only college-level quality, but the emotional and societal growth of the players was inspiring. Those who performed for her would become champions in their later lives. She was described by her students as "a guiding force in our school life who showed her interest in us in everything we did. We listened well, for we knew what Sister said was true; we knew she was there."

Sister had quiet strength and dignity that bordered on the regal, yet the personification of all that was Irish. Her smile, wit and voice brought comfort to all. She was my mentor through too many years. I had the honor to spend an hour of reflection with her at the funeral home before they took her to Mount St. Mary's for burial. It was another lesson for me as I recalled the contributions she has made to Catholic Education for so many years, and selfishly – to me.

Sister Mary Patrick resembled "the pillared towers of Ireland; wondrously she stood amidst the howling winds of educational change."

– *K-12 Principal Pat Forbes*

## Generous donors pave way for new elementary school

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish has announced plans to construct a new St. Mary's Elementary school building. The new building will be located east of the existing building on a tract of land that has already been purchased for this project.

This building project is made possible by the generosity of donors who wish to remain anonymous. In response to this most generous gift, the parish has embarked on a special fund-raising campaign to provide additional monies for the Memorial Fund, which primarily helps with the support of the schools.

"St. Mary's school has a long tradition of total support from this parish," said Fr. Tom Stroot. "It is time to plan for the future of St. Mary's."

Plans for the building design and the announcement of the architectural firm for the project are forthcoming. Look for further information and project updates in future newsletters.

### Multipurpose Building

A new multipurpose building is taking shape on the northwest corner of 10th and Locust streets. The 14,000 square foot facility will house the Goodwill store, the religious articles gift shop, a weight and exercise room, vehicle maintenance, and storage.

The building has been funded by the Altar Society and parish and is expected to be completed in the spring.

– *Kari (Emerson) Spiers ('86)*



*Construction on the new multipurpose facility northwest of the rectory continued in early January, above, while demolition of old homes made way for the new elementary school east of the existing one, below.*



### *St. Mary's-Colgan Alumni*

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mitment of our parish. St. Mary's is supported by our total parish through stewardship of our families. It has been an important part of my life since I began kindergarten. My husband Jim and I were married in this parish, and our three daughters are SMC graduates. We are privileged now to have our grandchildren enrolled here.

**Nancy Hicks:** I loved this school when I attended and wanted to be a part of it as a teacher.

**Teri Wachter:** I wanted to be active in the church community. It was also great being able to be with my children and share in their school experiences.

**Denise McLeod:** I always felt a certain amount of pride being raised and educated at our Catholic school.

**Terri Tener:** The religion factor, parents are also very serious about their children's education and the closeness of the parish as a whole.

**Mike Watt:** I was just lucky. I wanted to stay close to this area, and the job opened up at the right time. It's been a great experience. So many students and staff have had a tremendous influence on me through the years.

**Tom Compton:** I wanted a teaching job in the Pittsburgh area so my daughters could grow up near their grandparents. Fr. Eck offered me a job, and I jumped at the chance to teach at my alma mater.

\* \* \*

**For several of our teachers, St. Mary's is the only place they have taught. Others answered the question, How is teaching at SMC different than other teaching experiences you have had?**

**Donna Landrith:** St. James in Augusta was very similar to St. Mary's. I enjoyed my other experiences (student teaching and substituting in public schools), but I found it very different not to look up and see the crucifix, not to stop and say grace before meals and not to speak a word of God aloud all day long. This left an emptiness.

**Mary Askins:** Our Catholic Faith provides the most inspiring difference between our school and other teaching experiences.

**Nancy Hicks:** My other experiences were in the public schools. They were very good experiences as well, but without the advantage of being able to teach

## Alumni Faculty

- Donna (Orender) Landrith ('82), Kindergarten, 7 years
- Janie (Pecnik) Burrow ('73), 1st Grade, 25 years
- Mary (Keegan) Askins ('60), 2nd Grade, 16 years
- Nancy (Wilbert) Hicks ('74), 3rd Grade, 10 years
- Teri (Watt) Wachter ('75), 4th Grade, 14 years
- Terri (Ellis) Tener ('77), 5th Grade, 23 years
- Denise (VanBecelaere) McLeod ('83), 5th Grade, 11 years
- Mike Watt ('78), K-9 Physical Education, 19 years
- Tom Compton ('70), High School Theology & Social Sciences & Counselor, 21 years

about our faith.

**Teri Wachter:** I like not being afraid to share my faith with the students. The students at St. Mary's are truly blessed to have such wonderful parents. It is really sad to work with children who can't concentrate on their schoolwork because of their home life.

**Terri Tener:** I feel there are more parents who take an active part in the educational process.

**Tom Compton:** There is more support from the administration and parents. More people are involved in school activities. There is more of a commitment from the students – better discipline, higher expectations. We can teach all of the truth without looking over our shoulder.

\* \* \*

**Did any particular teacher influence you to become a teacher?**

**Donna Landrith:** There are two teachers that I think of when I look back at who influenced me to become a teacher. One is Mrs. Simoncic and the other is Mrs. Dobrauc. They both treated students as individuals. They both were always glowing with the love of Christ. It was evident then and is still evident today whenever I see them. They not only taught me, they witnessed the faith in the way they taught.

**Mary Askins:** I was greatly influ-

enced by my aunt, Helen Delaney. She taught kindergarten at SMC for many years as I was growing up, and I admired her enthusiasm for her students. She enjoyed teaching as well as special times of the Forty Hours Processions. I still remember her teaching the children to square dance.

**Janie Burrow:** I had many great mentors, especially Sister Henrita and Mrs. Simoncic during my first years teaching.

**Denise McLeod:** It was not so much the influence of one certain individual but a combination of several teachers and the satisfaction of going through a Catholic school system.

**Mike Watt:** I have a great deal of respect and gratitude for Coach Frank Crespino. He was a great role model. I always admired his passion, dedication and enthusiasm that he brought to SMC. Even today if a baseball team has a big win, Coach Crespino is one of the first to call and offer congratulations. Frank is a true mentor and friend.

**Tom Compton:** I was influenced by Alice Simoncic and Sister Rosemary in grade school and Pat Forbes and Sister Mary Patrick in high school.

\* \* \*

**The teachers were asked How have things changed at SMC since you were a student here?**

Many of the responses centered around structural changes. The lunchroom was in the basement of the grade school, and all of the classrooms were upstairs. The kindergarten was upstairs in the "old gym," which is now the music room. Many of the teachers recall when there was a third floor on the grade school. The new junior high is now attached to the remodeled high school. There is an Activity Center, which houses the new gym and cafeteria.

In the high school there are more curriculum choices now. Typewriters have been replaced by computers and slide rulers by calculators. Latin and French were taught where now we have Spanish. There were dances with live bands. Now there is a full slate of both boys and girls sports. We have gone from a very strict dress code in the late '60s to the rag-tag look in the '80s and '90s, to uniforms. The CYO has been replaced by BASIC.

# SMC builds teachers for life

How much more magnificent is the educated soul than the most beautiful rose! Don't get me wrong. I love roses, but the results of excellent teaching on young minds is infinitely more exhilarating! Having spent 12 years teaching at St. Mary's-Colgan, I'm convinced that there's a corollary between the quality of teaching and SMC's large number of students who graduate and become teachers.

Many of these new teachers have returned to SMC to teach (see related article, page one), meaning they liked the way teaching was done here and want to be a part of this school and its philosophy. But why are SMC's methods so different? As a teacher here, you're always aware you are on display – and not just in class.

It isn't always *what* teachers say, but more often, what they *do* that students mimic. A common phrase from students is, "There's my teacher," whether we're at a game or shopping downtown. That teacher is a role model.

A common question that parents ask when a child comes home from school on the first day is, "Did you like your teacher?" Parents and teachers know that the student does much better if he or she likes the teacher.

SMC teachers show this warmth and empathy to their students, enabling not only the kids' academic needs to be met, but also other needs such as self-esteem, respect for themselves and others and self-expression.

Students have left SMC with a strong background in the arts and sciences and have been remarkably successful in college. Many who became teachers have said it was the strong teaching they encountered in high school that prepared them well.

Now, they have the confidence and drive to go out and do the same for other young people. They've been shown at SMC that a real teacher *leads* the class in learning. Real learning begins with a teacher educated in the subject matter who takes charge of the class and delivers the material.

Most of our SMC alumni who have chosen teaching did so because they were inspired and challenged by superior teachers here. They imitate our teaching, which is the highest form of flattery. They take their Catholic background in morals and religious values with them wherever they teach, and this is so tremendous when you reflect on the fact that many children don't receive these values at home.

It's ironic that in this secular world, we take such care over what goes into our children's stomachs, yet don't take nearly as much time to scrutinize what goes into their minds.

Lastly, I know that the strong educational philosophies of Principal Pat Forbes and Administrator Fr. Tom Stroot have combined to inspire superior teaching among SMC's faculty. Everyone in the schools is dedicated to the most difficult of all the arts – teaching! I know. I was there.

– *Marcel Normand*

## Senior picture restoration

Your help is needed to restore, preserve panels of pictures

With approval of school administration and some interested students, the Art Club at SMC has been raising money in an effort to restore the senior pictures that used to reside in the hallway. This project is under the direction of Dawn Carlson, SMC Art and Yearbook teacher.

As you might guess, this is an expensive and elongated process. We have managed to raise enough money to purchase a new stand for the pictures that will mount on the wall. New panel prints of this year's senior class (2004) will be the first to be installed.

The ambition is to continue forward and backward until every class is up for viewing. You can assist us in this process several ways. The class pictures date back to 1940. Most of the old pictures are in good enough shape to use. However, there are some classes that have irreparable problems – even in this age of computer enhancement.

The following classes need to be entirely redone: 1947, 1965, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, and 1975. If your class needs to be redone, then a big step in the restoration process can be taken by you simply sending us a new picture.

Send your senior picture with your first and last name printed on the back and the year you graduated. If you have copies of your classmates' pictures, send them as well with the same info on the back. Also, if you want your pictures returned to you, send a self-addressed stamped envelope.

We will keep a hardcopy file of each class at the school for our records and for reprints in the future. Remember that the pictures you send to us must be in good shape and not a photocopy or cheap copy, or they will not look any better than they do now.

Another way to help would be with a small financial donation. Even \$10 would go a long way toward completing this project. This money can be donated to your class year or just in general to help fund our cause.

I hope you consider helping us, and if you can't, maybe just spread the word to other Colgan alumni to give us a hand. Thank you for your patience and interest. Send any correspondence on this matter to:

*Attention: Dawn Carlson (senior panel prints), St Mary's-Colgan High School, P.O. Box 266, Pittsburg, KS 66762*

### Catholic School Facts

Source: Diocese of Wichita

<http://www.cdowk.org>

- Catholic schools have been serving south-central and south-east Kansas for **150 years**.
- All Catholic schools in the Diocese are **accredited**.
- 90% of Catholic high school seniors **enroll in college**.
- 99% of high school students **graduate**.
- Catholic schools enroll more than **1,800 minority students**.
- Catholic schools serve more than **2,500 students from low income families**.
- The diocese is recognized as a leader in **high standards, innovation, staff development, and the stewardship way of life**.
- Diocesan Catholic schools **save Kansas taxpayers more than \$45 million** in state aid annually.
- Our Catholic schools charge **no tuition** to most active Catholic parishioners because the schools are funded through the **stewardship efforts** of all parishioners.



faith. "His commitment to the faith was reinforced by his parents, his high school teachers, lay, priest and sisters in Parsons (Pat's hometown) and the priests and nuns at St. Mary of the Plains in Dodge City."

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Pat has done it all at SMC. He taught social science from 1960 until 1973 when he became principal. Along the way he has coached football, basketball, track and field, golf and baseball. Basically, according to Compton, "he has done everything from sweep the gym to overseeing major capital improvements."

During his 30 years as principal, Pat has witnessed more than 1,500 students come through SMC's doors, and he has worked with dozens of teachers to ensure those students received the best Catholic education possible.

Teacher Maggie Ryan has worked with Pat for 26 years. "Through the years Pat has been my mentor, my confidant, my friend, my leader, my advisor and my sounding board. He has been that solid rock that has provided the foundation of who I am as an educator," she says.

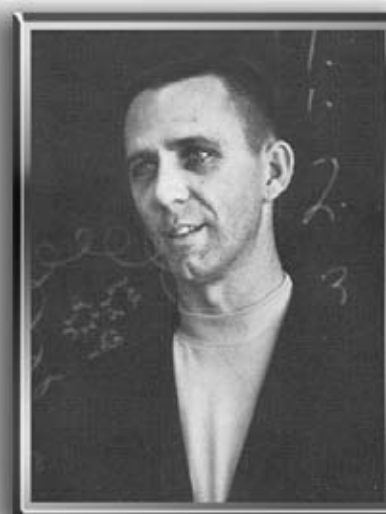
"He is very much in tune with education and very knowledgeable," said Fr. Stroot. "He personally continues to become more knowledgeable in the educational field and especially in the area of curriculum, educational strategies and trends. He himself is an adult learner. He wants the student as well as the teacher to succeed."

"Pat has been a fixture at SMC for my entire tenure here," Cichon added. "He has been the glue that has held our schools together for some time now. His leadership has guided us – the faculty, parents, and parish community – through so much. Even through some personal health problems, he has sacrificed much to make sure that SMC continues to thrive."

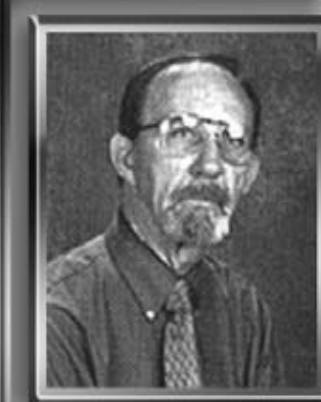
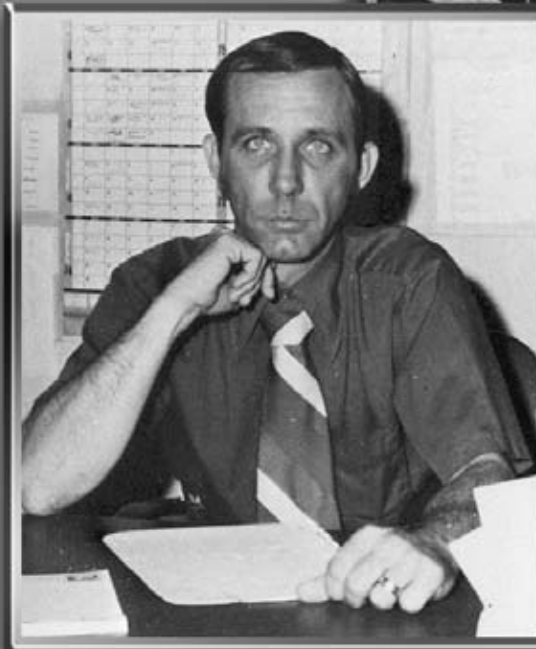
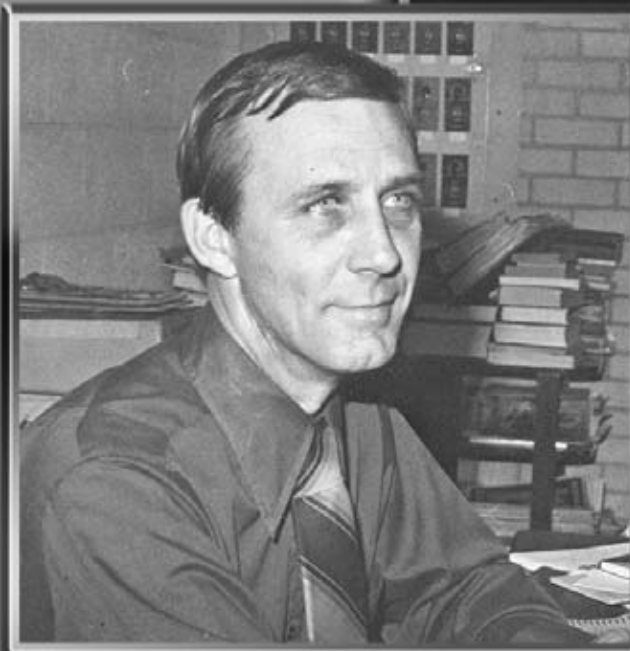
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Discipline and maximum effort are all that Pat expects from students as well as teachers.

"The discipline that the school has is generated by Mr. Forbes," Smith said. "He demands



See related article  
on page 9



good discipline from everyone, and it shows in the conduct of the students."

"If Peter is the rock of the Church, Pat has been the rock of SMC," Compton said. "Most students respect him as the leader of the school. I have found that many students appreciate what he does for the school after they have been away for awhile."

Added Ryan, "Through his own example, Pat taught me to expect excellence and demand it from students. He has never tolerated mediocrity. He is the type of person who leads in a quiet manner. As a teacher, I never wanted to disappoint him or shake the faith he had in me."

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*"If Peter is the rock of the Church, Pat has been the rock of SMC. Most students respect him as the leader of the school. I have found that many students appreciate what he does for the school after they have been away for awhile."*

– Tom Compton

What has been Pat's greatest contribution as a teacher and principal?

"His commitment to the faith and his commitment to quality education," Fr. Stroot says. "His leadership helps reinforce these aspects of a Catholic school."

"He works hard to maintain the Catholicity of our schools," Compton added. "He expects people to strive to be the best they can be, which has been fundamental to our academic and sports successes."

"I feel his greatest contribution to the school is his demand for discipline in all aspects of life," Smith said.

"He is and always will be an endless romantic, and because of this he has great faith, hope and charity," Ryan said. "He has always believed that we can be better than we are. This great faith has been a hallmark of our success."

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Pat's ceaseless efforts to improve SMC schools and the students who fill the classrooms are greatly appreciated and will always be remembered.

"As a teacher, Pat set high expectations for his students, then provided an educational atmosphere that facilitated their success," said Compton, one of Forbes' students before becoming a colleague. "His methods taught students to set high standards and then work hard to achieve their goals. He taught us to accept personal responsibility for both our success and our shortcomings. He was and remains one of my role models as a Catholic educator."

"As I sit in my rocking chair," Ryan said, "I will have many memories of Pat to reflect on, but the one memory that I will hold near and dear to my heart is the memory of his undying love for the Church and his commitment to his faith."

– Tom Farmer

## Pat's Career at SMC

**Years Overall:** 43

**Tenure as Teacher:** 1960-1973 (American History, Government, World History, 20th Century America)

**Tenure as Principal:** 1973-present (also taught most of that period of time)

**Coaching:** Football, basketball, track and field, golf, baseball



# *St. Mary's Colgan Principals Through the Years*



**Sr. M. Linus**



**Sr. M. Paula**



**Sr. Laura**

- 1940-1949:** Sr. M. Linus, M.A.
- 1949-1950:** Sr. M. Edwina, M.A.
- 1950-1958:** Sr. M. Paula
- 1958-1960:** Sr. M. Linus, M.A.
- 1960-1963:** Sr. M. de Chantel
- 1963-1966:** Sr. Veronica
- 1966-1972:** Sr. Mary Patrick
- 1972-1973:** Sr. Laura
- 1973-Present:** Pat Forbes



**Sr. M. de Chantel**



**Sr. Mary Patrick**



**Sr. Veronica**

# Memories of a daughter/student/parent

When I think back on the experiences in my life, the happiest involve my family. The Forbes family has always included the entire St. Mary's-Colgan family.

Why? Because for more than 40 years my Dad has been dedicated to providing a quality education to each student who joins the family.

By his definition, a quality education encompasses skills and knowledge needed to be successful throughout life, as well as an understanding that God is the most important thing.

I'm in a unique situation. I am the *daughter* of Pat Forbes. I was a *student* at SMC, and then a *parent* of a student who attended and graduated from SMC.

During each of these three phases in my life, I learned to appreciate and admire my Dad for his dedication to SMC, the sacrifices he has made to attend as many functions as humanly possible,

and his desire to make a difference in the lives of SMC students.

As a daughter, you love and respect your Dad. You want his advice and guidance. My sisters, brother and I couldn't wait to sit around the kitchen table after school and share our day with him.

Then things changed. As a high school student, you think that people in authority (especially school authority) don't know anything. Their ideas and rules are outdated. Most teenagers question their parents' decisions continuously. In high school I questioned our house rules and Dad's school rules. Take all the emotions you felt as a teenager, and then imagine your Dad being at school every day and attending every school event. It seemed like I never had any privacy.

But then things changed again. As a parent of an SMC student, I valued the rules and discipline that he requires, the sense of right and wrong that he tries to

instill in every student. He asks students to work hard, be the best they can be and thank God for their gifts.

Dad has had opportunities to leave for other jobs, but he wanted to raise us where we would receive the best possible education, in the best possible environment. To him – and now to me as a parent – that means St. Mary's Grade School and St. Mary's-Colgan High School.

My Dad loves his job! He has never wanted to be anywhere else. He has spent his life and his career taking care of his family, positively impacting thousands of students during his career.

As a daughter, as a former student and as a parent, I am grateful and appreciate the sacrifices Dad has made to ensure that our schools provide a quality education, encourage a close relationship with God and include the traditions that make SMC second to none.

– Lisa (Forbes) Paterni, '82

## Consider supporting the Memorial Fund

In 1973 two men, Fr. Edward Steinberger and John J. Towner, had a vision that has impacted our parish and schools for 20 years.

With the approval of the bishop, the Our Lady of Lourdes Memorial Fund was established to support Catholic education in our parish and to help provide for the care of the St. Mary's cemetery.

We would not be where we are today if this endowment fund had not been established. Over the past 16 years the Memorial Fund has subsidized the schools, providing more than \$5.5 million. All of this is possible because of the generosity of many parishioners and other benefactors who give to the Memorial Fund or make the fund a beneficiary of their estate.

We are blessed because of the vision and generosity of so many people. If you would like information about the Memorial Fund, please contact the high school at 620-231-4690 or [smcolgan@stmarys-colgan.org](mailto:smcolgan@stmarys-colgan.org).

## '92 graduate receives \$25,000 Milken National Educator Award

Andrews says the surprise presentation made it one of the 'best days of my life'

Meredith Horning Andrews, a 1992 Colgan graduate, was the recipient of the Milken National Educator Award. She received an unrestricted \$25,000 check and an all-expense paid trip to a professional development conference in Los Angeles in April, where she and the other recipients accepted their awards.

"It was incredible. They (the Milken Foundation) hold a surprise assembly in which they completely shock you in front of your whole school. The kids in my school were so excited. It was obviously one of the best days of my life," Andrews commented.

This annual award is given to 100 teachers across the nation for their outstanding efforts in education. Recipients are chosen by a blue ribbon panel from each of the forty-six participating states. The criteria is based on instructional practices, accomplishments, leadership



Meredith Horning Andrews

and rapport with students, colleagues and community.

The panel then submits recommendations to the Milken foundation, which, in turn, narrows the list to 100 educators. Each

winner receives a \$25,000 check.

As quoted in the school newsletter, *Campus Connections*, principal Jana Woodward commented on Meredith's dedication to the school and students: "Meredith is truly a team leader, in her first grade classroom and district-wide."

Andrews has been an elementary education teacher for eight years. She is currently teaching first grade at Desert Willow School in Cave Creek, AZ. In 2001, she became National Board Certified. She and her husband Todd have one son, Carson.

– Audrey (VanBecelaere) Dickey, ('82)



# Alumni in Education

**Ellen (Masterson) Patton** ('44) is a retired school administrator and college instructor living in North Olmstead, OH, which is a suburb of Cleveland. Her husband and oldest son are deceased. Her son Michael is an attorney, and her daughter Mary Anne is a housewife and estate salesperson. Ellen also has six wonderful grandchildren.

\* \* \*

**Agnes (Diller) Harrington** ('56) graduated from the University of Kansas with a BS in Nursing in 1960. Shortly after graduation, she began teaching nursing. Agnes has taught from Kansas to North Dakota and in high school, community college and university programs.

\* \* \*

**David Oberley** ('57) teaches at McAuley Catholic High in Joplin, MO. David's first wife is deceased. David is remarried to Sandra. He has six children, Terrence, Mark, Alan, Lisa, Luke and Carla. He has 19 grandchildren with another due in March. David recalled that Sister Paula was principal during his era. She was one of the "more memorable principals for St. Mary's." David also recalled that in his days, Pat Forbes was known by the Panther basketball team as one of the "Golden Boys" from Parsons.

\* \* \*

**Susan (Coury) Rogers** ('68) received her BS in Education from PSU in Mathematics in 1971. She later received her Master's in Educational Administration and PhD in Education from Kansas State University. Susan has spent her entire career working in the Topeka Public Schools. She has held many positions including junior high math teacher (two years), high school math teacher (eight years), high school curriculum coordinator (two years), high school assistant principal (four years), high school principal (six years), director of personnel (one year), assistant superintendent (four years) and associate superintendent (five years). Susan says that a large percentage of what we do as educators is based upon the way we were taught. "I know that I was taught by individuals who were caring, who would give you time outside of class, who encouraged you to do the right thing, who made you work hard, who challenged you to do

your best, and above all were positive role models." The teachers Susan remembered the most were Fr. Colgan, Mr. Forbes, Sr. Mary Patrick, Sr. Immaculata, Sr. Eustasia, Fr. Linnebur and Fr. Kerschen.

\* \* \*

**Mary (Coury) Whiteside** ('70) has been a teacher (business) and administrator for the past 30 years in the Wichita public and parochial school systems. This is her 12th year as principal at Metro Meridian Alternative High School. Mary enjoys working with high school students and finds great reward in helping them learn, grow and achieve. Two teachers, Lynda Dawkins (Sr. Lynda) and Pat Forbes, were role models for her as she began her career in education. Mary recalls that they gave so much to us, so much of themselves, to enrich our high school years.

\* \* \*

**Michelle (Carpino) Olson, Ed.S.** ('78) has been in Catholic Education for nearly 20 years in Wichita and Kansas City and became a high school principal in 1993 at Notre Dame de Sion in south Kansas City. This is her 11th year as principal at the private college preparatory high school for young women that has an enrollment of approximately 440, Grades 9-12. Even though she transferred to Colgan her sophomore year, she says the school left a lasting impression on her. "I value the friendships that were formed during those years and the ever-present sense of community. I work to cultivate these characteristics in my high school every day. Aside from the academics, I believe a values-based, caring community is what sets a Catholic Education apart from the others." Michelle lives in Olathe, KS, and her husband Erik owns a company based in Olathe. Their daughter Ann Marie is in third grade.

\* \* \*

**Damian Ahrens** ('82) is the administrator at the Tri-City Christian School in Independence, MO. He and his wife Pricilla live in Blue Springs, MO with their four children, Abigail, Andrew, Anna and Allison.

\* \* \*

**Ches Jones** ('82) is an Associate Professor of Health Sciences at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. He and his wife Holly live in Springdale, AR

with their two children, Clay and Mary Claire.

\* \* \*

**Peter Carpino** ('83) lives in Lee's Summit, MO and is a teacher as well as the head football coach at Raytown High School. His wife Stephanie is in obstetrics and gynecology in the Lee's Summit-Blue Springs area. They have three daughters, Rachel, Elizabeth and Sarah.

\* \* \*

**Amy (Normand) Christman** ('86) is a school librarian at Northeast Elementary and Junior High in Arma, KS. She recently received her master's in educational technology from Pittsburg State University. She and her husband Paul have two children, Jake and Jesse, and reside in Pittsburg.

\* \* \*

**Tom Ellis** ('87) is a teacher and coach in Sedalia, MO. This is Tom's fifth year in Sedalia and 12th year teaching overall. He currently teaches eighth grade science, is the defensive coordinator for the football team, head girls' varsity basketball coach and middle school track coach. The Sedalia football team made the state playoffs this year for the first time in school history, and the girls basketball team is the defending conference champion. Tom was married to Christine Kindle in December. Tom sends his congratulations to the Colgan football team.

\* \* \*

**Stephanie (Waltrip) Forbes** ('91) teaches health and physical education at Haven High School in Wichita, KS. Her husband PJ ('86) is the manager for the Lakewood Blue Claws, a Class A affiliate of the Philadelphia Phillies baseball team. PJ and Stephanie have two daughters, Ashton and Kendall.

\* \* \*

**Tonya (Compton) Harris** ('91) taught elementary at St. Mary's in Nevada, MO for three years. While taking time off to stay home with their daughters, Tonya teaches Parish School of Religion (PSR) at Our Lady of Lourdes. Tonya is working on her master's in Educational Technology at PSU, which will allow her to get a licensure in Library Media Specialist. She and her husband Jason live in Pittsburg with their two daughters, Natalie and Kellie.

# Alumni Update

**Ed Herbeck** ('34 – 8th grade) is retired and lives in Pittsburg. He and his late wife Ann have two children.

\* \* \*

**Jim Scalet** ('48) is an insurance adjuster in Tulsa, OK. He and his wife Ellen have four children, Jane Scott, Chris Scalet, Anne Scalet and Meg Wilson.

\* \* \*

**Walter Murphy** ('49) is a retired locomotive shop superintendent in Springfield, MO. He and his late wife Helen have three children, Natalie, Patrick and Jill, and four grandchildren.

\* \* \*

**Patricia (Smith) Rochon** ('53) is a registered nurse in Bethpage, NY. She and her husband Paul have five children, P.J., Renee, Jennifer, Craig and Jessica.

\* \* \*

**Sandra (Mobley) Nixon** ('60) is an obstetrics and gynecology nurse in Wichita, KS. Her husband Bill is an independent insurance agent. They have three children, Becky Knapp, Michelle May and Sarah Kauffman, and eight grandchildren.

\* \* \*

**Mary (Payne) Gilmore** ('64) is the Morton County Clerk in Elkhart, KS. She and her husband Mike have two children, Julie and John, and one grandchild, Sheldynn.

\* \* \*

**Sherry (Gallagher) Goodvin** ('71) is the director of student services for Maize USD 266. She is currently pursuing a doctorate degree at Wichita State University. Sherry and her husband Woody live in Wichita, KS. They have two children, Ryan, who will graduate from WSU in May, and Erin, who graduated from KU in December.

\* \* \*

**Debby (Walker) Smith** ('72) is a mortgage loan originator and sales representative in Woodstock, GA. She and her husband Ken have three children, Aaron Smith, Austin Smith and Jamee Douglas, and three grandchildren, Kalon and Alyssa Smith and Gracie Douglas.

\* \* \*

**Paul Strukel** ('75) is a machine shop

**Alumni Update:** Your classmates would like to hear from you, and this newsletter is a great means of staying in touch. Please fill out, clip and send, or e-mail the following information to Chris Flood (6664 NE Liberty Road, Weir, KS 66781, ctflood@ckt.net).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Year Graduated: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Children: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Information: \_\_\_\_\_

supervisor at Ingersoll-Rand. He and his wife Kim live in Quapaw, OK and have four children, Kevin, Stacy, Adam and Dustin.

\* \* \*

**Michelle (Barone) Kennett** ('78) and her husband Kevin own a religious gift store in Gladstone, MO. The store is called On a Wing and a Prayer and specializes in Catholic gifts and custom rosaries. Michelle and Kevin live in Kansas City, MO. Their children are Katie, a junior at SMSU, and Adam, a senior in high school.

\* \* \*

**Marla Carpino-Esch** ('80) lives in Bella Vista, AR with her husband Brian. They own and operate eleven Sonic Drive-Ins in northwest Arkansas. They have two children, Anthony, who is a senior, and Margaret, who is in the eighth grade.

\* \* \*

**Barbara (Johnston) Schmidt** ('81) is an operation management specialist with UPS in Joplin, MO. She and her husband Ray live in Carl Junction, MO with their two cats.

\* \* \*

**Louis Monsour** ('85) does business consulting and entertainment contracts for Universal, Disney and DreamWorks. He and his wife live in Monrovia, CA with

their three boys, Joseph, Andrew and Nicholas. Louis says that when they were looking at schools for their boys, "I found myself comparing every school to Colgan. As hard as I try, and as great as the schools are, nothing seems to measure up."

\* \* \*

**Barry Dean** ('85) is a songwriter for BMG out of Nashville, TN. He currently has a song on Martina McBride's newest CD. The song is titled "God's Will." And he has another song on Reba McEntire's newest CD. That song is titled "Moving Oleta." Barry and his wife Jen live in Pittsburg with their daughter Kathryn and son Alex.

\* \* \*

**Kiersten (Gobetz) Firquain** ('86) is self-employed and lives in Olathe, KS. She and her husband Boris have one son, Carter.

\* \* \*

**Lisa (McClure) Farris** ('92) is a physical therapist in Waterloo, IA. She and her husband Mike have three children, Jessica, Andrew and Lauren.

\* \* \*

**Tish (Estenson) Wydick** ('94) owns a daycare in Weir, KS. She and her husband Doug have two children, Peyton and Parker.



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## 'Our Town'



*The SMC Drama Department, under the direction of Floyd McKibben, put on a production of "Our Town" in early December 2003. The cast and crew entertained crowds during three public showings and also staged the Thornton Wilder play for the viewing pleasure of other students.*

## Around *Continued from page 4*

Changes in the grade school include having two classes for each grade. Students are taught in many more content areas. Students attend music and PE on a regular basis as well as use computers daily. Teaching styles have also changed as today's teachers use a variety of techniques to reach more children. Today's students do not hesitate to talk to the teachers, and there is more openness and a greater rapport between students and teachers.

One of the most significant changes is that there are no longer any Sisters of St. Joseph teaching at SMC. We have a couple of Sisters who spend time as volunteers in the school, and for that the teachers are grateful. Another significant change is that the children attend Mass three days a week, not everyday as the teachers remember. (Some even remember when Mass was said in Latin.)

But the importance of God and Church as the center of the school has not changed. Mike Watt summed it up well when he said, "When I attended SMC, the teachers and coaches were dedicated to the best religious, educational and athletic opportunities they could provide. SMC schools still strive to attain these ends. Sure we have new buildings, teachers and technology, but the foundation of our schools has remained the same."

— *Chris (Wilbert) Flood ('85)*