



NEWS FROM THE NEST



2016 GACC Alumni Banquet



Class of 1936: Rita Fisher Ellinghausen.



Class of 1941: Nick Wieler.



Class of 1956: Front: Margie Kaup Price, Cecelia Wuestewald Franzluebers, Lorraine Neesen Schlautman, Margaret Ortmeier Wordekemper, Larry Ulrich; back: Robert Kaup, Roland Schueth, Leona Kaup Meister, Dusty Schlautman, Larry Reimers.



Class of 1986: Front: Duane Throener, Tim Rolf, Shawn McGill; middle: Greg Tobey, Judy Meiergerd Perry, Denise Bracht Keling, Tim Plagge; back: Dan Steffen, Dave Fischer, Kay Ulrich Bartek, Mary Jo Schorn Gardner.



Class of 1991: Front: Sara Eisenmenger Helling, Deb Brunsing Bailey; back: Doug Kaup, Donovan Mlnarik, Chad Schinstock.



Class of 1946: Henry Druieke, Juliana Hugo Wordekemper.



Class of 1951: Front: Joan Kloke Lueckenhoff, Mary Ann Peitzmeier Ruskamp, Erv Wordekemper, Dennis Stalp, back: Audrey Scheppers Renter, Arlene Reeson.

Class of 1961: Am-brose Peitzmeier, Keith Tingelhoff, Sara Ellis Hough, Paul Wortman.



Date set for 2017 alumni banquet

Next year's GACC Alumni Banquet will be held Saturday, June 10, 2017 at the Nielsen Center. Honored classes will be:

- 1922
- 1927
- 1932
- 1937
- 1942
- 1947
- 1952
- 1957
- 1962
- 1967
- 1977
- 1987
- 1992
- 1997
- 2007
- 2017

Please remember all GACC alumni are invite to attend whether it's an honor year or not.

You're always welcome to come home

**GACC
PRINCIPAL**



**Kate
Hagemann**

Hello Bluejays,

The summer months always bring about a time of reflection in the world of education. The 2015-2016 school year was another successful year at GACC.

The tradition of spiritual growth, academic excellence, active apostolic outreach, and extracurricular success continued throughout the year. On Sunday, May 8 we celebrated graduation in the GACC Activity Center.

The graduating class of 2016 consisted of 34 talented, intelligent, and unique individuals. This class had an average ACT score of over 24, earned over \$800,000 in scholarships, and 100% of them will be moving on to some type of postsecondary education.

I know they are all excited to move on

to the next step in their lives and become proud alumni of GACC. That brings me to June and the annual alumni banquet.

A school like GACC is only as strong as the support of its alumni. We are truly blessed to have so many graduates who continue to support our school.

I'm sure the alumni banquet brings back a lot of memories and storytelling for those attending! We continue to work hard to make sure GACC is a place of pride for all.

A couple of the speakers at this years' graduation reminded the class of 2016 that no matter where life takes them that they can always come "home."

We hope that all of our alumni know that they are always welcome at GACC. You are always welcome "home."



Class of 1966: Front row: Con Reeson, Diane Praest Schneider, Nancy Kaup Steffen, Judy Heimann Charlson, Doris Rhode Meyer, Jean Stewart Griesel, Eileen Wordekemper Randell, Lorie Peitzmeier Endsley, Florence Ridder Hendricks; second row: Dennis Buse, Gene Schlickbernd, Phyllis Rief Rosloniec, Sharon Popken Mace, Mary Mahlberg

Parizek, Diane Nitz, Jeanette Guenther Kindschuh, Dorothy Deppe Lawse; third row: Joe Diekemper, Don Knobbe, Rich McGill, Carol Kreikemeier McGill, Don Oligmueller, Don Steuter, Martin Peatrowsky; back row: Rich Baumert, Alvin Eusterbrock, Raymond Schueth, Reggie Smith, Larry Batenhorst, Donald Throener.



Class of 1976: Front: Ray Wiesen, Kevin Knobbe, Mark Batenhorst, Janet Lueckenhoff Denham, Nancy Hugo Cady, Bill Luebbert; second row, Tim Peterson, Dennis Wordekemper, Donna Gentrup Kreikemeier, Diane Meiergerd Evert, Shari Lux Ruskamp, Connie Guenther Prinz; third row: Randy

Schinstock, Ron Collins, Carol Evert Lofgren, Doris Hagedorn Guenther, Bonny Uhing Emanuel, Alice Stalp Kindschuh, Mike Ridder; back row: Gene Praest, John Yosten, Dale Knievel, James Wordekemper, Willy Kreikemeier, Sharon Emanuel Ingersoll, Tom Reichlinger.



Class of 1996: Front row: Joe Engelmeyer, Amy Meister Engelmeyer, Jen Mlnarik, Gina Wolf Kelly, Emily Broekemeier Engel; second row: Tyler Gentrup, Jason Harstick, Melissa Bliemeister Walsh, Amber Leitow Horn, Lachelle Vrba Hasemann; third

row: Doug Knobbe, Susan Hegemann Coe, Lea Batenhorst Grimm, Jennifer Throener Martinez, Jamie Schlecht Wiechman, Gwen Kaup Ahrens; back row: Andrew Kelly, Chad Eisenmenger, Matt Steffen, Jason Gustafson, Jeremy Prinz, Chris Moore.



Class of 2006: Front row: Danielle Pagels Yarger, Casey Wiechman, Kaylie Wietfeld Bracht, Kelsey Schuetze, Alyn Knobbe; middle row: Robert

Kreikemeier, Craig Randel, Michael Knobbe, Heath Graybeal, Chris Renner; back row: Adam Guenther, Patrick Knievel, Aaron Prinz, Geri Heimann Eich.

St. Aloysius a founding parish of GACC

By Delores Meister

St. Aloysius Parish, Aloys is a co-founder and incorporator of West Point Central Catholic High School

When Central Catholic High School was in the planning stage, St. Aloysius Parish came forth as one of the founding parishes in full partnership with area parishes to form the corporation. Kids from the parish have their high school home here at Central.

Pastor Father Steve Emanuel said, "Like many rural parishes the number of parishioners have gone down but the vibrant Faith of the people is always constant, strong and inspiring."

"It is good to celebrate our history and our roots," said Senior Associate Pastor Father Frank Lordemann said. "I have enjoyed serving and working with the parishioners at Aloys."

The rural parish celebrated its 125th anniversary June 21 with a 6 p.m. Mass with Archbishop George Lucas. Mass was followed by blessing of the Blessed Virgin Mary shrine and a barbecue supper served from a tent. A candle-light living rosary at the outdoor shrine at dark concluded the occasion.

Many GACC graduates and alumni are great-great grandchildren of the German immigrants who established their farms and parish more than 125 years ago in the Aloys vicinity.

St. Aloysius Church is the center of the rural Aloys community. Today, the 1930 Romanesque Leo Daly Omaha designed buff brick church and 1959 rectory stand at the intersection of Hwy. 32 and County Road 7 and G ten miles west of West Point. Tombstones on the multigenerational cemetery stand as testimony to the faith of the fathers, the grandfathers and great grandfather pioneers who brought their Catholic Faith with them from the Old Country.

In the 1880's, the Aloys area was virgin prairie with green grass and blue sky. The oxen or horse drawn wagons with German-speaking

immigrants arrived and were welcomed to help settle the land. Land for a few dollars an acre was available from land companies. Buildings had to be built and trees needed to be planted. Water needed to be found. A post office was established in 1885.

In the 1880's, Joe Ernesti broke ground with a team of oxen and in 1891 donated five acres of ground for a church and cemetery.

When equestrian travel was the only mode of transportation, this location was a strategic spot equidistant from the other area pioneer Catholic parishes. With travel dependent upon horses, it was 7 miles from St. Boniface, Monterey, 7 miles from Sacred Heart, Olean, 10 miles from Dodge, 11 miles from St. Mary's West Point, 11 miles from Beemer and 12 miles from Wisner. Already at this corner was a horse barn across the road southwest of the church and watering place for traveling horses.

In early 1891, 24 families received permission from the Omaha bishop for a parish. The first frame church was dedicated in August, 1891. The building was used as a church and school as the backs of the church pews folded to serve as desks.

The new parish was named after St. Aloysius, a 16th century Italian priest during a time of a particularly violent pestilence. In caring for the sick in Rome, St. Aloysius, also a Jesuit, contacted the disease and died at age 21. Aloysius was known as the patron of youth. A life size painting of St. Aloysius pointing children the way to Christ is centered above the church high altar.

Faith, hope and love lived in the hearts of the pioneers every day as they experienced in every facet of their work the beauty and joy of Nature as well as the hardships and pain. The joy and the sufferings of pioneer life were their dependence upon God. Faith was their support in the struggles they bore to survive.

In 1891, the parish was a shared mission of Sacred Heart at Olean with bi-lingual German and Bohemian Jesuit Father Francis Turek the pastor until 1894. As a mission it was passed back and forth between Olean and West Point until Father William Reybach became the first residence pastor in 1907. Father Joseph Roth became pastor in 1908 and served until 1942.

The Aloys store was owned by the Paschang family grew at the post office site and the rural store and exchanged and gathering place continued to this day with the Wolf family ownership..

In 1913, a frame two story St. Aloysius School for first-through-eighth grade was staffed by the Milwaukee School Sisters of St. Francis. The German language was spoken. Prayers were said and school books were in German. Later prayer books were both German and English. Kids walked to school or older kids drove their family-owned horse drawn wagons with benches or stools. During the school day the horse was tied in the established corner barn and at noon the driver would feed the family horse some oats.

With the outbreak of World War I in 1917, the mastery of the English language and culture was accommodated. Names were Anglicanized. The German sons of parishioners joined the U S Army.

The parish celebrated its 50th anniversary In 1941, before World War II broke out, attracted 3000 people, Bishop James Ryan, 20 priests and seminarian Godfrey Meiergerd were special guests. The pastor Father Roth spoke with the old timers in their native tongue. Msgr. Joseph Bosheck of St. Mary sang German and English songs. Chicken dinners were served. The Dodge band played, and sports competition with neighboring parishes Holy Name Societies provided entertainment in ball games and tug of war competi-

ST. ALOYSIUS: A founding parish of GACC School

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tions. There was an evening dance in Dodge. In 1942 Father Godfrey Meiergerd was ordained and said his first mass at Aloys May 26.

After WWII ended former army chaplain Father John Beacon served the parish from 1952 to 1977. In 1959, a new rectory was built. In 1963, Central Catholic High School began class with St. Aloysius a member of the corporation. During Father Beacon's time the formation of Pebble Valley Catholic School took place.

Due to dwindling school enrollment, St. Aloysius School merged with St. Boniface School to form Pebble Valley Catholic School from 1960-1984 with 150 students enrolled. The Aloys Sisters of St. Francis, the St. Boniface, Monterey, Franciscan Sisters of Colorado Springs and lay teachers staffed the school. Pebble Valley became an academic gem in the Archdiocese.

Pebble Valley lay teacher Paul Albenesius who later became Father Albenesius, said, "I have very fond memories. The students were really good. They had a desire to learn. The kids went home after school, probably did an hour of farm chores, and an hour of homework. Parents wanted their kids to do homework. Pebble Valley ranked number one on some archdiocese achievement tests."

On an occasion when Albenesius had finished leading the Stations of the Cross for the students, one mother told him, "Mr. Albenesius, you'd be a good priest."

Albenesius said, "This was something I had in the back of my mind for a long time, and when I learned I no longer needed to take Latin, I moved that direction."

Volunteer Marius Baumert drove the bus from Aloys to Monterey and back again daily until 1984 when Marius Baumert drove Pebble Valley students to West Point Guardian Angels Central Catholic.

After Monsignor Francis Schmitt retired from 36 years of directing the Boys Town Choir, he brought his musical mastery, Gregorian chant, vespers and choir location to the parish. As the last resident pastor, Monsignor served until his death in 1994.

In 1991, the 100-year centennial celebration was an all-day Sunday event with Archbishop Sheehan, 20 priests and an estimated 1,200 people. All day-festivities including a noon barbecue, tug of war, gunny sack races, hula hoops, softball, volleyball, and horse-shoes. Historic displays were in the school, centennial books were printed and music was provided by Wellman family singers and Bob Schuetze Band.

The '90's brought parish realignment due to fewer clergy and the growth of city parishes. St. Aloysius became affiliated with area parishes. Father Stephen Gutgsell became pastor of St. Aloysius, Aloys, St. Boniface, Monterey and St. Anthony's, St. Charles from 1994-1998. Residency was at St. Boniface, Monterey.

Philippine born native Fr. Dennis DeGuzman became pastor in 1998-2002 He is a First Lt. United States Army Reserves chaplain. Father Dennis's motto was "Serve the Lord with Joy." He inter-connected the parishes socially with a warm social atmosphere with golfing, picnics and church celebrations. Father Dennis provided his deejay equipment for several parties and dances for Halloween and the 2000 New Year's Eve Millennium dance in the Aloys school auditorium.

Pastor's Fr. Jeff Zila, Fr. Mark Bridgman and Fr. Tim Podraza served from 2002-2005 in affiliation with St. Joseph, Wisner and Holy Cross, Beemer.

In 2005, St. Aloysius became one of four parish contingent with Father Gerald Gonderinger and Father Frank Lordemann. The four parish group, St. Aloysius, Aloy, St. Mary's of West Point, St. Anthony's of St. Charles, and

St. Boniface of Monterey and remains today.

"I will always remember the first time I drove down highway 32 and saw Aloys. This beautiful place is in the middle of the country," Father Gonderinger said.

The school building was used randomly for social events until 2009 when the nearly century old frame building was used for a practice burn in Sept. 2009.

"I remember how painful it was to tear down the school building," Father Gonderinger said. The cornerstone was opened prior to the burning in Sept., 2009. The rectory became the social center for parish coffees and meetings.

The outdoor Shrine of the Blessed Virgin Mary was added in 2009 on the site of the former Sisters' house. The statue of Our Lady of Grace was imported from Lima, Peru. Blue rosary beads/stones are embedded in the concrete floor. Flower planters and benches surround the open shelter shrine. It stands as an inspiring shrine for praying the rosary under the blue skies with the growing green grass just as the parishioners prayed 125 years ago. Today travelers stop at the Shrine. During May and October the living rosary is prayed weekly followed by a root beer float social.

Parish native sons who attended St. Aloysius School and went on to serve the Church were Bishop John Paschang, Father Anthony Paschang, Father Godfrey Meiergerd, Father Norman Hunke and Brother Bernard F. Stratman ('65).

Deacon Francis Meiergerd ('71) and Deacon Joseph Meiergerd of St. Charles, Mo. are also parish natives. Paul Doernemann ('73) is in the deaconate training program.

Sisters from the parish are Sr. Annelle Renner, Sr. Angelia Baumert, Sr. Benedetta Fuchtman, Sr. Judanne Stratman ('56), Sr. Celeste Rebhausen, Sr. Veronica Wolff and Sr. Joan Renner. Sr. Veronica Wolff was the last sister to serve in Pebble Valley School.

GACC rocks around the clock at JayFest



Above: Kylie ('10) & Brenn Kai.
Top right: Kevin ('76) & Jane Reeson ('77) Knobbe.
Bottom photos: Some of the decor found at JayFest, an annual fundraiser for GACC School the night before the alumni banquet.



Photos courtesy of K & Camera (Kylie Kai)

Congrats

Class of 2016



Above: Sarah Arduser proceeds out from GACC's 2016 graduation ceremony.



Top right: Brandon Hass displays his approval after receiving his diploma.



Right: Morgan Bracht is all smiles after receiving her diploma from GACC Principal Kate Hagemann ('00).



GACC brings home hardware from state track

Bluejay athletes qualifying for the State Track & Field Meet were, from left, front: Maddie Bracht, Mariah Hunke, Elizabeth Franzluebbers, Ashley Minnick, Hannah Hrbek; back: coach Kurt Bracht ('92), Tanner Hass, Angela Jansen, Maddie Knob-

be, Lauren Wobken, coach Allan Lamkli, Nathan Bracht, coach Jason Minnick, head coach Matt Schlaebitz and coach Mark Knobbe ('74). Wobken placed 5th in long jump (16-3.25) & 6th in triple jump (34-10.25). Hass was 4th in shot put (55-5.5)



GACC golf team qualifies for Class C state tourney

Guardian Angels Central Catholic golfers qualifying for the Class C state meet are, from left, Andrew Franzluebbers, Hannah Hunke, Noah Kreikemeier, Zach Kaup and Sam Ulrich. The Bluejays are coached by Daryl Boots and Mark Svec.

BIRTHS

NEW TO THE NEST

Jenica (Weiler) '06 & John Dietrich: son Logan John born 4/14/16

Danessa (Brunsing) '05 & Jared Kenney: daughter Piper Olivia born 4/11/16

Andy & Cassie Guenther: son Miles Joseph born 5/11/16

Jesse '04 & Abby Ridder: daughter Tatum LeaAnn born 5/21/16

Zach '02 & Wendy Ridder: son Mitchell Paul born 5/17/16

WEDDINGS

Jeremy Vanek '05 & Ashley Niewohner '05: married 6/11/16

DEATHS

ETERNAL REST GRANT UNTO THEM O LORD

Marlyn (Seeman) Hunke '50: Date of death was 5/26/16

Marcella Wolken Rennerfeldt '45: Date of death was 4/17/16

Merlin Recker '52: Date of death was 4/10/16

Arlene Michaelis French '56: Date of death was 5/6/16

Robert Schmaderer: Date of death was 4/12/16

Reader's Note: To submit birth, wedding & death announcements, please submit that news to wpnews@cablone.net

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GACC's top students

Kate Knobbe, left, earned the title of valedictorian of the Guardian Angels Central Catholic High School's Class of 2016, and Monica Reeson was the class salutatorian. Both spoke at the commencement ceremony where 35 seniors received diplomas.

Don't Forget!

We want to hear from you. Please submit your news!

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