



St. Mary's Colgan

Alumni & Friends Newsletter

Volume 1, 2021



St. Mary's



Colgan



St. Mary's Colgan

TEACHING Through A PANDEMIC Special Edition SMC Alumni and Friends Newsletter

This newsletter is different than most, with the focus on how COVID-19 has affected education. You will find heartfelt articles written by SMC teachers and administrators, as well as SMC alumnus who teach elsewhere. No one has been spared changes caused by the pandemic. We are very proud of how SMC has handled these most difficult times.



COVID-19 UGH

Mrs. Nancy Hicks ('74)
St. Mary's Elementary Principal

March 13th, 2020—Friday the 13th to be exact. This was the day that we heard school was going to change. This novel corona virus seemed so far away-New York and California-but not Pittsburg, Kansas. As the weeks unraveled, it was clear we were going to be on a new path for education. No more live classes from March thru the end of May. We would be going to what became known as CLP-Continuous Learning Plans. Every week for the remainder of the school year, paper and pencil packets were picked up by parents for the elementary students, then dropped off the following week. No Church services.

Summer plans all changed: no Totus Tuus, no Catholic Kids camp, no summer school, no diocesan teacher meetings in person. ENDLESS meetings all summer trying to figure out what it would all mean. There were so many drafts of plans and edits and what ifs. Finally it was all decided-we would start school on August 19th - IN PERSON - with masks and social distancing and hands cleaner than they had ever been before. There are all kinds of new protocol to keep our kids as safe as possible!!!

AND guess what? The kids and parents were great!!! The students still run into the building every day wanting to see their friends or their teacher. They are abiding by the rules, masks on, sit behind plexi-glass to eat lunch, only have a certain section of the playground to play on and wash hands all the time. AND they do it all and will continue to do it all.

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COVID-19 VOCABULARY TEST

Many new words and phrases have entered our vocabulary over the past year here at St. Mary's Colgan Catholic Schools. In this newsletter you will find 15 of these words, do you know the definition of some or all of them? Are they part of your vocabulary now too?

CORONAVIRUS: A family of viruses, seven of which are known to infect people. Coronaviruses can cause the common cold, as well as dangerous illnesses such as severe acute respiratory infections such as SARS. SARS COV-2 is the coronavirus that was first discovered in December of 2019, causing the disease now known as COVID-19.

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HOW WE HAVE ADAPTED

By Chris Flood

Navigating the guidelines of running a school through a pandemic is daunting. The rules and regulations are enough to make your head swim: desks moved at least six feet apart, everyone being temp checked before entering the building, creating stable groups to minimize cross over exposure, daily cleaning of EVERYTHING, handwashing stations, no drinking fountains just water bottle filling stations, not to mention all the changes to the lunch room, daily conversations with the county health department, and a constant stream of questions from parents...the list goes on and on. When working on plans to reopen for the 2020-21 school year, it became apparent that a school nurse would help our administration.



Enter Krista Smith. As a very active member of the parish/school community, it did not take Krista long to get acclimated to her new job. Krista and her husband Mike ('85) have three daughters, one each in SMC high school, SMC junior high and SME grade school. Born and raised in Morton, Illinois, Krista became a registered nurse in 1995 earning her degree from Methodist School of Nursing in Peoria, IL. She became the eyes and ears for the school for all things COVID-19. Krista began working directly with the Crawford County Health department, talking to them daily. Together with the health department, she oversaw the classroom and physical changes that occurred on our campus last summer in preparation for the school year. Plans were developed to keep students distanced throughout the day. This year students would not sit shoulder to shoulder in Church.

School Nurse
Mrs. Krista Smith, RN

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ALUMNI ANNOUNCEMENTS



Alumni Wedding & Anniversary Announcements

And Two Shall Become One

- Ben Cortes ('13) and Laura Tibbs** May 2, 2020
- Kathleen Sanders ('11) and Andy Rowe** November 28, 2020
- Abby Normand ('16) and Ryan Asauskas** January 9, 2021
- Happy 60th Wedding Anniversary**
- Jerry and Lenore (Kavanagh '60) Kneebone** March 24, 2021

Alumni Birth Announcements: *Welcome to the Baby Panthers*

- Joe ('08) and Erin Wachter**
Announce the birth of a son, **James William**, November 8, 2020
- Ben and Abby (Dellasega '07) Arnold**
Announce the birth of a son, **Walter Marius**, November 14, 2020
- Willie ('08) and Jeanice Watt**
Announce the birth of a daughter, **Leighton Marie**, November 30, 2020
- Nathan and Maggie (Snow '13) Niederklein**
Announce the birth of a son, **Beck Allen**, December 21, 2020
- Mark ('04) and Lindsay Smith**
Announce the birth of a son, **Cooper James**, January 8, 2021



Recently Deceased Alumni

May their souls and the souls of all the faithfully departed rest in peace.

- Michael Torchia ('55)** October 6, 2020
- Donald Manning ('49)** November 15, 2020
- Hazel (Monsour) Peak ('44)** December 13, 2020
- Dave Chapman ('63)** January 20, 2021
- Ted Yoakam ('47)** January 29, 2021
- Steve Esch ('79)** February 2, 2021
- Flora (Shields) Rice ('59)** February 5, 2021

Michael ('08) and Erin (Farmer '09) Hayes

Announce the birth of a son, **Thomas Michael**, January 14, 2021

Adam ('10) and Hannah Barnes

Announce the birth of a daughter, **Marci Amelia**, February 1, 2021

Aaron ('10) and Morgan Snow

Announce the birth of a son, **Treghan Robert**, February 9, 2021

Brian ('96) and Cristina (Bevilacqua '05) Hamilton

Announce the birth of a daughter, **Sofia Antonietta**, February 18, 2021



SARS (SEVERE ACUTE RESPIRATORY SYNDROME): A coronavirus, which first infected humans in 2002. There have been no outbreaks of SARS since 2003.

SARS-COV-2 (SEVERE ACUTE RESPIRATORY SYNDROME CORONAVIRUS 2): The new coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019): The symptoms of COVID-19 include cough, fever, shortness of breath, sore throat, new loss of taste and or smell, chills, head and or muscle aches, nausea, diarrhea, vomiting and fatigue. While the disease appears to cause mild to moderate illness in most people, in others it has caused life threatening pneumonia, irreversible lung damage and death. Doctors and researchers continue to learn more about the disease, so information about prevention, treatment and immunity continues to change and become more available.

PERSEPECTIVE FROM OUR JH/HS PRINCIPAL



Mr. Wes Streeter, St. Mary's Colgan Jr/Sr High School Principal

As I walked through the halls on March 12, 2020 I had a student ask, "Mr. Streeter, do you think the corona will shut down school after Spring Break?" My response was "No," and at that time could have never imagined the events that were about to unfold. The very next day on the 13th, we began communicating that we would not be coming back after Spring Break because of COVID-19. The lack of knowing what the outcome of the school year would look like was both shocking and unsettling for students and teachers alike. But as we put the virtual spring semester behind us and went to work preparing for the start of in person learning again, this year's theme seemed extremely fitting: Psalm 27:1 "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom should I fear?"

Throughout the summer, Mr. Burke, Mrs. Hicks, Eric Wilson, Krista Smith and numerous others worked to ensure that we had everything in place to start school in person. We were also prepared, and still are, to go to remote learning at a moment's notice. Prior to the pandemic, preparing for the school year brought the excitement of a new year, new ideas for instructions and the logistics of school. Preparing for this year involved planning one day, and the next day having to completely re-plan due to some change or new requirement. Our teachers have had to adapt and not only teach their content, but also contend with mitigation strategies that are ever changing. Our teachers have been phenomenal in keeping focused and teaching our students throughout these unpredictable months.

Everything during this pandemic seems to be more difficult and the job of principal is no exception. At times, the job feels impossible, as there is always someone who thinks we are being too strict and others that think we are not doing enough to protect our students. With restrictions and requirements changing, almost daily, from the Health Department, the Diocese, and KSHSAA, I couldn't be happier with how the staff here at SMC has worked quickly to adapt and adjust to make the best possible learning environment for our students. When I took this job, nowhere in the job description did it say "mask police," "temperature taker" or "contact tracing," but here we are, doing our best to keep our students safe and in school. I look forward to the day when I can walk the halls and see the students' faces again, without masks. The students are the reason that as a staff we work so hard to create a faith-based learning environment where we can see them succeed spiritually and academically.

We recently received our senior ACT scores that they took in the Fall of this year. Looking at these scores you wouldn't know that school had been altered since March of 2020. Our average composite score for all seniors was 24! That is truly impressive and displays the hard work of our students and teachers during these trying times.

May God continue to bless St. Mary's Elementary and St. Mary's Colgan JH/HS. Thank you for your support and prayers. Christ, be our Light! We are Colgan!

COVID-19 UGH, CONTINUED

[« continued from page 1](#)

BUT WHY do they do it? They do it because they are good kids who follow the rules, respect their teachers and administration and just really want to be in school with their friends learning.

What will the rest of this school year look like?? No one knows for sure. What I do know is that my staff is ready for anything—in person learning---remote learning---quarantined classrooms or hybrid learning. They would all tell you that they 100% prefer in person teaching. The reason they are in this profession is to make a personal difference in a child's life face to face—twinkling eyes to twinkling eyes. AND we all know that is exactly what they do!!

Let's all continue to pray that we continue to have that opportunity for the rest of the 20-21 school year.

I am the proud principal of SME and proud member of the Class of '74.



QUARANTINE: *Separating oneself from others for a period of time designated by the health department from last known exposure to COVID-19.*

ISOLATION: *Separating oneself from others for 10 days, or until there are no symptoms, after a positive COVID-19 test*

QUARANTINED CLASSROOM - MODIFIED QUARANTINE: *An elementary classroom, which because of a positive exposure to COVID-19, is quarantined from the rest of the school. This lasts for 10 days after the last exposure. Students arrive late at 8:15 and leave early at 2:45, to avoid contact with other students. The students and teacher are quarantined to their classroom all day, even eating lunch in their room. A special bathroom is assigned to the class that the rest of the school does not use.*

We would like to thank all those who made donations to the 2019-2020

(July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020) SMC Annual Appeal.

A

Allen, Terri
Anderson, Mel & Joyce
Arnold, Rev. Chad
Aronhalt, Greg ('73) & Ginger
Askins, Mary ('60) & Jim
Ayers, Susan

B

Bache, Randall & Teresa
Bacon, Matthew & Stacey
Badart, Karen ('70)
Baker, Matt & Julie
Baldwin, Rev. Michael
Balthazor, Jo Anne
Barley, Midge
Barnett, Pat & Sheri
Barone, Jim & Donita
Barone, Sharon ('56) & Pat
Bartelli, Joe ('57)
Beasley, Brooke ('03)
Beasley, Jeff ('76) & Flora ('79)
Beasley, Robert (74) & Rebecca
Beauchamp, Joe
Berry, Sheryl ('78) & Keith
Bertone, John ('65)
Bicknell, Bill ('62) & Victoria
Bishop, Margaret
Bland, Kathy ('11)
Blick, Susan ('59) & Larry
Bogner, Leon

Bolinger, Delores
Bolinger, Mark & Marta
Bollinger, Kip & Nancy
Bolton, Mark & Brinda
Boone, Mike ('60) & Judith
Born, Thomas & Louisa
Bourne, Tim ('80) & Amy ('79)
Braden, Daniel ('73) & Kristi
Brake, David & Mary
Brake, Lindsey ('03)
Bresnick, Mary
Brewer, Gary ('70)
Broadway Chiropratic
Brown, Donald & Joanne
Brown, Leo ('83)
Brown-Cecora, Kathleen ('65) & Reno
Brunetti, Lee & Jennifer
Bryant, Tom & Koeta
Buche, Steve ('77) & Michele
Bull, Betty
Burke, Dennis & Mary
Burns, Jim ('65) & Joanne

C

Caldwell, Lorey ('68) & Paula ('66)
Caldwell, Norm & Mary Kay
Castagno, Harvey ('48)
Castagno Oil Co.
Cedeño, Julie ('85) & Pat
Chitwood, Scott
Cizerle, Sharon ('54) & Joe
Clawson, Stan & Debbie
Close, Ron & Nancy
Clugston, Charles ('60) & Margaret ('62)
Cocotis, Agnes ('51)
Colgan, Thomas
Collar, John ('64) & Dona

Coltharp, Glenn & Hazel
Commerce Bank
Compton, Thomas ('70) & Sharon
Coomes, Dale & Bernadette
Cooper, Leona & Kent
Corsini, Ken ('57) & Christine
Cortes, Dean & Paige
Craig, Norma ('53)
Crandon, Tom ('57)
Crossland, Pat & Bonnie
Cukjati, Frank ('62) & Roberta ('62)
Cumiskey, Kelly ('97)
Cumiskey, Margaret

D

Dalrymple, Austin ('01)
Dalrymple, Jana ('72) & Roland
Davis, Steve
Dawson, Ed & Beth
Dayton, Dan ('77)
Dayton, Ken ('73)
DeLange, Pete & Jane
Dellasega, Doug ('73) & Julie
Dellasega, Mark ('68) & Marjorie ('69)
Dellasega, Nick ('03)
Dellasega, Joe ('79) & Janice ('77)
Dittmann, Elizabeth ('60)
Dollar, Silver and Mary
Dorr, Jayme ('06) & William
Doti, Donna ('44)
Doue, Michael
Draper, Joyce ('66) & Barry
Duncan, John & Becky
Duncan, John ('94) & Valerie
Duncan, Kirk ('97) & Becky ('96)
Dunlap, James ('52) & Barbara
Dunn, Karen ('60) & William
Dutton, Tama

E

Eck, Rev. Ivan
Ehling, Mike
Elder, Michael & Denise
Elliott, Gordon
Ellis, Carolyn ('53)
Endicott, Adam
Esch, Jerry ('65) & Peggy
Esch, Pete ('47) & Shirley
Esposito, Barbara ('57) & Frank
Evans, David ('04)
Evans, Nancy ('79) & Jim

F

Farabi, Caleb ('04) & Abby
Farmer, Rachel ('13)
Farrell, Dan & Mary Lou
Finkeldei, Jamie & Nina Lopez
Fleming, Keagan ('23)
Fleming, Kyle ('91) & Lori
Fleming, Robert ('60) & Peggy
Flood, Chris ('85) & Tim
Forbes, Melissa
Forbes, P.J. ('86) & Stephanie ('91)
Forbes, Patrick
Forsyth, Margaret ('53)
Freeman, Virginia ('53)
Friskel, Alice ('54) & David

G

Galetti, Gesena ('52) & Walter
Gariglietti, Don ('66) & Donna
Garrison, Jon & Marianne
Gartner, Denis ('74)
Gartner, Leona
George, Bill ('66)
Giacometti, Albert ('49)
Gill, Amy ('96)
Gill, Christie ('66) & Bill
Gilmore, John & Kathie
Gilmore, Mary ('64) & Mike
Gilmore, Richard ('86) & Gail
Glick, Karl ('71) & Wendy
Glover, Patrick & Melissa
Goetting, John & Melinda
Gollhofer, Seth & Amy
Golob, Jo Marie ('59)
Goodson, Jason ('92) & Staci
Gorenc, Ronald & Carol
Gorentz, Buddy & Patti
Grimaldi, Gary ('67) & Debbie
Grisolano, Maxine ('59) & Jack

H

Habjan, Joe ('65) & Virginia
Hamilton, John ('59) & Claire
Hamilton, Kevin & Julie
Harbour Construction
Harrington, Agnes ('56)
Hayes, Tom & Denise
Heffernan, David ('64) & Catherine ('64)
Henke, Eileen ('60)
Hessman, Mary Ann
Hickman, Herb
Hooper, Deacon Derek ('00)
Horgan, Mike ('53) & Mary Ann
Hubbard, Theresa ('66)
Huelat, Bruce & Theresa
Hunsicker, Mary

J

Jacquinet, Ray & Becky
James, Barbara ('61)
Jameson, Brock ('16)
Janes, Timothy ('76)
Javni, Ivan & Marijana
Jeck, Richard ('56) & Marilyn
Jefferson, Kristen ('03)
Johnson, Andrew ('58) & Annette
Jones, Ches ('82) & Holly

K

Kalan, Jasna ('95) & Gregor
Kannarr, Amy ('89) & Shane
Karlinger, Jeff ('64) & Katherine ('65)
Kays, Kelly & Connie
Kazmierski, Thomas ('65)
Keller, Jim ('66)
Keller, John ('73) & Sara
Kemmer, Most Rev. Carl
Kerschen, Kyle & Briana
Kilcher, Mary
Kimbrow, Kim & Kari
King, Jim (62) & Rose ('62)
Klenke, Andy & Mary
Kratz, Margaret ('61) & Gary
Krumstick, Herb ('61) & Kathy
Krusich, Devon ('96) & Alisha

L
Lickteig, Roy & Joyce
Lindburg Pharmacy
Lindsey, Dennis & Jacqueline
Lomshek, Anna ('69) & Jerry
Lomshek, David
Lomshek, Edward ('87) & Amy
Lomshek, Jurij ('97) & Melissa
Long, Ashley ('02) & Nick
Lorimer, Lee
Lundy, Gary & Susan
Lyons, Danny ('70) & Christine

M
Main, David ('80)
Malcolm, Sandra ('70)
Mallouk, Veronica ('92) & Peter
Manfre, Michael ('53) & Claire
Mangan, Tim ('66) & Janne
Martinez Hernandez, Angel & Elida
Mathews, Babbie ('70)
McCall, Pat ('47) & Linda
McClure, Cary ('70) & Gena
McCormick, Karen ('83) & Jon
McGeorge, Joan ('61)
McGrath, Gary & Fran
McNally, Patrick ('97) & Amber
Meador, Douglas & Mary
Merrell, Frances
Merrell, Kathy ('79)
Mesplay, Kimberly
Milburn, Paul & Mary
Miller, Nancy
Miller, Norman & Nancy
Miller, Richard
Miller Family Foundation
Minton, Phil & Shelly
Misasi, Roger ('72) & Heidi
Mitchelson, John ('76) & Bev
Mitchelson, Kevin ('75) & Frances
Moble, Tom ('69) & Shirley
Monsour, Della
Moore, Carla ('72)
Moorehouse, John ('64) & Pat
Moorhead, Frances ('59) & Allan
Morgan, Allison ('03) & Craig
Morris, Robert & Sarah
Murphy, Joseph ('66) & Linda
Murphy, Walter ('49) & Sandy

N
Naccarato, Larry
Naylor, Joe & Sally
Nelson, Bette
Nelson, Marilyn ('69) & Mike
Nettels, George
Newcomb, David & Carol
Newcomb, Terry & Mary Jo
Nixon, Sandy ('60)
Normand, Marcel & Helen
Norton, Johnna ('98) & Will

O
O'Brien, Ed & Kristen
O'Connell, Thomas ('41)
Oehme, Dustin ('02) & Erica
Oehme, Leonard & Bobbie
Oehme, Tim ('75) & Patricia
Orlando, Joan ('54)

P
Parise, Frank
Paterni, Melissa ('82) & George
Patterson, Angie ('46)

Patterson, John & Janet
Patterson, Rosemary
Patton, Ellen ('44)
Payne, Mike ('66) & Kay ('67)
Peak, Hazel ('44)
Perez, Tony & Jen
Perry, William & Carolyn
Pesavento, Frank & Joann
Pesavento, John & Ethelene
Piccini, Paul ('90) Kathi
Piccini, Rinaldo & Sharon
Pitsco
Plank, Michael & Julie
Polfer, Mary ('62) & Neil
Potusek, Mike & Patricia

R
Radell, Jimmie ('81) & Debra
Reda, Barb ('61) & Sam
Rhuems, Chris ('74) & Carol
Rhyne, Cathy ('69)
Roark, Sarah ('98) & Christopher
Robertson, Ken & Brenda
Robertson, Yvonne
Rogers, Susan ('68) & Dennis
Russell, Charlotte ('76)
Rutherford, Janet ('61) & John
Ryan, Dennis ('73) & Maggie
Ryan, Raymond ('55) & Zoe Ann ('54)

S
Scalet, Jim ('48) & Mary Ellen
Schiefelbein, Kurt ('73) & Janis
Schiefelbein, Mark ('65) & Mary Sue
Schirk, Robert ('68) & Terry
Schoene, Norberta ('61)
Schoenhofer, Marilyn
Scripsick, Chris & Kim
Scripsick, Ron & Betty
Seglie, Ronald & Susan
Seitz, Jim
Sesso, Don ('44) & Mary
Shaw, Dick ('56) & Daffy
Simmons, Gary & Laura
Simmons, Megan ('95) & Eric
Simon, Gerald & Rosemary
Simone, Karen ('95) & Jim
Simone, Steve & Mary Kay
Sloan, Steve & Becky
Smerchek, Judith
Smith, Weston & Ashley
Smith, Beth ('74) & Chuck
Smith, John ('78)
Smith, Madeline
Smith, Rob & Elizabeth
Soper, Dave & Janet
Spence, Daniel & Marlene
Spicer, Larry & Linda
Stahl, Marty ('70) & Lori ('72)
Stahl, Nathan ('94) & Mindy
Starchman, Dale ('59) & Jane

Starchman, Donald ('61) & Francie
Steinmiller, Jeff & Kathleen Flannery
Stockard, Jerry & Cathy
Story, Julie ('84) & Doug
Sullivan, Ryan & Melissa
Sunnenberg, Kathy ('66) & Frank
Sutton, Doris ('68)
Swearingen, Eileen ('59) & Jim

T
Tawil, Elias & Magda
Taylor, Francie ('68) & Blaine
Taylor, William & Catherine
Thomas, Karen ('62)
Thomas, Tom ('57)
Towner, Dolores ('49)
Towner, Terry ('76) & Karen
Treiber, Sarah ('02) & Dustin
Tyler, Thomas & Nancy

U
Ukena, Mary ('86) & David
Unrein, Barbara ('45)

V
VanBecelaere, James ('53) & Wava
VanBecelaere, Richard ('62) & Barbara
VanBecelaere, Vince ('78) & Theresa
Vogel, Lothar & Evainda

W
Wachter, A.J. ('61) & Susie ('63)
Wachter, Mike ('62)
Wachter, Mona ('65)
Waltrip, Vickie ('67) & Ken
Ward, Gregory & Janis
Warner, Sarah ('98) & Brandon
Watt, Mike ('78) & Christy
Wenzl, Joanne
Wesonig, Michelle ('65)
Westhoff, Alberta
Westhoff, Alicia ('89) & Thomas
Westhoff, Julian & Judy
White, James & Sherry
Whiteside, Mary ('70) & Larry
Wilbert, Bill ('64) & Vicki
Wilbert, Kathy ('82) & Craig
Wilbert, Jeff ('71)
Willis, Linda ('66)
Wolfe, Mary
Wolfe, Steven
Yager, Alexandra
Yager, Terry ('67) & Dale
Yaghmour, George ('90) & Dana
Yaghmour, Laila
Yaghmour, Michael ('94) & Robin
Yaghmour, Talaat & Mary
Yaghmour, Ted ('87) & Lisa
Yartz, Lee Ann ('74) & Ron
Yost, Mary ('47) & Charles
Younger, LeRoy & Anna
Zeb, Anna ('03) Jahan

*Every attempt was made to ensure the accuracy of this list.
We apologize if we have omitted any donors.*



Mr. Cody Spencer St. Mary's Colgan Athletic Director and Social Studies Teacher

It is undeniable that COVID-19 has changed the way sports are watched, played, and coached. Change is not always a bad thing, but these particular changes have brought about inconveniences and extra work for everyone who is a coach, parent, or family member of an SMC student athlete. What has encouraged me the most is how those with ownership in St. Mary's Colgan activities have responded to these circumstances.

In August of 2020, when we had our annual SMC all-coaches meeting, we laid out the new COVID-19 guidelines and what having sports would look like for our Panthers in the 2020-2021 school year. This was my first meeting as an Athletic Director and I was interested to see how all of the coaches would respond to all of the changes we'd have to make. There were added requirements of temperature checks, transportation regulations, mask requirements, and documentation (the list goes on). My biggest takeaway from this all-coaches meeting was the unflinching response of willingness to do whatever it takes to give our student athletes a chance to compete and to keep them as safe as possible. I know that this attitude can be attributed to the quality of character our coaches possess and keeping their own "Why?" in perspective. We have been absolutely blessed with a tremendous coaching staff at SMC and there is no better place for a high school student to become a better athlete and benefit from having role models that will continue to do what is right, regardless of the circumstances. These coaches have had to make changes to many of their operations to ensure that they are keeping our student athletes safe. From increased sanitation and changing the way our athletes hydrate, to restructuring team dinners and activities, our coaches have met this challenging year head on. The support, problem solving attitude, and exemplary leadership from our coaches has turned what could be a daunting situation for any school, into an example of how our perspective should be one of gratitude that our student athletes continue to get opportunities to compete.

Our families and friends who enjoy coming to watch SMC sports have also had to adjust to vouchers, pass gates, temperature checks, social distancing, or even watching the livestream of the events online. The willingness to adapt and cheer on our athletes has been noticed and much appreciated by the faculty and staff. There have also been individuals who have been faithfully serving our athletic events for years that didn't feel comfortable doing so this year. We appreciate the years of service from those parishioners. We are also grateful for the individuals and organizations that have stepped up to meet the needs of running concession stands and filling the roles of event workers. We have also had parishioners and school employees make it possible for those not coming to the game to digitally view the activities from the comfort and safety of their own homes. Our communications director, Jess Nicholson, along with our technology and maintenance departments have been instrumental in making sure that our new Hudl Focus cameras in the gyms would be functioning properly and ready to provide a livestream of each event to our Panther fans. For many this capability has been necessary to watch their son, daughter, grandchild, or family friend participate in their respective activity.

There have been many changes and challenges in the COVID-19 era for our Panther athletics and activities. In my first year as Athletic Director at St. Mary's Colgan, these challenges have made me appreciate the tremendous character of the faculty, staff, and students of SMC. If high school sports in 2021 are anything like they were in 2020, I can assure you that our coaches and athletes will continue to find ways to make the most of their experiences and continue the successful tradition of St. Mary's Colgan Athletics.

WE LOVE YOU TEACHERS! OH YES WE DO!



Mrs. Kristen O'Brien, St. Mary's Elementary 1st Grade

As I prepared to begin my 25th year teaching, I had no idea what to expect from this school year. Feelings ranged from anxious, fearful, overwhelmed, and excited for the opportunity to teach students in person again. Our beginning of the year in-services meetings consisted of all the new protocol for logistics of teaching during a pandemic. We talked about everything from how often hands should be sanitized, to how far apart do the desks in the classroom need to be, to how in the world are we going to get 6-year-olds to wear masks all day. We received training on the online platforms we would use so that we would be prepared for the possibility of having to teach remotely again. Now, with more than 1/2 of the school year in the books, I can safely say, although this year has been very different, many

things have remained the same. We teachers come to school each day to teach, nurture, and instill the Catholic faith into the students we are fortunate enough to serve. It isn't always easy, but really teaching never has been. Every day teaching during a pandemic is a new day. We are never sure what the day will bring, but faith makes it possible to continue on with our vocation to educate God's children.



Mrs. Tina Valenzuela, St. Mary's Colgan Technology Instructor

During our school year with COVID-19, I was working with a class that was quarantined here at school. Since the students were wanting to actually see me, I setup up a Zoom. We tried to have them login with their individual laptops, but soon discovered that they did not have Zoom downloaded to their computers. We have since corrected that problem. The teacher utilized her laptop for the session. I demonstrated how to share my screen with the students and we played a game from the internet called Geogussr. Geogussr pulled up a Google street image of a country, and using the context of the pictures the students were to guess what country they were visiting. The students directed me down the streets, where they saw flags that they identified using their laptops to be Germany's flag. The students then guessed correctly that the next country was Belgium by locating more flags. As we played the game, the students learned that those giving me directions had to be close to the teacher's laptop, so that I could hear them. The students were great at adapting to any issues we had along the way and loved playing the game.

We love all our new technology, and the students and teachers have learned patience as we work through any problems. I love watching the students problem-solve these issues and become better digital learners.



CLP - CONTINUOUS LEARNING PLAN: Plan implemented by SME/SMC to continue education after the school buildings were closed in March. It continued until the end of the school year in May of 2020.

STABLE GROUPS: Students and teachers who are together daily and do not intermingle with other stable groups. Each elementary classroom is a stable group. Students stay in their stable groups all day: lunch, Mass, PE, music, and recess. There are stations set up at recess and the stable groups move through them together.

MASK BREAKS: When students are sitting at their desks, distanced from other students, and teachers allow the students to take off their masks for a few minutes.

HOW WE HAVE ADAPTED, CONTINUED

[« continued from page 2](#)

As preparation continued on the facilities and mitigation plans were put in place, Tom Compton ('70) our Technology Facilitator, worked to prepare the Chrome Books that would be new to the jr high and high school students. The Chrome Books, donated by SMC graduate Veronica Mallouk ('92) and her husband Peter, allowed the students and teachers to be prepared for virtual learning. Eric Wilson, our maintenance supervisor, as well as Steve Herman ('65) and James Johnson, custom made and installed plexiglass guards in the lunchroom, high school commons, offices and preschool. There are at least two in each classroom for one-on-one, teacher-student tutoring. With the beginning of the school, began the daily building sanitization. Each morning from 4am-7am, Eric, sprayed the elementary and high school. The Church was sprayed after every Mass.

After a delay to our expected start date because of changes at the state level, the school year began on August 19, 2020. To help mitigate possible holiday exposures, Christmas break was extended a week from the original calendar. But, as of the writing of the article, March 2021, St. Mary's Elementary and St. Mary's Colgan Jr and Sr High School, have not closed down for even one day because of COVID-19.

We have had students and teachers test positive, but there has not been any known community spread within the school. Following the directives of the county health department, Krista has had to make difficult phone calls regarding if students need to be in quarantine based on exposures. Entire elementary classes have been put in modified quarantine. Dennis Burke, President of Schools, along with building principals Wes Streeter and Nancy Hicks ('74) have worked nonstop since the beginning of the pandemic. Communications Coordinator, Jess Nicholson ('01), has had the daunting task of keeping parents informed of daily changes to schedules, games, practices, activities as well as a weekly update on our COVID-19 counts. All have been well informed.

As the school year has progressed, what was once unusual, is now normal. Students and teachers wear masks, even the little kiddos, without question. Elementary dismissal has become very streamlined as a drive through with most parents not ever getting out of their vehicles. Major improvements have been made to the ventilation systems in the church, rectory, elementary and high school buildings. A system provided by Global Plasma Solutions (GPS), cleans the air by using Needlepoint Bipolar Ionization which improves the air quality, and among other things, reduces airborne particles. With this system, no more daily spraying is needed, however surface disinfection will continue.

As the school year progresses, we know that there will be more challenges never before imagined in a school. SME/SMC will meet them head on! With God's guiding hand we will continue to find the right people to deal with each new problem. Christ be our Light!!



Ms. Teri Tener ('77), St. Mary's Elementary 5th grade

Hi! I'm Theresa Tener and I have taught 5th grade at St. Mary's for 40 years. I always have people ask me, "Why have you stayed for so long? Couldn't you make more money in the public schools?" The answer is yes I could; but you see teaching isn't about the money, it's about the love of the game --- and the game is the students. Every day when you walk into the school and see the faces of all the different children smiling, reading, and talking to their friends, you get a feeling of being home, being content and fulfilled. You feel all warm and fuzzy inside. It's even more special at St. Mary's because God is there in every aspect of your day. He is always present.

There is nothing better than watching kids learn. That "ah-ha" look they get when it sticks. The look of wonderment when they think something is so awesome in science or religion; seeing the pride on their faces over a good grade on a test or project. These moments are like a drug for teachers. We live for these moments. Last Spring COVID-19 took this all away from the teachers and the students. Not seeing their faces everyday was depressing. Yes, at first it was nice, oh yay ---- out of school early, wearing sweats all day, sleeping in, exercising whenever. But believe me this all became boring and meaningless and started to feel like a prison. No funny conversations with the students, no seeing their cheerful smiles and faces every day. The giggles, the endless questions, even the talking was gone. I was empty. It was QUIET!!!! My calling in life to educate and be around children had been taken away by a germ, by a villain that we could not fight back against.

At first we got to ZOOM with our students once a week for 20 minutes, well that was like having one lick from a double scoop ice cream cone. It was good to see the students but it was not enough time with them. Needless to say it was very frustrating. Well we got through the spring and summer and were able to go back to school where things are different but doable. We get to see each other and learn together. The smiles are back. Wearing masks is just part of our day and we have gotten used to them. We use our laptops daily and we had to learn (or I had to learn) new ways to present information just in case we go remote. Really school isn't much different other than we stay in stable groups, social distance, wash hands and talk through barriers. But in the grand scheme of things it is NO BIG DEAL.

We pray every day we can stay in school. We need each other. We depend on each other. We pray daily for the people who have COVID-19 and the people who are caring for them. It is never far from our thoughts. Please pray for an end to this illness.

One thing COVID-19 has taught me is not to take the smile, the giggle, the chance to talk to a child for granted ever again! God Bless.



SOCIAL DISTANCE: *Staying at least six feet apart!! Student desks are spaced out to minimize exposure should there be a positive case in the classroom. Students are spaced out in the church for Mass, using the entire church for a few classes.*



Coach Shawn Seematter, St. Mary's Colgan Head Football Coach and Math Teacher

A COVID-19 SITUATION: SCHEDULING A FOOTBALL GAME OVER THE COURSE OF AN HOUR, THE DAY BEFORE THE GAME

We were set to play Galena during the second week of the football season. On Thursday, the day before the game, we received a call around 10:30 in the morning that Galena had COVID-19 issues and would not be able to play the game the following day. This put us in a huge bind - trying to fill a game on short notice, the day before the game was set to happen. Immediately, our Athletic Director Cody Spencer and

I, were reaching out to people we knew all over Kansas and Missouri searching for a new opponent. Within a few minutes of the news of the cancellation going public, I had several text messages with potential ideas/opportunities for opponents. One of those texts was from SMC alumnus Matt Gilmore ('97) who owns the website Kpreps and has connections with schools and coaches all over. (from Kpreps website - Kpreps.com is the information source for Kansas High School sports covering every high school in the state across multiple media platforms.) Matt informed me that St. Michael the Archangel, a fairly new Catholic school in Lee's Summit, Missouri, was in the same boat as us and also looking for an opponent on short notice. It happened that Matt was aware of this opening because fellow SMC alumnus, Kenny Wachter ('08), is an assistant coach at St. Michael's and he had reached out to Matt in hopes of finding an open opponent in Kansas. Shortly after speaking with Matt, he had me in contact with Kenny and the head coach at St. Michael, and we were able to schedule our new opponent for the following day. Both teams were able to trade film and have one practice later that afternoon to prepare for the game the next day. And just like that, within about an hour, we went from not having a game and frantically searching, to having a game with a fellow Catholic school from Missouri that was coached by one of our former players and alumnus. As for the game itself - it was a great battle of two very evenly matched teams. Fortunately, we were able to score a couple of late, 4th quarter touchdowns to pull out the win! All-in-all, considering the circumstances and situation, it was a great night and a great win for us. Once again, a huge thank you to Matt and Kenny for their help in getting things scheduled and pulled off on such late notice!



Ms. Donna Landrith ('82), St. Mary's Elementary Kindergarten

Kindergarten is very different from when most of you attended school! However, it is very important that our program remains developmentally appropriate for the children while keeping up with the rigorous standards of today. This year has required more adjustments to do just that! During the summer I conversed with other Kindergarten teachers across the nation and a few international. We all shared ideas and gave pointers to keep the hands on and social parts of our K programs while also insure our children were safe!

So, I created a center container for each individual child. There is a movable stick with the child's number that moves to their new box on Fridays as well. They use the materials each morning for a week and on Fridays they are cleaned and moved for the next child to use. As the semester has progressed we have added and changed materials as needed. Hands are washed before and after using center boxes, after recess, when coming back into the room from anywhere we go, and at any other time it is deemed necessary. Masks are worn and distance is kept between the children. My Sweet Little Cherubs are doing a WONDERFUL job with all of this!!! I soon realized the children were longing for more books than the two that fit into their center boxes. Therefore, I used PTO funds (THANKS PTO) to purchase more containers. These are numbered per child and the container remains the same, but the books inside change periodically as needed.

The hardest part is not having the opportunity to mix the two Kindergarten classes together. I barely know the other class and the children don't know each other very well between the two classes. We stay in our own "family" or "cohort" so that if one class is quarantined, the other does not have to be as well. Two of the saddest, hardest parts for me, are not being able to take the children to Mass (the older grades do attend on certain days) or to the Atrium. I am very grateful that the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program is still being presented in our classrooms with Sister John Marie coming room to room. Our beautiful, peaceful Atrium space sits empty for now, but we know we will return one day to go even deeper in love of our faith! I truly miss having all the children gather close at my feet while I read them a story. We still have story time, but they are spread out around the room on a mat near their chair or sitting in their chair.

As educators we know the importance of being flexible and this year has called us to be so in new ways! There have been challenges that turned into opportunities to be creative. There have been blessings in the midst of challenges! GOD is always with us! The Holy Spirit is guiding us! We are together and so very grateful to be together!!!

God bless each of you and your families! Keep healthy and safe! Thank you all for your stewardship that keeps the ministry of our schools going!!!



TEMP CHECKS: *Students, teachers and faculty have their temperature taken each morning before they enter the school. Temp checks happen before each sports practice and activity and before getting on the bus for away games. Everyone entering the football stadium or gymnasium to watch a game has their temperature taken.*

DAILY HEALTH SCREENER: *All faculty and staff complete a daily health screener answering questions about COVID-19 symptoms as well as possible exposures. These are reviewed by the school nurse. Anyone who comes into a school building for teacher conference also fills out the health screener and is temp checked.*

ASYMPTOMATIC POSITIVE: *An asymptomatic case is an individual infected with SARS-CoV-2 who does not exhibit symptoms during the course of infection.*



Coach Mike Watt ('78) St. Mary's Colgan Baseball Coach, Jr high Football, and PE Teacher

SPRING 2020 BASEBALL

SMC Spring 2020 Baseball had just started. We had a couple great weeks of practice and then our season was suddenly cancelled due to COVID-19. It was very tough on everyone, especially the seniors. In May, KSHSAA passed summer guidelines which allowed teams to begin their summer programs on June 1. We practiced, scrimmaged, and held a Blue and White World Series, but did not play any outside competition. Hand sanitizer was available for use before, during and after practice. Players could not use the dugouts, share equipment, and practiced social distancing as much as possible. Coaches sanitized every baseball and all equipment after practice. I was very proud of the boys. They had early morning weights and yet I had 24-26 kids at every 10am practice. No complaints. Regardless of all the restrictions the best part was being back together again.

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Mike Watt ('78), continued.

FALL 2020 JR HIGH FOOTBALL

We began Junior High Football thinking that we would be lucky to get a couple games in before our season would be cancelled due to the coronavirus. We, fortunately, were able to play our entire schedule even though several changes had to be made. The boys had limited time in locker rooms, players could only keep their helmet, shoulder pads and cleats in their locker. Players and coaches sanitized equipment daily. Everyone had to provide their own beverage container. Before and after the games each player and coach had their temperature checked before getting on the bus. Players and coaches had to maintain social distancing guidelines while on the sideline, the practice field, and the field of play, when possible. Coaches had to wear masks while coaching during practice and games. The boys handled everything well. They were thankful for the opportunity to be together, compete and finished the season with two great wins. It was worth all of the extra precautions we had to take to see the boys play.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS

Physical Education class has also changed in response to the coronavirus. The students use hand sanitizer as they enter and exit the gym and wear masks when possible. I sanitize equipment between each class. Probably the most challenging coronavirus restriction, is requiring the kids to social distance as much as possible. Social distancing, or maintaining personal space, is not a natural thing for kids, especially the little ones. The students have done a very good job with all the new changes. It is great to have the kids back in the gym!



SPECTATOR GUIDELINES/VOUCHERS/PASS GATE: Spectators to our sporting events have been limited by the sport and size of the venue. For the fall sports, vouchers were created for each game and given to students to give to parents. For most football and volleyball games each participant received four vouchers. Just prior to the start of high school basketball season, and near the end of jr high girls' basketball, KSHSAA voted that there were to be no spectators in the gymnasiums. After a couple of games, it was revoked upon and two parents were allowed. A pass gate system was used and the players had to designate who was on their pass.

SMC ALUMNI TALK ABOUT TEACHING DURING THE PANDEMIC



Peyton Wydick ('16)

Ewing Marion Kauffman School KC - 8th Grade Science

I have always known that I was destined to be a teacher. In fact, one of my earliest memories was making my grandmother, who was a paraprofessional, play school with me in my childhood bedroom. However, I never imaged my first full year of teaching would be completely virtual during a worldwide pandemic.

I graduated from St. Mary's Colgan in 2016, and I am a recent graduate from Rockhurst University in Kansas City, Missouri. I proudly teach eighth grade science at Ewing Marion Kauffman School in Kansas City, Missouri. EMKS is a public charter school that serves the lowest socioeconomic status zip codes in the Kansas City area. We serves grades fifth through twelve, aiming to create college graduates. Our mission is to break the poverty cycle, provide a gateway to the world through the wonder of education, help students find their passion and demonstrate their brilliance, and help students develop a critical consciousness of the world around them.

EMKS has been one hundred percent virtual since the start of the pandemic in March. And, as the numbers of COVID-19 cases rise drastically each day in Kansas City, we are likely to be virtual for the rest of the 2020-2021 school year. However, our model of virtual school is quite unique compared to the surrounding school districts in Kansas City. Each weekday, students log on to attend six 50-minute class periods via Zoom, attending all core content classes with their fellow classmates. This is a rigorous approach that took a lot of adjusting and learning to fully implement, however, the result has been far better than we could have ever imagined. We are working tirelessly, as all teachers and schools are, to help close the education gap that is already in place, as well as attempt to stay ahead of the inevitable gap that students will face due to the current pandemic.

Virtual learning and teaching brings with it many challenges, but it also brings a lot of joy, as well as new and exciting moments that we likely would not have had in person. I have had the honor and pleasure to begin a new program for our middle school called Science Fun Friday. This project began when a student approached me about wanting to pursue a science major in college. She asked if I knew of any professionals in the fields she was interested in so she could talk to them about their experience. From there, this beautiful work of passion was born.

Each Friday, during the last thirty minutes of our school day, students have the opt-in opportunity to join a Zoom call with a professional who works within a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) field. Students participate in a short presentation, experiments, have Q&A sessions, and make real life connections with professionals in fields that they themselves are interested in pursuing. These experiences and guests would not have been accessible if we were in person, as most of our guests are spread all over

the United States. Our eight grade students have loved these experiences so much that I was asked to roll this initiative out to the entire middle school, and we are working to extend it to our high school as well.

I am blessed to have many connections within the STEAM field all over the country thanks to my previous education position with the Kansas City Royals. My former colleagues and friends have been so gracious and excited to join my students to share their love for STEAM education. Two of our most loved and recurring guests include former colleagues who now work as a Space Consultant for SpaceX and NASA, as well as a NASA Engineer and NASA Ambassador for Missouri. Science Fun Friday began with a simple inquiry and has quickly turned into such a treasured and exciting experience for both myself, but also our students.

Virtual learning and teaching during a pandemic brings with it so many challenges that are easy to focus on. It is easy to pick out the negative pieces that are affecting both our lives and our student's lives. However, there are ample opportunities and blessings that we would not have otherwise. Each morning, I have the pleasure of logging onto Zoom to greet my students who are safe and healthy from their homes, and that is something I cannot take for granted. To quote one of my wonderful eighth grade students, "We have the option to be the Patrick Mahomes of virtual learning. We'll get it done, we'll do it as a team, and we'll be great at it. There's no other way!"

*Shortly after Peyton wrote her article, the Ewing Marion Kauffman School made the following announcement: Every two years, the Missouri Association of Colleges for Teacher Education **awards their Outstanding Beginning Teacher Awards to Missouri teachers -- and our very own Ms. Wydick is a 2021 recipient!** As an 8th grade science teacher in her first year teaching, Ms. Wydick has led her students to some of the strongest results in the school and has launched Science Fun Fridays, a guest speaker series, to rave reviews from our 8th graders.*

Congratulations Peyton!!



Maddy VanBecelaere ('16), Westside Elementary Kindergarten

This is my first year teaching and it definitely was not what I was expecting, but it has been so much more. I am teaching kindergarten at Westside Elementary here in Pittsburg. The first few months have been so much fun with my kiddos, but there were a lot of challenges and hard work. To start the year, I had to make sure my classroom followed all guidelines; spacing out all furniture and gathering up enough tables to abide by having two students to a table. Also, I had to make sure I had plenty of cleaning products, cleaning stations, and cleaning procedures for the kids to learn. To top it off, I had to make sure that I had plans for my remote learners, as well as my in person kids. Juggling two learning environments is tough, but I am grateful that we are able to see all our students no matter their situation.

Trying to keep a kindergartner to wear a mask correctly all day and keep them socially distanced has been a challenge too. So many times, I have turned around to see them flinging their masks like sling shots or wearing them on their eyes. It keeps the day interesting that is for sure. However, they have all learned so much and we have been able to keep our class healthy. This year is definitely not usual, and the veteran teachers have told me my next years in the profession will be a piece of cake. I sure hope so! I come home exhausted each day, but I also come home every day with a smile on my face knowing I'm blessed to teach and help to change the lives of so many little ones.



Megan (VanWey) Brown ('14), Turner School District - School Psychologist

This year is my first year as a school psychologist in Kansas City, Kansas. I work in the Turner school district and am responsible for two elementary school buildings. As a school psychologist, my primary role is conducting evaluations for special education as part of the special services team. I enjoy knowing that I play a part in helping students obtain the resources and services they need to be successful in school. I also work on behavioral and mental health teams in my buildings to advocate for the wellbeing of all students.

As is the case with almost everyone, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed how my job looks this year. All students and staff wear masks and practice social distancing. Our students are currently in a blending learning model, with some students participating in remote learning only. All meetings typically conducted face-to-face have been transitioned to online formats. I have made a conscious effort to limit my exposure to large groups of people as much as possible.

Although much of the focus has been on the limitations of this year, the challenges school employees have faced have brought us closer together. This year has taught me to think outside the box when offering new ideas and solutions to problems we never thought we would face. We have found a way to continue staff breakfasts and spirit days to provide some sense of normalcy and community. Additionally, I have felt the immense support of my district and coworkers as we give each other grace during these challenging times. This is something I especially appreciate during my first year in the profession.

In reflection, I feel that this year has pushed me to become stronger and more patient than ever. Inconveniences as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic have made me appreciate the importance of family and friends and the role they play in providing support. As my first year as a school psychologist reaches the halfway point, I pray for the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

ALUMNI & FRIENDS

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SMC All School Reunion Postponed to Summer 2022

Because the All School Reunion is only held every five years, we have decided to wait one more summer.

We hope and pray that by the summer of 2022, we will be able to gather and celebrate as the St. Mary's Colgan family.

BUT, we are inviting all SMC Alumni and Friends to the

**Our Lady of Lourdes
Parish Block Party on
July 10, 2021
6:30pm next to the Fieldhouse**

If your class would like to gather and have a table reserved for you, please contact Chris Flood at alumni@ollsmc.com or 620-231-2135.

More details to come later.

