



From the
Director
By Ann Comstock, Oblate

*"We'll always come to thee again,
when Alma Mater calls"*



The longer I am the SBA coordinator, the more I realize the value of the SBA Alumnae Association. Despite the closing of St. Benedict Academy in 1988, the alumnae have remained strong and committed. They have shown their support of the Benedictine Sisters and their ministries, they have maintained friendships with classmates, and they have come together to celebrate themselves and others. When Alma Mater calls, they are right there ready to respond, ready to lend a helping hand, ready to be the kind of organization that makes a difference.

I recently invited the alum to share thoughts and memories about SBA, past and present, the difference the sisters made in their lives, the values that keep them strong and the spirit that makes the SBA Alumnae Association the dynamic group that it is. The response I received was incredible! While there is not enough space to run all of them in this issue I promise to share them in upcoming issues until I have no more left. I hope you enjoy these reflections as much as I have. I feel inspired and proud to call myself an SBA Alum.

SBA ALUM SHARE THEIR MEMORIES

I can still remember the day my parents told me I'd be leaving Wilson Jr. High and going to St. Mary's Catholic School. I know now that they saw potential in me and wanted to give me more opportunity. But the child in me only saw that I was leaving the neighborhood and friends that I knew to spend my days with strangers. Strangers became my closest friends. At St. Mary's, and later at SBA, the sisters became the wonderful women who would develop in me a lifelong love of learning and a belief that the condition of the world is my responsibility. The mark of St. Benedict Academy is imprinted on me and to some extent on everyone with whom I interact. I am proud to hail from those halls, and I am grateful for the experiences that shaped the person I am today. — **Virginia Glenn Flowers '66**

I have wonderful memories of my years at St. Benedict Academy. Those memories continue through my membership in the Alumnae Association. The sisters taught us many things, most importantly, a responsibility to the community and to God. As a member of the Alumnae Association I am able to help the sisters with their ministries and give back to the community. Our alumnae are still as strong as when the school was open. This surely is a testament to the spirit of SBA! — **Lisa Manendo '74**

As an SBA alum I am in awe of the faithfulness of the many SBA graduates who today are so proud to have been recipients of a Benedictine education. The fact that these women return year after year to SBA to support the present programs being offered at St. Benedict Education Center (a welfare-to-work ministry housed in the former high school) and to share in the social events with classmates is testimony of their love, faith and gratitude for the education offered by the Benedictines Sisters of Erie. — **Sister Phyllis Schleicher OSB '56**

I credit the Sisters of St. Benedict for making me the woman I am today. If it weren't for my education at St. Benedict Academy I really don't know what might have become of me. My home life was chaotic and non-supportive. The sisters provided a safe, consistent, loving environment in which we received an education centered on the concepts of social justice, our value as women and the equality of all people. Moreover, we were taught to investigate issues thoroughly through a variety of methods all the while learning how to think for ourselves. These values served to keep me aware of my intrinsic worth as a child of God and to therefore respect it in others, to want to be of service and to do it with kindness and an open heart. I am so grateful that I had the opportunity to attend St. Benedict Academy and to continue to receive *The Mount Magazine* to learn and keep up with all the wonderful services and activities the sisters continue to provide. I brag on the sisters every chance I get. — **Cecilia G. Popp '63**

SBA shaped my life and my career. It was at SBA that I learned about social justice and the power of women leading around social justice issues. I learned that the world needed women leaders. Now in my work at a traditional women's college, I have the opportunity to help women become these global leaders that are still needed in our world. My life's work is tied directly to what I learned from the sisters and faculty at SBA. I am forever grateful. — **Mary Alice Ozechoski '81**

As an SBA alumna, I realize how big a role our teachers played in building our confidence in our talents and instilling a love of a subject in their students. In particular, Sister Dorothy Szczypinski made such a difference in my life. I was not the most confident of her math students, but she apparently saw something in me and gave me confidence in that “talent.” I became a math major in college and received my degree in math. I’ve spent my entire career in IT, primarily because of that degree. Not only did she make a difference in my life, but in several of my friends’ lives. We had a relatively small class when we got into our junior and senior years, maybe 15 students. At least four of us got our degrees in mathematics, or at least had a concentration in mathematics. How could this have been without a teacher like Sister Dorothy instilling in us the love of a subject that she taught? — **Jeanette S. Lewis ‘73**

The SBA Alumnae Association has made a huge difference in the community by way of the ongoing support given to the Benedictine Sisters and their various ministries. The women of SBA have given their time, prayers and donations which have helped many in need. The Alumnae Association has given me the opportunity to rekindle my relationships with friends and has enabled me to meet many of the great women that graduated before me. I am able to stay in touch with my classmates as well as begin new connections with other alumnae that I have met through the Association. — **Marlo Machalinski ‘91**

My time at St. Benedict Academy was so important to me in many ways. Being in an all-girls school allowed me to participate in discussions without the intimidation of males in the class. The retreats filled my spirit and kept my faith going. I was a farm kid from a family with limited resources. Sister Theophane helped me to find a live-in babysitting job for all my summers. This made it possible for me to pay part of my tuition and uniforms. Later after moving away, the alumnae organization kept me connected with what was happening back in Erie. In my mid 30’s, I discovered the writings and speeches of one of my classmates, Sister Joan Chittister. They reflected my world view and encouraged me to follow in a concrete way my quest for a deeper spiritual path. Her words and involvement in social issues have been a great support along my way. The “St. Ben’s effect” has moved me from a quiet country kid to a much more outgoing person, living out our alum worldview that “we are a part of something greater than ourselves.” — **Judy Hubert Kruger ‘54**

Three words echo in my head when I think of my time at SBA: the *good*, the *truth*, and the *beautiful*. As students we were encouraged to look for the *good* in others; to always seek the *truth* in living out day-to-day lives; and to take time to enjoy the *beautiful*, i.e., whether a sunset over Lake Erie, the smile on another’s face, or the feeling inside of having made another person happy. (Thank you Sister Mary Louis Eichenlaub!) — **Jean Reynolds Miller ‘58**

There are no words that could ever capture the wonderful days I was so lucky to share at SBA, but here’s my attempt... When I look back at my high school days at St. Benedict Academy, they were some of *the best days of my life*. It was the people...the nuns, the faculty, the staff, the coaches, the students—a perfect mix of people who left a positive feeling in my heart and memory to this very day. Real and supportive relationships that built confidence and allowed learning to flourish. When we talk about high school days, I use the word comradery to sum up everything...vocabulary.com explains it: comradery is the spirit of friendship and community in a group; someone who comes to mind when you say, “We’re in this together.” And together we all were and STILL are to this very day! — **Mary Hoffman ‘71**

Keep in Touch...

We want to hear from you! Class reunions every five years are a tradition with SBA alumnae. We will gladly include information regarding your reunion on our website. Send us the facts and we’ll post them as soon as we get them. Please provide us with any follow up stories and photos (digital, please) you might wish to share and we will post them on our website (ErieBenedictines.org/sba-alum). Call Ann Comstock at 814-899-0614 ext. 2573 or contact by email: sbaalum@mtstbenedict.org

Please visit our Website

Visit ErieBenedictines.org/sba-alum for event updates and to download sign-up forms, or send your email address to Alumnae Director Ann Comstock at sbaalum@mtstbenedict.org to receive electronic reminders and sign-ups. If you don’t use email, write to Ann at Mount St. Benedict Monastery, 6101 East Lake Road, Erie, PA, 16511. Whenever you see or hear about SBA alumnae being honored or highlighted for their achievements, let us know. Clip an article or jot down the details then call, write or email us the information so we can share the news with all our members.



*"Spirit of SBA"
is alive and well.*

Reunions

Classes planning reunions next year are eligible to receive a \$35 check to help defray mailing costs. Also provided will be an updated class list from our database as well as a set of labels. Please provide us with any information regarding your reunion that you would like posted on our website. We would also appreciate any follow up stories and photos you might wish to share. All we ask is that you provide us with new or updated addresses for the database. It is one of the best ways we have to keep in touch with friends and classmates. Please contact Ann Comstock at 814-899-0614 ext. 2573 or sbaalum@mtstbenedict.org.

The SBA class of 1982 will hold their 35th Class Reunion on Saturday September 9, 2017 at Jr's on the Bay. Contact Sue Skrzypczak Chase at 814-825-2980 or mchase1@neo.rr.com. Any graduates who have moved recently or if you need to update your current address, please contact Sue Chase.

***Members of the SBA Class of 1976 met on Saturday, June 11, 2016
to celebrate their 40th Class reunion at The Lawrence Park Golf Club.***



First Row, L-R: Patricia Lukaszewski Fidorra, Kathy Solomosi Holland, Barb Archacki Zdarko, Ruth Siatkowski Lowers, Janice Akus Gardner, Sue Pacinelli DiVecchio, Carolyn O'Brien Carmosino, Cathy Behringer Barone, Debbie Stockman Lasko, Mary Jo Scheffner Steffes, Barb Visnosky Thoman, Cindy Anderson Tabolt, Mary Beth Cermak-Bell, Cindy Andrejczak Rettger, Leslie Phillips Borresen, Patricia Rettger, Julie Patalita Srnka, Diane Adkins Tobin, Karen Kuchcinski Sonney.

Second Row, L-R: Camille Osiecki Vahey, Renee Dorau Walsh, Marilyn Huegel Kingston, Pam Conover Perciavaille, Patty Nies, Linda Wargo Majewski, Selena Laufenberg, Kim Rinke Sullivan, Nancy Szcotkowski Cross, Darlene Webb Feeney, Cathe Piorkowski Hedderick, Jane Hogenmiller Steineck, JoAnne Shickler Harof, Maureen Maloney Johannemeyer, Debbie Allen Parr, Beth Bruno Gawronski.

*Mark Your
Calendars*



**Sunday,
October 1, 2017**
SBA Purse Bingo
Harborcreek Social
Hall
Harborcreek, PA



**Tuesday,
December 5, 2017**
SBA Christmas Party
Ambassador
Conference Center
7792 Peach Street
Erie, PA

Christmas Party 2016

Approximately 350 women gathered last December 2 at the Ambassador Conference Center to begin the Christmas season. "I just love this party," shared one alum. "It is a great way to begin the Christmas season." The gift basket raffle is one of the favorite features of this event. The monies raised from the raffle financed a generous donation of \$5,400 to the Inner-city Neighborhood Art House. It was a very successful event, thanks to the hard work and the incredible generosity of the SBA volunteers and attendees.



SBA Spring Luncheon

The SBA Spring Luncheon was held on April 29. At the luncheon 20 scholarships of \$250 were awarded to relatives of alumnae members who will be attending Catholic grade or high schools for the 2017-2018 school years. Scholarship checks will be sent directly to the schools prior to the opening of the school year.

2017 Scholarship Winners

Winner	Alumnae Member	Relationship	School
Madeline Welch	Doreen Welch	Daughter	Villa Maria Academy
Logan Braendel	Barbara Nazarian	Grandson	Cathedral Prep
Erie Schwab	Donna Whitford	Grandson	Cathedral Prep
Zachary & Krista Chalupczynski	Maryann Sullivan	Grandchildren	St. Luke School
Grace & Gabby Gallenstein	Erin Gallenstein	Nieces	St. Luke School
Jacob Sorge	Cheryl Carver	Grandson	Cathedral Prep
Lisa Macek	Audrey Riazzi	Granddaughter	St. Luke School
Chloe H Staab	Jacqueline Staab	Great Granddaughter	Our Lady's Christian
Makayla Davis	Michele Breter	Niece	Villa Maria Academy
Roman Luniewski	Lucille Murawski	Great Nephew	Our Lady of Peace
Audrey Vamos	Kathleen Lane	Cousin	St. Mary of Assumption
Tyler Neimeic	Nadine Laufer	Nephew	Cathedral Prep
Madison & Kiera Bauer	Dee Madura	Great Grandchildren	St. Mary's Catholic
Maria Piecuch	Kathy Grisier	Niece	Mercyhurst Prep
Lyrissa Skolnik	Ann Marie Skolnik	Granddaughter	Our Lady of Peace
Lillian Imler	Barbara Dulin	Cousin	St. George School
Kaden Swanson	Diane Swanson	Grandson	Cathedral Prep
Emily Stewart	Joan Ragen	Great Granddaughter	St. Luke School
Sophia Plyler	Christine Jaskiewicz	Granddaughter	Villa Maria Academy
Lillia Dahlkemper	Joyce Dahlkemper	Granddaughter	Mercyhurst Prep

Let us pray...

For our SBA alumnae who passed into eternity—

Ruth Buckel Considine	'43
Bernadette Lorei, OSB	'45
Wanda M. Drzewiecki Jurkiewicz.....	'46
Theresa C. Pol Frackowiak	'46
Teresa G. Jakubowski Wawrzyniak	'46
Cecelia Gutowski Truchanowicz	'48
Patricia Hughes Kelleher.....	'49
Phyllis Traphagen Coe.....	'54
Lydia L. Kozlowski Corrado.....	'58
Laura J. Korn Schwenk.....	'58
Bonita Kinsinger	'59
Anne Froehlich Metzger	'60
Bernadine Mizikowski Zdunski	'60
Nancy Randazzo Eckerdt	'65
Nancy Malinski.....	'67
Colette M. Piotrowicz Wisinski.....	'67
Shirley Mosalczyk Kempisty.....	'71
Diane C. Letizo Hopkins	'74