Mount Opens Its Doors for Prospective Students

On Sunday, September 24 from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. and again on Monday, September 25 from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m., the Mount St. Mary Academy Campus will be visited by literally hundreds of 6th, 7th and 8th grade girls and their parents.

It’s our annual Open House -- an exciting opportunity to showcase our faculty and programs, highlight our achievements and share the warmth that sets the Mount apart from its competitors.

The Mount clearly continues to be the school of choice as competition for placement is at an all-time high. Prospective students value our blend of time-honored traditions with state-of-the-art learning, in addition to small class sizes, individual attention and a sense of “family.”

Students who wish to join Mount St. Mary Academy’s freshman class must complete an application and take the Catholic High Schools Placement Test. This test is offered on November 18, 2006 at 8:30 a.m. at our school.

Our alumnae play an active role during Open House. Members of the Alumnae Association, whose purpose is to strengthen and support their allegiance to Mount St. Mary Academy, prepare a display of Mount memorabilia highlighting the school’s history, and welcome these young women to our community, as well as answer questions about the Alumnae Association. In addition, support of alumnae-sponsored events throughout the year helps to fund several scholarships that are available to freshmen.

Some scholarship winners from the Class of 2009 have written:

“This year has gone by so fast and I have enjoyed every moment of it. Mount St. Mary’s is a very welcoming school and made me feel right at home. The teachers are great and I have made many new friends. At Mount we have so many fun activities that I think it brings us together like a family. From my first day at Mount I knew I was going to love it and it hasn’t let me down.”

“The teachers are very smart and know how to deal with kids. I am enjoying life here at Mount and I can tell that my peers are too.”

Alumnae who are interested in helping at Open House or serving on the scholarship committee should contact Barbara Johnson at 877-1358 ext. 304 or bjohnson@mt-st-mar.org. Questions about the admissions process should be directed to Julie Wojick ’85, Director of Admissions and Public Relations at 877-1358 ext. 219 or jwojick@mt-st-mar.org.

Do you know a Mountie-to-be?

Do you know a middle school girl who would make a great Mountie? Maybe she’s your daughter...or niece...or granddaughter.

We’d like to invite this Mountie-to-be to great events designed especially for girls her age and introduce her to all the wonderful things going on at Mount St. Mary Academy – but we need your help.

Contact Julie Wojick ‘85 at mailto:jwojick@mt-st-mar.org or 877-1358 ext. 219 with her name, address, grade, school and phone number, and we’ll be sure she doesn’t miss out on the happenings at MSM.
Dear Alumnae,

I hope you are having a wonderful summer so far – resting, relaxing, reading and recreating. At the Mount it’s been a busy summer for us with a variety of sports camps, fun camps, and academic classes. As usual during the summer we look forward to and prepare for the next academic year, which is just around the corner. Our theme for this academic year will be “Celebrate our Mission!” which is a reflection on our work for our Middle States re-accreditation.

Our faculty and staff will begin the year gathering together at Stella Niagara with a professional development program titled, “Forging the Future in Challenging Times.” This opportunity starts us off working on our Middle States action plans addressing one of our many strategies - To inspire students to internalize the Catholic tradition, Mount St. Mary faculty and staff will work as a community to understand and embrace Gospel Values and Catholic identity. Our first activity in this strategy is to focus part of our staff professional development on Gospel Values and Catholic Identity and this workshop should be a great way for us to begin!

In so many ways the hard and very valuable work of the Academy’s Middle States Planning Team will be the heart of our work with our young women. Our Academy’s foundation documents -- Mission Statement (see page 1), Philosophy, Value Statements, Vision and Graduate Profile -- have been examined, enhanced and renewed. They form and focus our planning. (A special thank you to all of you who took the time to respond to our survey last year – your input has been invaluable.) Our students need to be prepared for the world they will inherit, a world where change is the only constant. Alumnae, parents, students, faculty, staff and administration work together to set this Academy apart as a nourishing, challenging, excellent high school for young women. It is a place that enriches the minds, hearts, bodies and souls of young women so they may emerge as leaders in our changing world.

In one short year we will celebrate our 80th anniversary. Anniversaries always prompt us to look back nostalgically and challenge us to look forward hopefully. As I look back nostalgically I marvel at all the wonderful young women who have walked these halls, been formed by the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur, and the fine lay women and men who have staffed this school. The gifts of the Sisters, this Academy we all love, and their charisms -- simplicity, joy, service prayer -- are gifts we treasure. I am struck with the responsibility we all share – to pass on the wonderful gifts we have been given to the next generation of young women. We plan hopefully for the future of this beloved Academy with your support.

I thank you all for your prayers, financial support, involvement and well wishes. How wonderful it is that together we can pass on to future young women the very same gifts given to each of us.

Rooted in the past, celebrating our present and planning for the future -- that’s Mount St. Mary Academy. I wish you all, sister alumnae, a blessed and peaceful summer!

Dawn Hurley Riggie ‘71
Principal

Destination – Chrysalis!

Co-chairs Kathy Rizzo Young ‘77 and Jeffrey Levy announce the theme for Chrysalis 2007 -- “Mount-arataville – A Caribbean Festival”!

Chrysalis is the hottest destination around and helps the Mount remain one of the top schools in Western New York. So please make sure you join us on Saturday, March 24, 2007 for an evening of fabulous fun, frivolity and fundraising for your favorite charity – the Mount!

Tickets will be only $75 per person plus we’ll have a special early bird incentive, so stay in touch so you don’t miss out! All the proceeds help us maintain and improve our landmark building and programs.

Want to be part of the Chrysalis team? Consider volunteering to help, or maybe you could host a gift gathering party, sell an ad or make a cash donation? And don’t forget about our Ladies’ Gift Gathering – see page 8 for details. Looking for a way to help from a distance? Maybe you or someone you know could donate travel tickets, time-shares, or tickets to Disney or attractions in your area?

In the meantime, plan on donning your flip-flops and joining us on March 24th! Don’t forget our MSM raffle either. Running this fall, the 1st prize will once again be $10,000 – a prize won this past spring by MSM alumnae, Kate Knoble Tanner ‘81. The winning ticket will be drawn during the MSM Musical in November, so look for your tickets in September’s mail.
MSM Band Receives Grand Champion Awards

In 2002, when the Mount’s Band Director, John Hathaway, started at the Mount, no one would have realized that more than half of the Mount’s students would become involved in band, nor would anyone have realized that in this very short period of time, the MSM band would become such an award-winning and treasured program. Indeed, it has been a busy and exciting time for the band, and they have done a remarkable job representing MSM at several events.

Recently, the band was given the opportunity to perform on a Carnival cruise, and it was a thrill for the girls to play on the same stage as the professionals. In May, the concert band, jazz ensemble, and orchestra competed at Six Flags Darien Lake. The concert band and jazz ensemble placed first in their class, and the orchestra placed second. Additionally, both the jazz ensemble and concert band received grand champion awards. The jazz ensemble also received section awards for the keyboard and sax sections, and nine students were recognized with soloist awards.

With September quickly approaching, the band has already made many plans for the upcoming school year. On Labor Day, September 4th, the girls will be marching in a noon-time parade at Fort Niagara in Youngstown, and on September 9th, they will be marching in the Lewiston Peach Festival parade. The band will also be performing with the UB band and several other high school bands during the UB Band Day Half Time Show on Saturday, October 7th. The Mass Band will be the largest musical group to perform in UB Stadium since the 1960’s. This year the band will making a return trip to New York City to march in the St. Patrick’s Day parade. The parade is a New York City tradition and a huge honor for the band. Come see the band perform and show your support for MSM!

To raise money for band activities and instrument repair and purchases, the band will be holding several fundraisers this year. The MSM band appreciates all the support it receives from its fundraising events and has worked hard to ensure that they will be enjoyable experiences for everyone involved. Your support at these fundraising events is a great way to show your continuing support for the MSM community.

Annual Craft Show, Sunday, November 5th, 2006

Featuring a wide variety of crafters, this show is a great way to pick up a unique gift for the person who has everything, or to add to your own collection of holiday decorations. There is sure to be something to suit any taste. Come back to the Mount for this wonderful event!

Grove City Shopping Trip, December 2nd, 2006

The price of $35 per person includes transportation by coach bus to the Prime Outlets Mall in Grove City, Pennsylvania, breakfast on the bus, a day full of shopping, and refreshments on the way back. The Grove City Mall features over 140 brand name stores including Tommy Hilfiger, Banana Republic, Jones NY, Old Navy, and American Eagle. Everyone who goes on this trip will receive a complimentary goodie bag filled with money-saving coupons. This is a great way to get your Christmas shopping done, and get ahead of the holiday rush. For tickets, contact our band director, John Hathaway, at 716-689-1100. Space is limited, so be sure to reserve your spot early.

A Special Thank You!

Lowe’s Charitable and Educational Foundation has awarded a $4,900 Toolbox for Education grant to Mount St. Mary Academy to help create an Internet Club Café as a gathering place for students before and after school.

The school intends to create a fun, “hip” gathering where students can hang out, get their snacks, and do some work in a safe environment. As well as providing computer access, light refreshments along with specialty coffees and teas will be served. Managed by students, this opportunity will provide valuable business experience to the teenagers as well as providing a means of raising money for the teams and club in which they participate.
Alumnae Awards

On May 23rd, MSM Alumnae gathered to honor four special people who have made a difference in their community.

Alumnae of the Year was awarded to Francine Militello Mergl ’69 for her strong commitment and dedication to her family, faith, community and lifelong learning. We’re proud to recognize Fran for being a positive role model and for her continued involvement at the Mount. Fran challenges herself and inspires those around her to be better people.

Jeffrey Levy, father Katie Levy from the class of 2007, was honored as Volunteer of the Year. For the past three years, Jeff has quietly yet fervently devoted his time, skills and patience, particularly to the MSM Band and Chrysalis Auction. In fact, Jeff is co-chairing the 2007 auction event. We’re grateful to Jeff and inspired by his spirit of community service.

Robert Rathbun, or “Bob” as referred to by all MSM students and faculty, was named as Honorary Alumnae. Bob is a staff member of the Mount – part of our marvelous custodian team who has the afternoon shift. He gently and good-naturedly ensures each student and staff member is safely on her way home each day. He lends a hand with each event and an ear to each crisis in our lives. His dedication to his Catholic faith and community, as well as his generous spirit is the definition of “Mountie.”

Student Volunteer of the Year was awarded to Sarah Mahoney. Sarah graduated this June with the Class of 2006 and was so surprised to receive this award. However, for the past four years, Sarah has exemplified community service. She’d lend a hand wherever needed and reflects her family’s dedication to support those in need in the community. Her generous heart will guide her well through her future.

MSM Staff and Faculty Lend A Hand

The MSM team truly strives to model community service to the students. All of the staff and faculty can be (unbiasedly) described as “outstanding”. They also find enormous energy to volunteer their talent at the Mount as well. In addition to time, there is their financial generosity too. If they don’t give money to the AGP or a special project – they are buying raffle tickets and paying their way to MSM events.

Did you know that there are a lot of alumnae who just couldn’t stay away so they’ve decided to work at the Mount too? Among the numbers are Lisa Jakiel Baco ’78, Angela Christiano ’97, Rachael Romano Kittelson ’89, Anne Kohl ’84, Gail McDonald ’00, Jennifer Pritz-Jones ’96, Dawn Hurley Riggie ’71, St. Catherine Taberski ’63, Marcella Forde Uhlman ’54, Nicole Wilkinson ’00, and Julie Rosenecker Wojick ’85.

Anne Kohl ’84 is the school’s business manager and an avid donor to our special projects. “I recognize that some of these projects just couldn’t happen without the support of our alumnae and I want to do what I can,” says Anne. In addition to supporting one of our priority projects this year, Anne contributed to a beautification project and purchased a needed magazine subscription for one of our classes – a creative idea that truly helps meet our needs.

Julie Rosenecker Wojick ’85 is another who thinks outside the box for her giving. She is among the many faculty members who contribute to a special scholarship fund. In addition to that, Julie and her siblings have embraced a growing trend – rather than giving a Christmas gift to one another, they make a donation to a favorite charity. Luckily for us – the Roseneckers have chosen the Mount!

Thanks to the entire team for keeping the MSM wheels oiled so finely!

Library Media Center Takes Shape

Inspired by necessity and formed by vision and dedication, this new space is quickly taking shape thanks to our leadership and generous support from our friends.

Initially two separate spaces divided by a center wall, the Library Media Center will join our Library to the Technology Lab. The shared wall was removed and glass doors put in place, computer cabling updated, and the space unified through its décor. Upgrades and increases in the number of computers will ensure that the Mount can meet the increased technology needs of its growing student body.

AGP (annual giving program) donations help fund special projects such as this, however, donations can be restricted to use in a special project as well. Alumnae and friends who made a direct contribution to this project include:

Anne Flynn Bauer ’62
Janice King Becker ’53
Suzanne Fuhrman Robinson ’56 (deceased)
Carol Wolf Pope ’59
Jean MacKay Reilly ’99
Claire Brachmann Perez ’62
Pamela Holmlen ’62
Deborah Wahlter Russell ’67
Maryruth Phillips Gligoswki ’68
Flora Lott Dorasaki ’70
Patricia Wishman Cryder ’72
Betsy O’Connor White ’75
Margaret Welch ’75
Kathy Hodschier Gleco ’81
Dawn Monette Gallivan ’83
Mary Bagley ’84
Sue Power O’Donnell ’86
Denise Rosita Gavilan ’86
Christina Farcher Cocklinina ’94
Catherine Farcher-Mongalo ’97
Karen Russell Belton ’97
Elizabeth Estoff ’00
Patricia Becker ’01
Emily Chance ’05
Tom Leous
David Dooley, husband of Moira Sullivan
Dooley ’76, and his company, MJW Corporation
Karls Rick
Chrysalis Auction Atendees

Alumnae award recipients take time to pose for a photo. From left to right: Francine Militello Mergl ’69, Bob Rathbun, Sarah Mahoney, Jeffrey Levy.
CLASS OF 1946 RETURNS “HOME” FOR REUNION CELEBRATIONS

The Class of 1946 may very well have held the longest reunion celebrations to date. They began on June 4th when they joined other Mount Alumnae and the graduating Class of 2006. Their day began with Mass in the Chapel followed by brunch where they looked through scrapbooks, photos and issues of their own Blue Light. During the graduation ceremony, the women were presented with red roses and an honorary diploma and then joined other classmates at a nearby restaurant. On the following Saturday, they went to St. Mary’s Center to visit the Sisters and shared Mass and a meal. After a day of rest, the women traveled to the races at Fort Erie. Carol Bauer Shattuck, who came the farthest (from Los Angeles) and all the women had a marvelous time and were able to present donations to both Mount St. Mary Academy and the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur.

CLASS OF 1956 CELEBRATES 50 YEARS!

The Class of 1956 gathered for fabulous festivities from June 2nd through June 4th. On the 2nd, they gathered for cocktails at the Annunciation Mother House where their classmate, Sr. Rita Claire Pfaff, is the caretaker. The women remembered their classmates who have passed on with bouquets of roses with babies’ breath and greens topped with a photo of each departed friend. On the 3rd, the women gathered at the Country Club of Buffalo where they enjoyed punch and hors d’oeuvres followed by a wonderful dinner. Along with the Class of 1946, they were honored during the Class of 2006 graduation ceremony. Fr. Richard Zajac presided at the morning Mass and was assisted by Pat McCarthy Hohl and Barbara Yageric. Sandra Sukiennik DeGlopper ’56, who sings with the Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus, led the women in song with her beautifully angelic voice.

IT’S 20 YEARS FOR THE CLASS OF 1986

Great friendships were rekindled during the 20th year reunion celebrations. The women gathered at the Mount during the evening of June 23rd where their laughter caused the decibels to rise! Everyone had a wonderful time and the class made a generous donation to the Mount.

Upcoming Reunions

Decade Reunion – If you graduated within the last 10 years – then this event is for you! You’ll get to hang with your friends, tour the school and see what’s new and wonderful at the Mount, as well as enjoy some light refreshments. Please join us for a Thanksgiving Gathering on Wednesday, November 22nd at 7 p.m. in the Mount Cafeteria. Want to crash the party? No problem – we’d love to see you! Call us at 716-877-1358 ext. 306 to let us know you’re coming.

Class of 1961 – Save October 21, 2006 for our 45th reunion! We’ll begin at 4 p.m. with mass in the Chapel at the Mount to be followed by a tour of the school. Later, we’ll head to Morgan’s Restaurant at 3485 Delaware Avenue in Kenmore and start with a cocktail hour at 6:00 p.m. (Cash Bar) followed by dinner at 7:00 p.m. The cost is $35.00 for dinner, gratuity, expenses and a donation to MSM. Please RSVP by September 20th by sending your check to: Sue Wagner Tocke, 20 McKinley Ave., Kenmore, N.Y. 14217. We are also considering including something simple for Friday evening. Questions? Please call Sue Wagner Tocke at (716) 874-1394 or Connie Blackburn Reed at (716) 832-4919. Remember to bring any old pictures or memorabilia from our MSM days to share.

Class of 1966 – Mark your calendars for Saturday, September 30, 2006. We know that we’ll begin at 5 p.m. at Mount St. Mary Academy. Check your mail for the latest plans. In the meantime, please contact Mary Ann Godios Galluccio at (716) 674-6121 with your ideas and questions.

Class of 1976 – These gals are starting their reunion plans at Macy’s “Shop for a Cause” event on Saturday, September 16th, 9 a.m. to 10 p.m., with all-day 20% off shopping passes. Macy’s at the Walden Galleria has reserved a private room for Mounties to enjoy wine and pampering from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. Want to join in – see page 8 for details. Plans are also being made to extend the evening with a gathering later that night. For further information regarding the reunion, please contact: Ann Conway Sullivan (716) 873-8337, abrn115@adelphia.net, or Roseann Gerace Gambino (716) 684-6267, ext. 630.

Class of 1991 – Plans are in the works for a 15-year gathering. Please make sure that Tracy Rudewicz has your latest contact information. You may reach her at rudemac57@sbcglobal.net or 818-507-1179.

Class of 1996 – Let’s get together on Friday, November 24, 2006 at 7 p.m. at The Cellar Bar at Pearl Street Grill and Brewery. The cost is $35 per person for food and drinks. You’ll need to RSVP by September 1, 2006 to Sarah Herlehy (Dewey) (716) 627-9011, dewey_sarah@hotmail.com or Molly Saxe (Herzog) (716) 627-3451, mary_e_saxe1@hotmail.com.
Cala Tricoli (1981), father of Charles S. Cala, April 20, 2006, Please pray for the following members of In Memoriam

Great Church on July 15, 2006. Francesco J. Barbarossa at St. Gregory the
will be making their home in the Town of Tonawanda.


Danielle Nixon (1994) was married to James D. Fleckenstein on July 16, 2005.

John and Christine Cala Tricoli (1981) have just received double blessings -- John Charles Tricoli and Maria Jacqueline Tricoli, who were born on May 5, 2006.

Samantha Grace Holubek was born on March 4, 2006 to Paul and Margaret DiCarlo Holubek (1986). Parents, older brother, Hunter (born June 20, 2004), and aunt, Barbara DiCarlo Durling (1987), are thrilled.

Joshua Douglas Mattioli was born on April 10, 2006 to Doug and Kim Miranda Mattioli (1986).


Lisa Politowski Spencer (1995) has good news to share with the recent birth of her daughter Ava Marie Spencer on May 11, 2006. She joins her big brother, Jackson Gregory (2 years old), who absolutely loves his “Baby Ava.”

Delaney Rhea Graser was born on February 28, 2006 to Matt and Mary Beth Rentz Graser (1995).


David Whitford, October 21, 2005, husband of Claudia Fronczek Whitford (1964). Claudia also lost her brother, Ken Fronczek, on May 12, 2006.

Sue Kaminsky (1950), March 29, 2006, twin sister of Sally Irene Kaminsky Jenkins (1950). You may contact Sally at Warragul@aol.com.

Dolores Kannelly Long (1949), June 1, 2006.

Edna Lippert, May 22, 2006, mother of Carol Lippert Camillo (1951) and the late Shirley Lippert Watson (1955).


Kathleen Swann Myers (1964 Class President), April 17, 2006.

Madelyne Trabert Hack (1933), July 2, 2006, sister of Agnes Jane Trabert Eisenberger (1939).


Linda Cosmann O’Donnell (1971) graduated with an RN from Sisters of Charity Hospital, then received her BSN from Daemen (it took 9 years!), then an MS in Leadership from St. Bonaventure in 2004. For the past 20 years, she has been working at Universa Healthcare as a Pharmacy Services Consultant – educating patients, physicians and employer groups about their pharmacy benefits. Linda is an active volunteer – devoting time at the Ronald McDonald House and recently has become President of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra Volunteer Foundation, a group founded in 1940. Their main goal is support the orchestra through various fundraising activities and to educate the public about the orchestra. She’s always looking for volunteers to help with the BPO, so please feel free to get in touch at lindao donnell@usa.net.

Julie Emery (1998) received a Masters degree in Public Health with a focus in Behavioral Sciences from Emory University in May 2006. She is currently living in Atlanta and is working for a consulting company.

Elizabeth Gruber (2002) has just learned she has received an academic scholarship to the UB School of Medicine. She will start this August. Elizabeth just received her BS in Biochemistry summa cum laude from Canisius with minors in Theatre Arts and Chemistry.

Mary Beth Henderson Wolfe (1986) writes that she and her husband, Robert, have been married for nine years and have two wonderful boys. She’s a stay at home mom, with a cleaning business on the side, who says, “I do this so I can enjoy my children before they grow up toooooo fast.” She also says she can’t wait to see her fellow “Mounties” at the reunion.

Mary Jenkins Roberts (1973) has been promoted to CEO for the Darwin Martin Restoration Corporation. Mary started in a volunteer leadership position and proceeded to the role of part-time associate director, then became finance director and then was asked to oversee the intricate reconstruction of the landmark Frank Lloyd Wright complex.

Mary Kresge Ghosbeh (1996) sends this greeting: I just wanted to let all of you know that I have relocated to Amman, Jordan with my husband, Omar, and daughter, Iman, who just celebrated her first birthday on June 13th. My husband is Jordanian so we came to live in his home country. Things are different but I enjoy living here. I have found employment as an elementary teacher at Amman Academy and as an after school swim instructor. My husband is now the marketing and promotional manager of the new Barakat Mall they are building here. We are doing well here and we miss everyone back home in the States. If you would like to keep in touch with me, my email address is: chosbeh@aol.com. I wish all of you the best.

Karen Kuczmarsha (1999) graduated in May from the University at Buffalo with a Doctor of Pharmacy degree. Karen is currently living in Orlando, Florida completing a Primary Care Pharmacy Residency at Florida Hospital-Celebration Health. To keep in touch, her friends can contact her at: karen.kuczmarsha@gmail.com.

Danielle Nixon Fleckenstein (1994) and her husband Jim returned to the Buffalo area in June of 2005 bringing a new business with them. Danielle and Jim own and operate children’s fitness, music, creative arts, and party facility for children ages 6 months thru 6 years old called Rolly Pollys. They invite you to stop in, or visit RPeastamherstNY.com for more details.

Gail Stevens Slawinski (1967) is happily retired after teaching 33 years in the Buffalo Public Schools. Gail and her husband George have been married 35 years; they love to travel and enjoy their family. Gail is looking forward to her 40th class reunion next year.
One in a Million!

Members of the Class of 1969 deeply felt the pain of losing their dear friend and classmate, Justyne "Tina" Rakoczynski. Tina was born April 22, 1951 and on January 23, 2006 she found herself at home in heaven.

Classmates and friends have established a scholarship fund at the Mount in her memory. The young woman who receives this award will share Tina's qualities and love of life, and will follow her journey into adulthood at the Mount. Contributions are always gratefully accepted by forwarding your check, payable to Mount St. Mary Academy, to 3756 Delaware Ave., Kenmore, New York 14217.

This is the tribute that was written and read at Justyne "Tina" Rakoczynski's Memorial Mass on January 28 at Assumption R.C. Church.

Tina was blessed with a brilliant mind, incredible personality, sharp sense of humor, disarming smile, and blue eyes that saw through everyone and everything. Oh it was so easy to fall in love with Justyne. But as the years passed, it was the extraordinary generosity, compassion and thoughtfulness that sealed the deal. You wanted to be Justyne's friend. Because she was always 110% there for you, to share the ups and downs, the good times and the bad times.

Tina collected people from all walks of life. She did not suffer fools, hated superficiality, hypocrisy, and did not tolerate prejudices of any kind. Everyone was equal in Tina's book. Tina had strong opinions and was never afraid to voice them. She was as passionate about politics as she was about football. We all wanted to tap into her superb knowledge on any given subject from a medical ailment, to world events, to an in-depth psychological analysis of your personal problems. Our own personal therapist. She shared our lives and loved every minute of it. She was the heart and soul of our group.

Tina battled MS from age 15 years with steadfast strength and remarkable courage. We were in awe of her independent spirit and determination to take care of herself. Most of us could never handle the obstacles and hurdles Tina faced every single day. Tina used to say "you don't understand" and sadly we didn't. The cancer diagnosis in August would prove to be yet another challenge but she was determined to beat it.

So the Christmas decorations went up in October and she started shopping for everyone. Suddenly there were presents, cards, thank you notes and optimistic phone calls. "It was like wait a minute, who's the one that's sick?" Although very ill, Tina got busy. She copied Patti's cookbook at Kinko's, had photos developed and framed, updated her card and photo albums, started new files, became a regular at the Post Office, shopped at Latina's, exchanged recipes with friends. Tina even decided it was time to buy a new TV so she could watch her beloved Bills, keep up with CNN and tune in to Larry King. Tina loved music and when you visited Rod Stewart or Stevie Wonder would play in the background. Oh, how she wanted to dance.

Even as her condition deteriorated she set goals. A trip to Florida in February for some sun. A new Mini Cooper this summer -- slate grey hard top. She had the car brochures sitting next to the cancer research studies she was reading. As the disease progressed, her voice became weaker - we all became alarmed. The telephone was Tina's lifeline - everybody called Tina. We could hear the pain, but Tina wanted to stay in touch to see how we were. She was still there to console, to listen to gossip, to consul and remind you of the important things in life...your health, your friends, your family.

So now Tina has left us for a much better place and finally her suffering is over. There are lots of people here today who loved Tina and many more who couldn't be here. Our grief is new, the pain is raw, the tears flow. How can we bear life without her? We were so lucky to have her in our lives. Tina, you are with your mother and father now and making friends with all of the heavenly saints and probably talking about all of us down here. As Tina always said... blah-blah-blah. Now we have our own Angel to talk to all of the time. Save us the best seats in the house. Arriverderci dear friend. We love you more. Always, the girls.
Events & Gatherings: Get a jump on your holiday shopping at the Alumnae Scholarship Shopping Extravaganza set for Wednesday, November 1st, 6 p.m. – 9 p.m. in the cafeteria at Mount St. Mary Academy. You’ll find jewelry, purses, personal beauty products, home decor and more. A portion of the sales will be donated to the Alumnae Scholarship Fund. Admission is free so don’t miss this great event.

The Class of ’76 invites you to join them at Macy’s “Shop for a Cause,” an all-day shopping event on Saturday, September 16, 2006. This is a nation-wide event. Your 20% off shopping pass is available for $5 by sending your check, payable to Mount St. Mary Academy, to the Mount at 3756 Delaware Ave., Kenmore, NY 14217. The $5 ticket price stays at the Mount to support the Alumnae Scholarship Fund.

MSM Sports Boosters are holding their annual Taste of the Towns event at the Mount on Saturday, October 14th at 6 p.m. food and beverages, 8 p.m. Chinese Auction. Tickets are $15 pre-sale or $20 at the door. Pre-sale tickets are available by sending your check to “Taste of the Towns” at the Mount, 3756 Delaware Ave., Kenmore, NY 14217. All of the proceeds support the Mount’s athletic program.

Ladies’ Gift Gathering Brunch. Our famous Ladies’ Night Gift Gathering in support of the Chrysalis Auction has been transformed to a Ladies’ Brunch on Sunday, October 29th at 11 a.m. Once again, Lisa and Dan May of Classics V Banquet Facility at 2425 Niagara Falls Blvd in Amherst will be our hosts. Attendees are asked to bring a gift or cash donation (suggested retail value of $40.00) for our March 24th, 2007 Chrysalis Auction. To help us plan, please confirm your attendance by calling us at (716) 877-1348 ext. 306.

Alumnae Directory News

In the fall of 2007, Mount St. Mary Academy will be celebrating its 80th Anniversary. As part of the celebration, work has begun on a new alumnae directory. The Mount has partnered with the publication firm, Harris Connect, to begin compiling alumnae information for the new issue. If for some reason you have not yet been contacted by phone, e-mail and regular mail, please contact Barbara Johnson at (716) 877-1358 ext. 304.