



Carolyn Fraher traveled to Africa for a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

The Africa experience

**By Bobbie Ortmeier
GACC Senior**

"I wasn't nervous before I left, but when I got there, it finally hit me. I experienced major culture shock and had no phone to call home."

Carolyn Fraher, 2016 GACC graduate, reveals that at the very beginning of her experience in Kenya, she was a little uneasy. However, she soon "fell in love with Point of Grace Academy and the children there," making her hardest day in Kenya the day that she said goodbye.

Carolyn's brother owns a non-profit organization located in Kenya, and it was through the connections he'd made that Carolyn was presented with this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Even though

Carolyn is not interested in teaching as a profession, she eagerly jumped at the chance to volunteer. Carolyn decided that college could wait a year and packed her bags for Kenya.

"My first day was rather overwhelming," Carolyn said, as it would be for nearly anyone who had just arrived in a new country of which they had little knowledge. The children she was to teach spoke Swahili, their native language, which Carolyn couldn't even understand at the time. Although the children couldn't quite interpret what she was saying, they made Carolyn's fear fade quickly by answering her questions and asking their own, despite the language barrier. "Every time I would walk in the room, the first

thing they always said was 'welcome.'" Surely, this kind gesture also did a great deal to put Carolyn at ease and help her grow more comfortable in her foreign surroundings.

"More than anything, I think about the kids and miss them. There were a lot of memories made, and we had many fun times."

The orphans living in Point of Grace Academy had a massive impact on Carolyn's life. With all the fun they had spending time together, they became a family. Carolyn loved spending her time with them and fondly remembers the days when she taught them how to play softball. They found the equipment



Knobbe honored as a Believer & Achiever

Allie Knobbe, a senior at Guardian Angels Central Catholic High School, was honored as a 2017-18 Believers and Achievers winner by U.S. Bank® and the Nebraska School Activities Association.

Believers & Achievers is a state-wide program designed by U.S. Bank and the NSAA to give recognition to Nebraska's future leaders.

"This award means so much to me. I am extremely honored to be chosen for this award," Knobbe said.

Knobbe is involved with volleyball, one-act, basketball, choir, and National Honor Society.

As of October 2017 through March 2018, Knobbe was one of 48 Nebraska high school seniors honored as in the Believers & Achievers program.

From those 48 finalists, eight will receive \$500 scholarships from U.S. Bank® to the college

or university of their choice at a scholarship banquet to be held on April 29, 2018.

These students will be recognized at NSAA State Championships throughout the 2017-18 activities year and on bi-monthly posters sent to all NSAA member schools and U.S. Bank® branches throughout the state.

All of the students nominated for the Believers & Achievers awards program represent the very best of Nebraska's high schools.

"Allie has taken life's circumstances and used it in a positive way in all that she does," GACC Principal Kate Hagemann said. "She excels academically and in extracurriculars and takes on leadership positions within our school. Allie is very deserving of the honor."

Allie is the daughter of Melissa Knobbe and the late Chris Knobbe.

AFRICA: Trip

FROM PAGE 1

in a storage container, and during breaks, they'd spend eight hours straight playing the game until it was time for dinner.

Carolyn also spent much of her free time with the children having dance parties, writing and casting plays for them, playing games, and even receiving Swahili classes from them.

Carolyn learned quite a bit about teaching in Kenya. "It was a lot more challenging than I thought it was. It is definitely one of the most important careers," she said.

The other teachers at Point of Grace Academy were very kind to Carolyn, and even though the teaching methods in Kenya differ from those at CC, they worked together and learned from each other daily.

Carolyn taught English to roughly sixty 5th graders, math to fifty 4th graders, and English to fifty 7th graders. Carolyn's favorite class to teach was 4th because they were always so keen to learn, and when they understood something new, they'd clap their hands and thank her.

By dedicating her time to help educate orphans at Point of Grace Academy, Carolyn Fraher found a second family and experienced something most people only read about.

"Experiencing other cultures and immersing yourself in a different way of life is one of the best experiences a person could have. I learned so much, and the way I view the world will never be the same. The relationships I formed were life-changing, and if more people have these experiences, I believe that we will be a more understanding society."

Note: *Those wishing to donate to the school can do so. The name of the non-profit is 4KenyasKids. For more information, the website is 4kenyaskids.org.*



Shea Stokely, practicing on the baby grand piano at his father's house.

Stokely's piano skills in demand at area churches

By Willis Mahannah

Holidays off. Hardly.
Same for Sundays.

That all comes with the job of being an in-demand church pianist.

Meet Shea Stokely, West Point, who fills that bill for not one, but for three churches.

He can only sit on one piano bench at a time, but he manages a schedule that allows him to provide music for St. Mary's Catholic Church and Grace Lutheran Church in West Point, as well as St. Lawrence Catholic Church in Scribner.

This time of year the scheduling is a bit more difficult. Besides the regular church services on weekends, there are the special Advent services and other programs.

It would be easier if Shea's full-time job was pianist. It's not. He is a funeral director at Stokely

Funeral Home, West Point.

Shea doesn't match the stereotype of a church keyboard player. At the age of 28, he's younger than most of those you'll see seated at a piano or organ at church.

"When I moved back to West Point I wasn't planning on playing for three churches," Shea said. "But I found out quickly that there aren't a lot of us to go around."

A 2008 graduate of Central Catholic High School, Shea earned a business degree at the University of Nebraska at Omaha before earning a mortuary science / funeral services degree.

He returned to West Point in 2015 to help at Stokely Funeral Home, owned by his father, Bill.

Shea's first dabble into music came after listening to his dad play piano. Shea has been honing his keyboarding skills for as long as he

can remember.

"I have a picture of me when I was about 3 years old sitting on my dad's knee in front of the piano," he said. "That's where it started.

That led to piano lessons. And more lessons. And even more lessons.

"My dad taught me for a year or two, but I've had a lot of piano teachers. And I'm still learning. Basically, I've been playing my entire life."

His skills are God-given, but it also took discipline from his family and lots of work on his part to become as accomplished at the piano as he is. There were times when he wanted to give it up, but he's glad he stuck with it.

"There were times when I thought it was a pain. All that practicing and practicing wasn't always fun," he said.

Catholic Schools Week full of events for GACC

Right: GACC did several activities throughout Catholic Schools Week. Among them was a trip to the West Point Community Theatre for "Ferdinand." Looking at the camera for a picture are 7th graders, from left, Paige Hakel, Tara Gentrup and Halle Kreikemeier.

Below: Sophomore Reece Snodgrass with Ava Minnik (3rd grade) during GACC's Buddy Day creating a Valentine's Day craft.

(Photos courtesy of GACC's Leslie Kreikemeier)



Eighth-grader Cale Schwer takes part in GACC's living rosary. Each balloon represented a 'Hail Mary' or an 'Our Father.'



Speech talent on display

The GACC speech team held its annual "Night of Excellence" in February. Alisen Niewohner was among the GACC speech members who took part in the event.

Scholarships for alumni

The Louis and Abby Faye Dinklage Foundation of Wisner will make available a number of \$1000 scholarships for alumni of Guardian Angels Central Catholic High School who are full-time college students.

An application form is required for this scholarship even if you have received it in previous years. These scholarships may be applied to vocational training programs or a bachelor degree program where you are enrolled full time.

They are not applicable for a second bachelor degree or master degree programs. Also, if you have received four previous awards, you are no longer eligible.

Additionally, if you are a non-traditional student and working on your first degree, you may be eligible for an alumni scholarship. If you have just started post-secondary education and do not have a transcript yet, please provide current grades for the fall semester and proof enrollment for the Spring Semester or a copy of your Spring Semester Schedule.

Application forms are available at the high school counselor's offices or on the school websites. The completed application form must be submitted to the school counselor's office on or before December 15th.

You must provide a transcript from your college/university and proof of enrollment for the Spring Semester or your Spring Semester Schedule. Scholarship funds will be distributed in January/February upon verification of successful completion of fall semester and enrollment of second semester.

Anyone desiring further information may contact the School Counselor at (402) 372-5326.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



JayFest June 8, 2018

Alumni Banquet June 9, 2018

JayFest May 31, 2019

Alumni Banquet June 1, 2019



Local Knights earn Star Council Award

Knights of Columbus Council #2272 of West Point earned the distinction of Star council, one of the organization's top awards, for the 2016-2017 fraternal year. Officers presenting and accepting the KC Star Council Award for St. Joseph's Council were, from left, Jeremy Borchers, Chris Kreikemeier, Lou Gaspers, Justin Steffensmeier, Chris Peatrowsky and Fr. Andy Syring.



Rief signs to play baseball at Doane

GACC senior Bryant Rief signed his national letter of intent to join the baseball program at Doane College. At his signing were his parents, Roger and Jennifer Rief. Also pictured is his Rief's grandpa/coach, Bruce Schlecht.

BIRTHS

Ashley (Iden) '00 & Nathan McKown: daughter Finley Marie born 10/14/17
 Kara (Weiler) '10 & Josh Perchal: daughter Merritt Lois born 12/8/17
 Andrew and Cassie Guenther: daughter Felicity Martha born 12/15/17
 Tim '85 & Jessica Hagedorn: daughter Jane Marie born 12/19/17
 Amanda (Iden) '05 & Adam Schueth: son Cache Orville born 1/22/18
 Anna (Wieneke) '03 & Chris Worman: daughter Kolbie Ann born 2/1/18
 Kirsten (Klitz) '11 & Logan Owens: daughter Ashton Ann born 2/18/18

DEATHS

ETERNAL REST GRANT UNTO THEM O LORD
 LaVern (Knobbe) Faltin '50: Date of death 1/2/18
 LaJean (Aschoff) Owen '58: Date of death 1/6/18
 Melvin Greckel '63: Date of death 1/10/18
 Mary Ann (Brunnert) Schlickbernd '60: Date of death 6/27/18
 Susan Hagemann: Date of death 2/6/18
 Arthur Grewe '46: Date of death 2/6/46
 Dorothy Nebuda: Date of death 2/7/18

WEDDINGS

Joseph Knobbe '10 & Sierra Monif: married on 12/30/17

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Gabrielle Knobbe of Midland University was recognized with the Who's Who award. Pictured with her are parents Jane and John Knobbe.

Knobbe a Who's Who honoree at Midland

Gabrielle Knobbe ('14) was one of 20 students at Midland University to be named to the 2018 edition of Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges.

The annual listing recognizes outstanding campus leaders nationwide. The students were honored Monday, Dec. 11, in a special reception in the Olson Student Center.

"At Midland University, our mission is to inspire people to learn and lead in the world with purpose. The outstanding students who make the Who's Who list have proven they are leaders, and they have tremendous potential," Midland University President Jody Horner said.

"We are extremely proud of

each Midland student who was nominated. This is an honor reserved for those whose commitment to excellence is evident in the classroom and throughout the community."

Campus nominating committees and editors of the annual directory selected students based on their academic achievement, and, exclusively, those who have achieved a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.85, in addition to service to the community, leadership in extracurricular activities, and potential for continued success.

Gabrielle is the daughter of John and Jane Knobbe. She is majoring in Elementary Education and Special Education with an endorsement in Coaching.

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