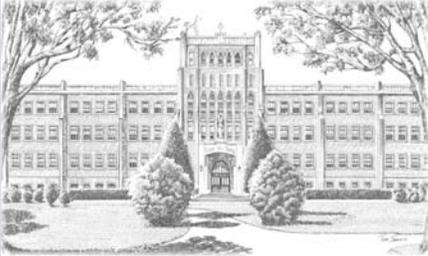


# Focus

Celebrating 80 years of educating young women.



*The Alumnae Newsletter of  
Mount St. Mary Academy*

Fall 2007

Mount St. Mary Academy, founded by the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur, is a Catholic, private, college preparatory school for young women. Within a nurturing and academically challenging environment, the Academy strives to develop the whole person. Guided by our Catholic tradition, and rooted in Gospel values, we educate young women dedicated to lifelong learning, moral integrity and service to and acceptance of others.



## MSM Celebrates Its Rich Heritage – The Mount is YOU!

On September 8th, we celebrated our 80th year of educating young women in Western New York. Therefore, it seems fitting that our pledge for the year is to “celebrate our rich heritage.”



Nowhere was this more evident than in the alumnae hallway where generations of graduation photos have been proudly displayed. Over the summer, the photographs were digitized, catalogued and preserved so that they could be showcased in a new mural, along with other photos that signify all of our traditions.

If you're in the area, you cannot help but notice the colorful banner hanging from our auditorium behind the grotto. Powerful words that summarize our philosophy -- tradition, acceptance, scholarship and values -- let our community know in an instant who we are and why we're successful.



We invite you to stop in for a tour and view these impressive displays.



Dear Sister Alumnae,

It was a tremendous pleasure to celebrate our anniversary here on September 8th – imagine MSM is 80 years young! As I look back at the past 80 years of history here, I am filled with gratitude for everyone who has supported the Mount in all its endeavors. The collaboration among the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur, alumnae, parents, students, faculty, and administrators, who worked hard together, has set this Academy apart as a nourishing, challenging, excellent high school for young women.

We welcomed back our beloved Sisters – welcomed them home, for this place they began will always be a place to which they belong. We are their girls – they gave us the gift of this Academy and the equally valued gift of letting us grow up here, safe and secure. They called us to be more than we were, to love learning, to serve others, and to leave the world a better place for our having been here. They called us to faith, to seek God and to share that faith with others.

We welcomed alumnae, students, family and friends, thanking them all for the sacrifice, love and support they have given Mount St. Mary Academy over the years and celebrating our many accomplishments and our life.

If you were able to join us, please know how happy we were that you could be here with us. If you couldn't be with us, please stop in for a visit soon. We love to see our alumnae, and we love to show off MSM today and our wonderful girls!

Inside these “fair halls” we surround ourselves with the key words from our mission and purpose:

*Personal Development*  
*Acceptance*  
*Tradition*

*Integrity*  
*Service*  
*Scholarship*

*Nurture*  
*Values*  
*Respect*

These words form the framework for who we are and all we do. These words are posted on our classroom walls and hung throughout the building, focusing us always on constant and consistent improvement -- especially in student achievement.

This year, our theme is “Celebrate Our Rich Heritage – The Mount Is You!” As we celebrate our 80th anniversary as a school, I hope we can positively revel in all that means MSM to each one of us -- red roses, our Alma Mater, the auditorium, chapel and so much more. Most important of what MSM means is the Sisters, lay teachers and alumnae who have made this Academy the treasure it truly is. Each of you has played and continues to play a significant role in our continuing growth and success. Join us in thanking God for the gifts we have been given and the joy of being able to share them with future generations of young women, continuing the vision of academic excellence begun 80 years ago by our beloved Sisters of St. Mary of Namur.

Dawn M. Riggie '71



## A Farewell...

A dedicated member of the MSM team since 1981, Mrs. Nancy Strychasz has now “officially” retired.



“Retired,” though, is a relative term, as we’ve still seen her in our halls almost every day. Mrs. Strychasz has been helping ease the transition for our new campus minister, Ms. Helen Scimeca, and helped prepare the 80th anniversary liturgy. She’s also lending her skills as a substitute teacher. Helping out where needed is a habit that isn’t surprising for someone who has, for decades, helped young Mounties understand the importance of community service.

As our religion teacher, department chairperson and campus minister, it has been Mrs. Strychasz’s gentle hands that guided the souls of nearly two thousand students through our spirited liturgies. Her special relationships with local parishes and priests allowed her to seek out those in need and respond through donations at Thanksgiving, the Christmas holidays and Catholic Charities.

Over the past year, she worked closely with Development Director Mrs. Barbara Johnson in development to write a grant for new liturgical furnishings. Mrs. Strychasz told Mrs. Johnson that better liturgy communicates the life of God around us. Spirit-filled liturgies draw people into the message of the Good News. We knew that by enhancing our liturgical space, we could create a welcoming environment that touches hearts, connects to the Divine, celebrates God’s presence in the assembled community, and in fact, “proclaims Jesus” and calls us to “the table of the Eucharist.” It’s no wonder that the grant request was successful and lovely new furnishings were created with Mrs. Strychasz’s design input.

Mrs. Strychasz is looking forward to spending more time with her husband, daughters, Amy ‘91 and Jennifer ‘89, and her grandchildren.

For those of you who wish to keep in touch, you can reach Mrs. Strychasz at her home e-mail: 19sandwoman42@roadrunner.com.

We’ll miss you, Mrs. Strychasz – thank you for all your gifts.



## Upcoming Events at MSM:

**October 13, 2007:** Sports Boosters’ Taste of the Towns, MSM Gymnasium at 5 p.m. The evening features specialties from local restaurants, a Chinese auction and a grand prize giveaway. Tickets are \$20 in advance or \$25 at the door and are available by calling Beth Frauenhofer Powalski ‘77 at (716) 632-2013 or Peggy Frauenhofer Galante ‘75 at (716) 874-0229.

**October 20, 2007:** All you can eat spaghetti and meatball dinner, featuring the MSM Concert Band, Jazz Band and String Ensemble, will be held in the MSM Gymnasium. Tickets are \$6 before Oct. 20th, \$8 at the door (kids under 2 are free). Call John Hathaway, Director of Bands, at (716) 689-1100 to order your tickets.

**On November 9th, 10th at 7:30 p.m. and November 11th at 2:00 p.m.** MSM is proud to present the Fall Musical: The Wizard of Oz in the MSM Auditorium. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$8 for students. Please call the school at (716) 877-1358 for ticket information.

**November 13 through December 20th** – The MSM Raffle! The winning ticket will be drawn at the MSM Christmas Concert on December 20th. Don’t miss your chance to be \$5,000 richer! Tickets are \$2 each, or a book of 6 for \$10. Please call Barbara Johnson at (716) 877-1358 ext. 304 if you would like to purchase tickets.

**December 1st, 2007.** It’s breakfast with Santa to support the MSM Band! Tickets are \$10, but are limited in number, so book early. Please call John Hathaway, Director of Bands, at 689-1100, for more information.

### Shop MSM!

Visit our website, [www.mt-st-marys.org](http://www.mt-st-marys.org), to shop at our virtual store and stock up on the latest and greatest Mount St. Mary gear. You’ll find a range of items and styles – from MSM shirts and caps to pants, sweatshirts and other must-have accessories!

# REUNION NEWS

*Thank you to all of these Reunion Classes for their generous donations to the Mount!*

## Class of 1947

On June 30, twelve classmates from the Class of 1947 held their sixtieth reunion! They attended Mass at Christ the King Church and then proceeded to the Café in the Square where they had dinner in a private room. They enjoyed it greatly and relived many happy memories of their years at MSM. The women took up a collection and decided to split it between the school and the Sisters to whom they owe so much. Much to their dismay, no one thought to have a camera and no pictures were taken to commemorate this great occasion.

## Class of 1957

The Class of 1957 chose to start their reunion at the Mount by joining the 80th anniversary celebrations. Following the Mass and reception, classmates dined at Harry's Harbor Place in Buffalo. Inspired by the Mount's new altar furnishings, the Class hopes to make a donation to the MSM liturgical ministry program.



Class of 1957

## Class of 1967

The 40th reunion of the Class of '67 on Sept 8th was fantastic!! They had so much fun!! There were 45 out of 122 girls who went to the Eagle House in Williamsville for dinner, drinks and a lot of reminiscing. There was even talk about a 60th Birthday Bash in a couple of years for all the "boomers" born in '49. To honor the young women who are attending the Mount, the Class of 1967 made a generous donation to the Alumnae Scholarship Fund.



Class of 1967

## Class of 1977

On Friday, August 10, 35 women from the Class of 1977 met at "Off the Wall" restaurant to reminisce and share a lot of laughs and memories. The party continued the next day, when 20 more Mounties gathered for Mass, celebrated by Msgr. Weldgen, in the MSM chapel. Later they went on a tour of the school where the women sat in the study hall seats and had a few laughs remembering the good old days. The day was topped off with dinner at Frank's Sunny Italy. Cleverly, they have set up a Yahoo groups email list to stay in touch and continue to catch up with each other. More than \$700 was donated to MSM to purchase a map set and DVDs

for the Global Studies department with the remainder going to the fund to repair the front flagpole.

Save the date! The Class of 1977 is planning on holding a few more informal gatherings as well as attending the Mount's April 5, 2008 auction.



Class of 1977

## Class of 1982

It's hard to believe that 25 years have gone by, but you'd never know time had passed once these women got together! Their reunion was a two-day affair beginning with a get-together at Caputi's Pub in Tonawanda. The next night, a wine & cheese party was held at the Mount. A generous donation was made to the Alumnae Scholarship fund which helps incoming Mounties.



Class of 1982

## Class of 1997

Angela Christiano '97, who teaches at MSM, was happy to help co-ordinate the 10th reunion for the Class of 1997. The women spent a fun-filled evening enjoying dinner in the Mount's newly decorated conference room and touring the school. A lovely donation was made to the Alumnae Scholarship Fund and a locker plaque, reading "Class of 1997" is outside Miss Christiano's classroom to serve a reminder of their fun-filled evening.



Class of 1997

## Wish List for the Art Room

Thank you to all of you who helped us with our Social Studies wish list. We have been able to purchase almost everything on the list!

By making a monetary donation to help purchase the following items, you will have a direct impact on our Fine Arts program. Please make your gift payable to **Mount St. Mary Academy** and mail it to the **MSM Development Office** at 3756 Delaware Ave., Kenmore, NY 14217.

- Cloth-backed vinyl tablecloths for ceramics (52x 70 or larger)
- 20 Easels (\$50 each)
- Combination TV/VCR or DVD player for Art Room (\$250)
- 10 New Desks for Art Room (\$325 each)
- Large Paper Cutter (\$400)

### HIGHEST PRIORITY:

Ceramics is one of our most popular classes, and we will be in need of a new kiln soon. The kiln is fired almost daily, and the elements inside are breaking down. There's a lot of history with our current kiln...before being moved up three floors to its new home in the Fine Arts studios, it actually survived being encased in ice when a pipe burst in the boiler room!

*Estimated cost: \$3,000 for kiln and new downdraft vent*

# 80TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The weather was picture-perfect as the Mount celebrated its 80th anniversary. Nearly 500 alumnae, students, family and friends gathered to share this very special day together. Monsignor Francis Weldgen led a spirited liturgy, which was highlighted by 80 roses being placed in front of the altar to represent each of our years of educational excellence.

The day was graced with a new altar and liturgical furnishings that were custom-made for the Mount through a generous grant from the Koch Foundation.

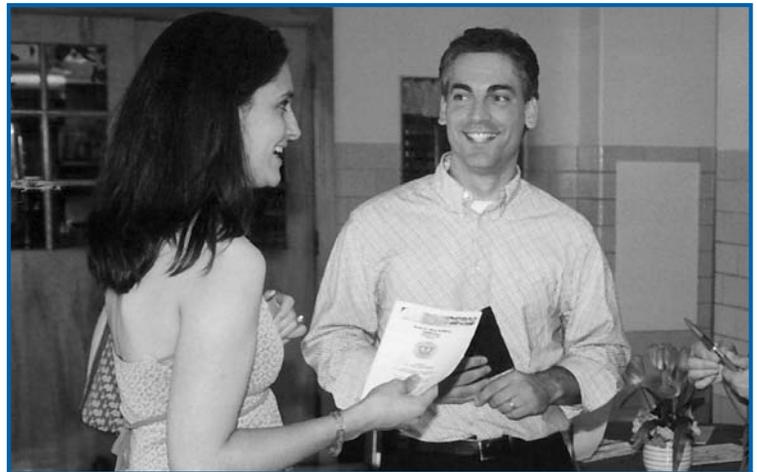
A grant from the M&T Charitable Foundation, along with private donations, funded a new video screen and projection system that were used to premiere a moving video tribute to the women and mission of Mount St. Mary Academy. The video was produced by MSM Board of Trustees member, Ben Richey (husband of Melissa Mergl Richey '93), narrated by senior Emily Young '08, and featured many alumnae and our beloved Sisters, including Sr. Helen Mary from the Class of 1932. Truly, there was not a dry eye in the house! You may order a copy of the DVD by sending your \$15 check, payable to Mount St. Mary Academy, to Barbara Johnson, Director of Development, MSM, 3756 Delaware Ave., Kenmore NY 14217.

A lovely reception was held on the front lawn with a very special performance of the MSM Marching Band and Dance Team. This was the first opportunity for many MSM alumnae to see the award-winning band perform.

Thank you to Beth Hoch Latko '84 for being our photographer for the day!



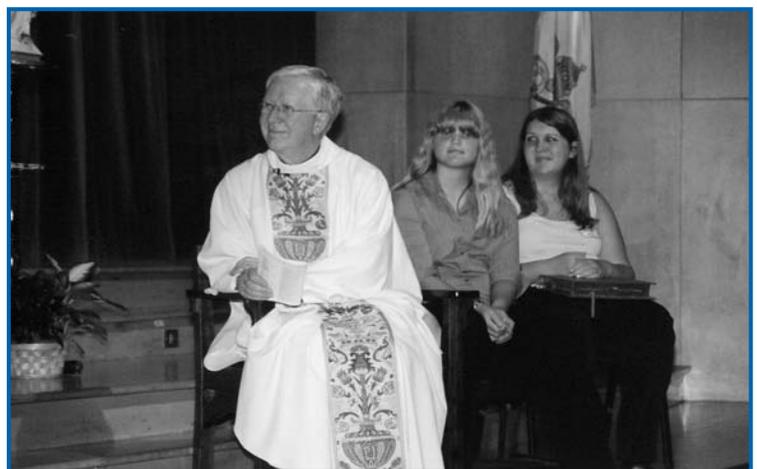
*MSM women placing roses symbolic of our 80 years.*



*Ben Richey and wife, Melissa Mergl Richey '93*



*Marcella Forde Uhlman '54 and Mary Theresa Furfari Colson '54 share a moment by an archival display.*



*Rev. Msgr. Weldgen with altar servers, Jennifer Grimm '11 and Jaclyn Reinhart '10.*



*The MSM Marching Band makes a breath-taking performance.*



*The newly renovated cafeteria showcased MSM yearbooks, photos and merchandise.*



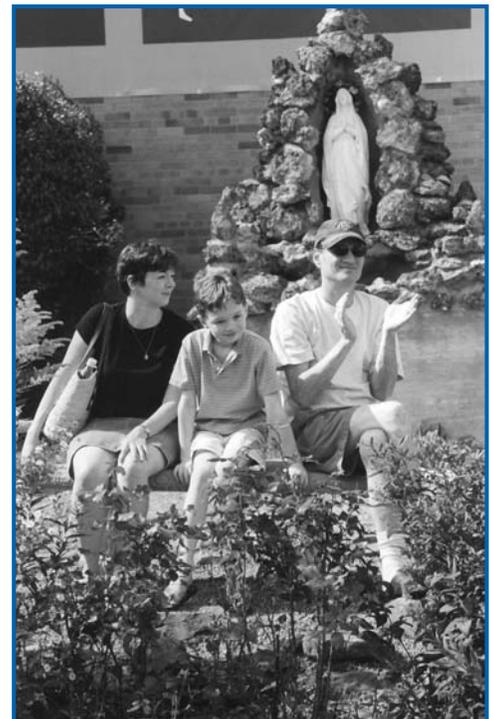
*Mr. Joseph Emminger, Councilman, presents Mrs. Riggie with Town of Tonawanda Proclamation.*



*Sr. Catherine carries the Cross bearing the Corpus she designed.*



*Faculty member, Mary Ann Fancher, enjoys a moment with Sr. Margaret Francis and Sr. Mary Helen '32.*



*An MSM Family enjoys a moment in the Grotto.*

# Alumnae NEWS

## Engagements & Weddings

**Melissa Gagliardo (1998)** and Tom Smith were married on July 13, 2007. **Colleen Allen Nuedell (1998)** was a bridesmaid and **Katie Battaglia (1998)** was the soloist for the ceremony. Tom and Melissa are both teachers and will make their home in Clarence, New York.

**Jayne Kolipinski Andrukut (1974)** was married in February 2007 to John Andrukut. After working 18 years as a bookkeeper in her family's business, Jayne is now employed as a secretary for the New York State Division of Parole. John and Jayne reside in a North Boston, New York.

**Beth Hoch Latko (1984)** was married this past April. The wedding was held on Sanibel Island, Florida.

**Natasha May (2003)** and Daniel Zeal announced their engagement. The wedding date is set for July 13, 2008 in Jacksonville, Florida.



**Jennifer Simmons (1999)** and Matthew Wright were married on May 19, 2007. They both attended SUNY Brockport and graduated in May 2003.

## New Arrivals

**Shannon Cavanaugh Lembke (1992)** and her husband Brian announce the birth of their son, Kiernan Cavanaugh Lembke, who was born on March 14, 2007. Kiernan joins big sister Maeve. **Kathleen Lembke Dyring (1998)** is the proud aunt!

Jeff and **Robin Kaminska Donlon (1995)** announce the arrival their second child, Sean Robert. He was born on April 16, 2007 and weighed in at 9 pounds. Sean joins big

brother Brent (2 1/2). Also beaming with joy is grandmother, **Donna Lask Kaminska (1970)**.

Randy and **Danae Kraws Rush (1986)** announce the birth of their daughter, Kaitlyn, on May 24, 2007.

**Erin McNeill Radley** and husband, Bo, welcomed their first child, Connor McNeill Radley on October 8, 2006. Connor is the nephew of **Sara McNeill (2000)** and cousin of **Hilary Kleppe (2003)** and **Rachel Saltarelli (2010)**.

Evan Carter Richey was born on April 25, 2007 to Benjamin and **Melissa Mergl Richey (1993)**. He joins older brother Colin (3). The proud grandmother is **Francine Militello Mergl (1969)**. Evan is a cousin to **Michele Militello (2000)** and **Megan Militello (2004)**.

**Lynne Pokrzyk Niclair (1994)** and her husband Jean-Hugues announced the birth of their daughter, Lauren Catherine, who was born on April 25, 2007. **Leigh Pokrzyk Petri (1996)** is the proud aunt.

On January 17, 2007, Kevin and **Venus Russin Szczepanski (1985)** welcomed the birth of their child, Verity Russin Szczepanski. Verity joins big brother Walker who is 17 months old.

James and **Laura Williams Crowley (1989)** welcomed their first child, Benjamin Crowley, into the world on September 7, 2006. Laura says "we're enjoying our new adventures as a family."

## In Memoriam

*Please pray for the following members of the Mount community who have passed on.*

**Sister Richard Barry (Mary Ann 1944)**, June 1, 2007. Although Mary Ann attended Annunciation High School for three years, she then entered the community of the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur and attended the Mount during her postulant year.

**Barbara A. Folvarcik (1957)**, April 8, 2007. Barbara remembered Mount St. Mary Academy with a gift to the Athletic Fund.

**Kathryn Marie Gauchat Jamberdino (1965)** passed away May 26, 2007, sister of **Mary Jane Gauchat Marino (1969)** and **Margaret Gauchat Breidenstein (1964)**.

**Rita Gaulin (1944)** passed away on July 18, 2007, sister of **Marie Gaulin Vogt (1950)**.

Joseph Golombek, father of **Deborah Golombek Varga (1971)** passed away on July 2, 2007.

**Juliann Grandits Rengert (1965)**, April 18, 2007.

**Margaret Grobe Johnston (1958)**, March 1, 2007, sister of **Susan Grobe (1959)**.

Patricia Jacobi, April 4, 2007, stepmother of **Mary Claire Jacobi Knapp (1967)** and **Anne Jacobi White (1970)**.

Helen Schmitt Jakiel, May 30, 2007, mother of **Anne Jakiel (1974)**, **Marjorie Jakiel (1975)**, and **Lisa Jakiel Baco (1978)**; mother-in-law of **Mary McMahan Jakiel (1975)**; grandmother of **Kelly Jakiel (2004)**, **Amy Jakiel (2006)** and **Laura Jakiel (2008)** and **Meagan Baco (2002)**.

**Susan Jedlikowski Futterman (1971)**, June 19, 2007.

Joseph W. Kolkmeier, May 5, 2007, father of **Carol Kolkmeier Beasley (1970)**, **Jean Kolkmeier Hoover (1973)** and **Susan Kolkmeier Robb (1977)**.

**Nancy O'Grady Curley (1942)**, May 10, 2007.

**Rosemary Perry Hinaman (1954)**, June 13, 2007, sister of **Virginia Perry Wrazin (1952)** and grandmother of **Jessica Hinaman (2011)**.

**Nessema (Sema) Peter Seibold (1959)**, July 10, 2007.

Suzanne Raiff Sharpe (1954), April 23, 2007.

Arnold Sobocinski, Sr., June 11, 2007, grandfather of **Andrea (1999)**, **Holly (2002)** and **Jesse Sobocinski (2007)**.

**Marjorie Sullivan Fanning (1949)**, August 12, 2007, mother of **Kathryn Fanning Hall (1984)**.

**Barbara Tuyn (1958)**, March 2, 2007, sister of **Julie Tuyn Wortham (1976)**.

## Bulletin Board

**Cara Brewer (2003)**, graduated magna cum laude from Canisius College with a Bachelor degree in Psychology. She is currently working on her Masters degree in Mental Health Counseling at Canisius.

**Caryl Denler Kershner (1965)** and her husband Ron have retired and moved to Crystal River, Florida.

**Nicole Killian (2000)**, who previously worked at MTV News, has been working at Nickelodeon as a Senior Designer since November 2006 where she has designed for Spongebob Squarepants, The Naked Brothers Band, The Backyardigans, Dora the Explorer and Ni Hao, and Kai-an, a new bilingual (English/Chinese) cartoon. Nicole is currently living in Brooklyn, New York.

**Sue Lauchert Mangold (1982)** is currently living in Lockport, New York and would love to hear from her fellow alumnae. You may contact Sue at [sue@niagarafunding.com](mailto:sue@niagarafunding.com).

**Jennifer Ortner Hahn (1998)** was married this past June. Jennifer is currently working at Immaculate Conception School as a Religion teacher. She has just started her Masters Degree in Education-Literacy.

**Lynne Niclair Pokrzyk (1994)** is a publisher representative for Prentice Hall. Her territory includes large universities like Purdue and Indiana University. In March 2007, Lynne was recognized at the Prentice Hall Sales Meeting in Chicago, IL, for being a top sales performer in the Engineering, Science, and Math college textbook division.

**Rabia Syed Stevenson (1999)** graduated from the University at Buffalo with a Doctor of Pharmacy Degree. Rabia and her husband Brendan will be moving to Rochester where Rabia will be working at Parkridge Hospital.

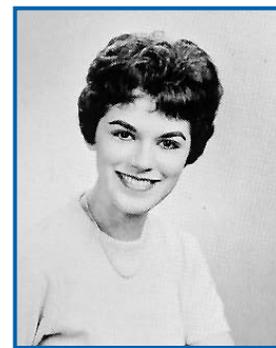
**Liz Vetrano (2001)** is currently working at Channel 2 – WGRZ in Buffalo every weekday morning as the Traffic Tracker reporter. Liz also is a freelancer with Business First and has a weekly column, “Dropping In” where she profiles different after-work hotspots. In addition to her busy schedule, Liz finds time to speak with **Julie Rosnecker Wojick (1985)** and her public relations class at the Mount. She has also mentored two of the Mount’s aspiring journalists this year. Liz would like her fellow Mounties to visit her travel themed blog at [www.wgrz.com/news/columnist/blogs/staffBlogs/vetrano/Vetrano.aspx](http://www.wgrz.com/news/columnist/blogs/staffBlogs/vetrano/Vetrano.aspx)

**Katie Ward (2000)** is currently working on her Masters degree in English Secondary Education at St. Bonaventure University. Katie and husband Joe Menichino live in Olean, New York.

*To submit your update, please visit the Mount website at [www.mt-st-marys.org](http://www.mt-st-marys.org).*

## Elizabeth Booth Hoffman '60

January 26, 1942 – August 16, 2007



It's with such sadness that we said good-bye to our good friend, Betty Hoffman.

At her funeral service, the Rev. Charles Slisz described Betty as “a person of great determination...a pioneer.” Indeed, Betty was just that to the Western New York community. As a woman, she was a pioneer in politics, crediting her MSM education with her success. In an interview last year, Betty explained, “The education I received at Mount St. Mary Academy taught me that there were no limits on what I could accomplish. I didn't have to be a secretary in a company; I could be the president. I didn't have to be a nurse; I could be a doctor. These were very empowering ideas in 1960.”

Despite her illness and physical limitations in more recent years, Betty continued to work tirelessly for local charities. Her alma mater, where her granddaughter, Nicole Farrell is a junior, was always first on her list as she was a strong supporter of the Mount's annual fund and auction. Over the past year, Betty worked closely with the MSM development office to chair a fundraising campaign to renovate the student dining hall — a project that has been beautifully completed. It was her goal to continue her work so that the kitchen could be remodeled as well.

Betty's daughter, Heidi Hoffman Winkler '89, has pledged to pick up where her mother left off and is starting by hosting a gift gathering party for the 2008 Chrysalis Auction.

May God bless Betty's family and comfort them in the loss. The Mount St. Mary Academy community will truly miss her.

### SARA SUSTY PRELEWICZ '80 MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP EVENT

*By Michele, Missy, Mike, Matt and Mark Prelewicz*

On Sunday, August 29th, 28 friends golfed during the day and over 50 attended the dinner party to support an annual MSM scholarship given in Sara's memory. This year's event was held at Glen Oak Golf Resort in Amherst, NY where there was golf, food, drink, raffles and a lot of fun. This year's scholarship recipient, MSM freshman Elise Rahner, was present. The golf outing was a success and with the positive feedback, it's hoped to be bigger and better next year!

Thanks to all who attended and to those who have sent donation – your support is sincerely appreciated by the family. **LIVE, LAUGH and LOVE!**

# 2007 ALUMNAE AWARD WINNERS

Baccalaureate Mass is always a very special evening. It's joyous as the Mount's senior class is inducted into the Alumnae Association, and it's sorrowful, as we know we are saying goodbye to these young women as they move to the next phase of their lives. It's also an opportunity for the Mount to honor members of its own community who have excelled in some dimension of our mission.



*L-R:  
Janet Andelora,  
Kathleen Rizzo Young,  
Mary Pat Pauly,  
Danielle Donner,  
Jesse Sobocinski*

## Alumna of the Year Award:

The Alumna of the Year Award was presented to Mary Patricia Pauly, Class of 1967. Mary Pat graduated Magna cum Laude from Canisius College with a major in Premedical Studies, continued her education at the University of Chicago Medical School, and then completed her medical training specializing in Gastroenterology. Today, Mary Pat is a highly respect physician who has received many awards for excellence in her field of study.

It was during Mary Pat's residency when she met Ronald Petrich. They married and settled in Sacramento, California. Despite this distance, Mary Pat has always remained connected to the Mount as she continued her work as a full-time physician, and raised two sons, Michael and Matthew, in a strict but loving Christian environment.

Mary Pat's older son, Michael, followed in his mother's footsteps and is currently working as a medical resident specializing in radiology. Mary Pat's younger son, Matthew, graduated from Santa Clara University and elected to work with the Jesuit Volunteers International as a teacher in Mobibo, Tanzania. As the world was becoming a more violent and dangerous place, many mothers were discouraging their sons and daughters from leaving the United States. Mary Pat, however, later joined her son viewing this as an opportunity to travel, explore and practice medicine in Africa. She applied her skills as a physician while working with the Maryknoll Missionaries at the PASADA (Pastoral Activities and Services for People with AIDS). She would later describe her experience as transformational from both a professional and personal perspective.

Mary Pat was nominated for this award by Elizabeth O'Connor Slaminko '74, who wrote that she always looked to Mary Pat as a source of inspiration when personal goals seemed out of reach.

Her love of family, church and community are a direct result of the nurturing she received from her parents and teachers. She is a woman of integrity, compassion and a most deserving candidate for Alumna of the Year.

## Volunteer of the Year

The Volunteer of the Year award is given to an individual who embodies the Mount's tradition of service to others and was presented to Kathleen Rizzo Young of the Class of '77.

Being a busy mom to daughter, Emily '08, and son, Jonathon, Kathie has always demonstrated her willingness to volunteer for the benefit of others.

A graduate of Daemen College, Kathie is currently Senior Vice President of Community Development at HSBC-North America where she has worked since 1998. Prior to assuming her current role, she served as SVP and group director, Public Affairs and also served for two years as president of HSBC in the Community (USA) Inc., the bank's charitable foundation.

In June 2000, she was named "Practitioner of the Year" by the Public Relations Society of America, Buffalo Niagara Chapter and was nominated for the Athena Award in 2006. She currently serves on the Buffalo Niagara Partnership's Community Council, the boards of the Brothers of Mercy Campus Foundation and Community Music School of Buffalo. She has served on the boards of the Western New York Women's Fund and Leadership Buffalo, where she was a member of the Class of 1991.

A contributing writer to The Buffalo News since 1993, her work has also appeared in national publications. She has hosted several radio talk show programs and is an experienced public speaker.

Kathie volunteers for all the right reasons. She volunteers throughout the community to promote the arts, to improve our quality of life in Western New York, and here at the Mount, she has dedicated herself to improving the experience shared by our students. This past year, Kathie chaired our Chrysalis auction. Along with her husband, Ken, and co-chairs Tracey and Jeff Levy, she ensured that the auction was the most successful in our history. She has stepped up to the plate again for the 2008 Auction where she pledges to raise \$80,000 for our 80 years!

## Honorary Alumna Inductee

The word "Mountie" encompasses many qualities students who attend Mount St. Mary have...someone who is fun loving, loyal to the Academy, always willing to lend a hand, and dedicated to the traditions set forth by the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur. In every sense, Janet Andelora is a "Mountie."

Janet has been teaching at the Mount for 15 years. She inspires students in her English classes to be the best they can be while modeling a true love of the mission and values of MSM. Janet's dedication to the Mount is far-reaching. She is the first to offer assistance whenever it is needed. Living almost 50 minutes away does not deter Janet from being one of the first people to arrive at MSM daily to be sure the bookstore is open in time for students. She has driven through many a snowstorm most would not even consider attempting just because of her strong commitment and dedication to the school and her students.

As a Student Council moderator for 13 years, Janet has put in a tremendous amount of hours at a multitude of school events. No matter what the activity, one can always expect to see Janet Andelora pitching in with a smile on her face, paying attention to even the most minute details to ensure the event is fun for "the girls." Almost anytime you can see her, she is wearing some kind of "Mountie" attire, so that there is no mistaking how proud she is to be a part of the Mount.

Janet has often said she wishes she had gone to a school like MSM. Although we cannot turn back time, we couldn't think of a better example of what a "Mountie" is and therefore proudly inducted Janet Andelora as an Honorary Alumna.

### Students Volunteers of the Year

This year, the decision was too difficult to narrow to just one young woman; therefore, two seniors were given this honor: Danielle Donner and Jesse Sobocinski.

Danielle has said that it's "such a joy to help others." She has obviously had a joyful life as her volunteer commitment started at a young age. When Danielle was in kindergarten she participated in a summer program at the United Cerebral Palsy Association. Even at this early age Danielle understood the importance of sharing her time and talents.

Each Christmas Eve, you'll find Danielle loading cars with Christmas trees, wreaths,

food and gifts for families that would be without during the Christmas season. In the community, she has volunteered in nursing homes, the Kenton Sleep out for Charity, Vacation Bible School and religious education at St. Albert the Great where she has been described as being "responsible and totally aware of her students' needs." At the Mount, Danielle has been involved with Serateens, Dream Team and Eucharistic Ministry and has been one of the smiling faces that greet prospective students at Open House.

Jesse's service goal is "to be the biggest help possible to her supervisors." A sports enthusiast and team player, Jesse has applied her talents by volunteering with Hertel North Park Softball and St. Andrew's Soccer. Her compassion has been demonstrated through community service with the elderly at Holy Family Residence and Schofield Residence, and with the needy at St. Luke's mission – particularly at Thanksgiving. At the Mount, Jesse participated in Serateens, the Youth to Youth Club, Community Service Club, and Dreams Unlimited.

She recently wrote an article for Focus explaining that the most heartwarming service experience she has had was at Women's and Children's Hospital where she spent time with the young patients who were recovering from serious accidents. Together they would play games, do puzzles, read stories and ensure they were having a good time in order to forget their medical problems. This interaction has sparked Jesse's interest in a career in the medical field.

Jesse and Danielle were an integral part of the development and alumnae team at the Mount – preparing appeals, making thank you calls to donors, visiting elderly alum, and helping with alumnae and donor events. They worked tirelessly to ensure our Chrysalis auction was a success, knowing that the Mount and future students would benefit greatly from the work they were doing.

***Congratulations to all of our award winners.***

### ***Laura Bork was Valedictorian for the Class of 2007.***

Below is an excerpt from her speech to her classmates, family and friends.



*You may not realize it, but every single person in this auditorium has something in common.*

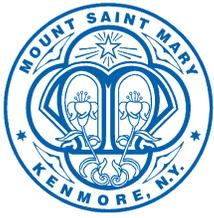
*Whether it be at school, the office, or at home...each and every one of us strives for success. Although we all may aspire for success, are we certain of its meaning?*

*One graduate stated that success isn't just measured by class ranking or the number of goals scored on the soccer field. Rather, success is getting up each morning and attempting to do God's will, regardless of the difficulty level. Another graduate said success was earning the respect of her teachers, parents, and peers. Others said it was feeling good about who you are and liking yourself. Moreover, a vast majority of the class wrote that success is working to the best of one's ability, even when failure seems imminent. In addition, I believe that the Mount has helped us to identify our own unique strengths and talents, encouraging us to use them to the best of our abilities.*

*To the Class of 2007, success refers to the quality of what lies within an individual and how one uses those admirable traits to do what is right. As I look back over the past four years, our class's actions have truly exemplified what it means to be successful. Whether it was spending thousands of hours serving the community, tutoring underclasswomen in the Learning Center, helping the less fortunate to provide a memorable Christmas for their children, or assisting, with less fanfare, everyday in so many ways, the graduates have sacrificed their time and energy to aid others. Acts such as these are the true meaning of success. And, it is quite evident that the Class of 2007 is successful!*

*As graduates, we are obliged to go forth and strive to make a difference by living the mission statement that the Mount has instilled in us: Guided by Catholic tradition, and rooted in Gospel values, we must remain dedicated to our individuality and, most importantly, moral integrity.*

*So now my fellow graduates, I challenge you to take the invaluable lessons of respect, acceptance, and integrity, the same values that have surrounded us on the hallway banners this year, and apply them to your life as you pursue success. From this day forward, let us go forth, embracing our future and willing to face our challenges with courage and dignity, while shaping the world into a better place because of who we are!*



*Focus*

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## Save the Date for the 2008

### Chrysalis Auction on Saturday, April 5th

#### Mount-aritaville II: Back to the Beach

Chairperson, Kathleen Rizzo Young '77, pledges to raise "\$80,000 for 80 years!"

Can you help us reach our goal by following the lead of Kathleen Sinclair Lannen '74 and her mom, Mary Ellen Seifert Sinclair '47, who last year donated a Chicago get-away including air, hotel, limo, and theatre tickets? Or, Jean Sullivan Canty '74, who donated a one-week stay in her home in Ireland?

Why not attend or host a gift gathering party like Marcia Duquette Noto '70, or gather your friends to reserve a table on auction night like Debra Hall-Stonish '71?

With your donations, sponsorships and attendance, we'll make this a beach party to remember. Call (716) 877-1358 ext. 306 to find out more or reserve your tickets!

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*Focus*

*The Alumnae Newsletter of  
Mount St. Mary Academy*

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*(Spring, Fall & Winter)*

We welcome your comments!

*Please send them to:*

*Focus*

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