

CRUSADER CONNECTION

Notre Dame High School's Alumni Newsletter

2024 LENTEN PROJECT



Seniors Maddy Fargo
and Abby Hart

*Giving is the greatest act
of grace*

The Lenten season is a period of preparation as we anticipate Easter Sunday, a period of fasting, repentance, moderation, and spiritual reflection. At Notre Dame, it is also an opportunity for students and their families, faculty, and administration to focus their efforts on service.

Notre Dame’s Campus Minister, Marie McCaig, had been made aware of a single mother who walks her 2 children to school each morning. Both children suffer from severe asthma and the school nurse frequently addresses their breathing issues upon arrival at school. After school drop-off, this mother walks to her full-time job and then walks to pick the children up after school. She pulls a wagon to the grocery store. She does not ask anyone for help and does not receive public assistance. She is an example of Elmira’s working poor. She is “getting by” but the possibility of ever owning a vehicle is highly unlikely. A gift of a vehicle would open the door to a better paying job and safer housing.

On Ash Wednesday, the 2024 Lenten Project was announced - an initiative to provide a vehicle for this deserving, young mother in need. We would buy her a dependable, used vehicle, along with insurance for one
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2024 LENTEN PROJECT (continued from page 1)

year and gas cards. All students, faculty, and staff were invited to complete a pledge card, pledging a minimum of \$5.00. They were encouraged to make a sacrifice; to donate from their hearts. If there were any doubts that this was achievable, you need only look to Marie McCaig. She did not doubt for a minute that the Notre Dame family would meet this challenge ... and they did.

“Through honoring their pledges, the students took ownership of this project. They have opened wallets in the hallway, pulled crumpled bills out of their backpacks and slipped money under my locked door. I am very proud of them. I pray that they are learning that together we can accomplish great things; understanding that while we cannot change everyone’s situation, we can change someone’s situation.”

In collaboration with the Ferrario Auto Team and Apex Dealer Solutions, Notre Dame parent and lacrosse coach, Geoff Crossley, arranged for the purchase of a 2014 Jeep Compass Latitude. Ferrario Auto contributed to the purchase price and provided an invaluable extended service warranty. Their support was critical to our mission.

April 16, 2024 was a special day at Notre Dame as students, faculty, and friends gathered in the circle to present our young mother with her new car! With her two young children at her side, she expressed her gratitude and noted the difference this would make in her life. The Notre Dame family truly is a force to be reckoned with.



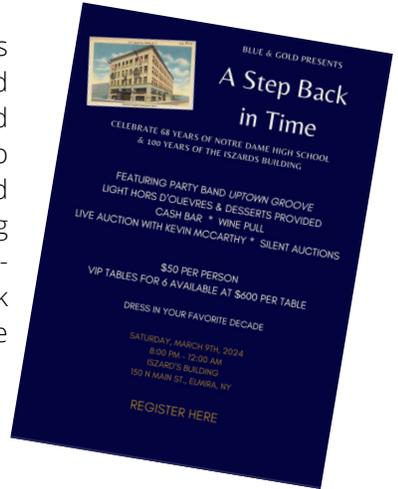
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Following the presentation of the car, the Senior Class followed Notre Dame tradition and led the student body in singing the alma mater. in the hopes of being awarded a mountain day. (Click on the picture below to watch the video) Head of School, Trish Mack '85, was impressed with their musical talents and declared Friday, April 19th, would be a Mountain Day, allowing for an early start to spring break!



A STEP BACK IN TIME

What a PARTY! On March 9, at the historic Iszard's building in downtown Elmira, ND families, alumni, and friends, dressed in their favorite decade and celebrated 68 years of Notre Dame High School. Thank you to emcee **Kevin McCarthy '89** for a lively and entertaining auction! Everyone enjoyed the amazing atmosphere and the phenomenal music by Rochester-area party band, Uptown Groove. A very special thank you to our sponsors and our guests for an incredible evening!



ALUMNI CORNER



by Eileen Ruppenthal '81, Alumni Relations Coordinator

Spring is the season of hope, renewal, and inspiration. A highlight of the season at Notre Dame is the annual Lenten Project. Recent years have seen students refurbish the Southside Community Center (Spring 2020 *Crusader Connection*), provide "Home Essential Kits" to local families transitioning to permanent homes (Spring 2022 *Crusader Connection*), and distribute "Bags of Hope" to the homeless community in Elmira (Spring 2023 *Crusader Connection*). The 2024 Lenten Project provided hope and a new beginning for a young woman through the gift of a car.

Alumni often mention that the service projects they worked on while students at Notre Dame helped to establish their belief in the importance of community service. The current students are forming their own foundation in service, most recently through the 2024 Lenten Project.

It was inspiring to watch as the students worked toward a common goal. At the end of the 40 days, as they gathered to meet the young family and present them with their new car, their excitement was palpable. They were able to witness the positive change they had made in someone's life; it was a defining experience that surely left an imprint.

As Notre Dame's senior class moves closer to graduation, they carry with them their own lessons in service and the teachings of Catherine McAuley. As with all of Notre Dame's alumni, those lessons will become evident as they graduate to their new beginnings and become involved in their new communities, providing hope and inspiration through service.



Keeping Track

This newsletter is meant to inform fellow alumni of the great things you are doing, but we need your help in order to do so! Fill us in on your travels, life experiences, accomplishments, careers, volunteer work, etc. so that we can share your news with your classmates!

You may submit news directly to Eileen Ruppenthal '81 at ruppenthale@notredamehighschool.com or to ndalumni@notredamehighschool.com

We hope to hear from you soon! Thank you!

Planning your reunion?

If your class has a reunion coming up, please contact Eileen Ruppenthal '81 at ndalumni@notredamehighschool.com to share your plans, schedule a school tour, request a class list, or for any other assistance you may need.

ALUMNI CHRONICLES

by Jim VanBrunt '73

Notre Dame High School has been an important part of my life for over 50 years. The level of importance ebbed and flowed as life has sometimes gotten in the way, but it never has gone away. I'm pretty sure it never will.

My mom and dad had grown up in Chicago and New York City and were convinced that a Catholic education was superior to the public school system. When we moved to Horseheads in 1966, there was no question that my sister and I would attend St. Mary Our Mother elementary and Notre Dame High School. Our older siblings had attended Catholic schools exclusively from kindergarten through college.

So, in the Fall of 1969, I started my freshman year at NDHS. What I found was that the size and scale of the school was perfect for me. The academics were challenging at the correct level. There were plenty of clubs and organizations to join. There were sports teams always looking for participants. (As an 85 lb. freshman, I was never going to be a football player, but found a place in Cross Country and Track.) Even after graduation, while I was a student at Elmira College, I returned to NDHS on a regular basis and worked for several years as a volunteer Assistant Coach for the track team.

After college graduation, life interfered for a while, as it often does. I was focused on my career and family. But I always kept track of the events surrounding my alma mater. My wife and I had careers that took us from New York City to Hartford, CT, to Columbus, OH, to Dallas, TX, and finally, to Naples, FL. My wife and I both had long careers in the retail industry. I owned my own business. At one point, I became a stay-at-home Dad to a couple of kids aged 5 and 1. I got to do all the things most dads, and many moms, don't get to do. I got to be a "room father" to kids in elementary school. I got to go on field trips. I coached baseball and softball. I ran the basketball league in our town in Ohio. I served on the Finance Advisory Committee to our local School Board. I was on the Board of Directors for a local charity. I built and painted sets for the school's theater department. It was the best job/career ever! However, once they had both graduated, I had to admit I was "retired." But Notre Dame was never far away.

Now that life has slowed down, the kids are grown, and my wife and I are both retired, I have a little more time on my hands. A couple of years ago, I was asked to assist with the administration of the Notre Dame High School Alumni Facebook page. It has helped me reconnect with some great friends from 50+ years ago. It has also helped me make new friends with many others, both older and younger, who share similar feelings about NDHS. It's been invigorating to feel that enthusiasm.

If you have bothered to read this far, you have that feeling too! Notre Dame has done a great job of adapting to a changing educational environment. They have added 7th and 8th graders. They have a vibrant program for international students. They have wonderfully handled the change to a staff and administration fully comprised of laity. But they still need our help. We want Notre Dame to be the best option for students for years to come!

I encourage you all to think of ideas of ways to help NDHS continue to thrive for the next 50+ years. Sure, they will always appreciate monetary donations, but there is so much more that can be done. If you have family and friends with students approaching high school age, offer to talk to them about Notre Dame High School. If you have a talent or skill that can help, volunteer!

Time. Talent. Money. (Not necessarily in that order!)

Alumni News



Familiar faces gathered at the annual “Elmira Day” in Bradenton, Florida, which was held on March 4, 2024, at Coquina Beach. Several Notre Dame alumni attended, including **Tony Murray ‘61, George Maloney ‘65, Dianne (Morrell ‘65) Maloney, Paul Titus, ‘67, Tom Eagen ‘70, Jim Leonard ‘70, John Wood ‘70, TM McInerny ‘71, Mark Titus ‘71, Mike Eagen ‘73, Debbie (Titus ‘73) White, Lisa (Dupont ‘73) Gilbert, and Jennifer (Berg ‘82) Treu.**



ND Alumni celebrating St. Patrick’s Day at the Ancient Order of Hibernians! **Barb (Tenny ‘79) Connolly, Bonnie (Norton ‘79) Flynn, Joanne Thompson ‘79, Margie (Cady ‘79) Hitchcock, Eileen (Costello ‘79) Drew, Patti (Hurley ‘78) Thompson, John Thompson ‘79.**

Congratulations to Denny & **Mary Ellen (Maloney ‘61) Coseo** on their 55th wedding anniversary! Pictured at a recent family gathering are Denny and Mary Ellen with their family, including alumni **Katie (Coseo ‘91) Viselli, Christine (Coseo ‘92) Shea, Denny Coseo ‘94, Jen (Beaty ‘94) Coseo, Annie (Coseo ‘02) Clark, Matt Coseo ‘04, Nick Viselli ‘20, Caroline Viselli ‘22** and future alumna Emily Coseo ‘27 and Lauren Coseo ‘29



We love to hear from our alumni!!
 Please continue to submit your news & pictures to ndalumni@notredamehighschool.com



Congratulations to **A'Don Allen '93** on being named Coach of the Year by the Basketball Coaches Association of New York (BCANY) in the region for Section IV. A'Don is the Elmira Express girls basketball coach, leading the program to its first Section IV title since 2020.



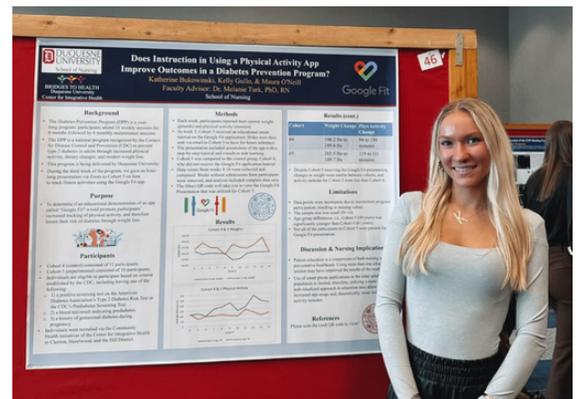
Lindsay McCarthy '19 was a contributing author for Southern Tier Life, a website highlighting the news, culture, history, and events in the Southern Tier of New York State. Lindsay, a 2023 graduate of the University of South Carolina, wrote a profile of Dawn Burlew, a Horseheads native recently named the President of Watkins Glen International. You can read the article [here](#).



Emily Micelotta '11, owner of the 1894 Taphouse & Spirits (located in the former Pierce's Restaurant building) was featured in the Mark Twain Country's Discover Chemung campaign, funded by the Chemung County Chamber of Commerce. The video showcasing the 1894 Taphouse can be seen [here](#).



Elmira Downtown Development hosted its annual "Taste of Downtown" on March 28, 2024. **Jack Holleran '21** represented Elmira Country Club at the event, which was held at the Empire Sports complex (located at 300 N. Main St. in the former Trinity Church).



Katie Bukowinski '20 recently presented at the Undergraduate Research Symposium at Duquesne University. She worked with 2 classmates on the presentation "Does Instruction in Using a Physical Activity App Improve Outcomes in a Diabetes Prevention Program?" Katie is in the Nursing Program at Duquesne and will graduate in May 2024.



Erik Charnetski '20 is hitting .500 through the first six games of his Elmira College baseball career, with eight RBI and nine runs scored in those games. Erik is attending Elmira College for a semester as a grad student, before continuing his education at LECOM in July 2024.



Nick Viselli '20 (pictured above with his father, Lou Viselli), a member of the Mercyhurst University Club Hockey team, celebrated winning the UNYCHL Division 3 Championship on March 3, 2024 against the Allegheny College Gators. Congrats to Nick and all of the Lakers!

Congratulations to **Ally Finnerty '22** who qualified for the IHSA (Intercollegiate Horse Shows Association) Nationals! Ally is a sophomore at LeMoyne College.



Megan Pratt '22 recently travelled to Davis, CA with the Delaware State University Equestrian Team for the ECAC (Eastern College Athletic Conference) Championship. Earlier in March, the team was recognized by the Delaware House of Representatives as a part of the Delaware Legislature's International Women's Day celebration. Megan is a sophomore at DSU.

Keeping Track

1979

Cathy Montanarella

Is living near Clearwater, Florida, and is enjoying getting together with classmates **Deb (Huffman '79) Miller** and **Theresa (Mallare '79) Palmer**, who live nearby. Life is good!

1989

Kevin McCarthy

Was appointed Superintendent of the Elmira Correctional Facility in May 2023. Notably, prior to this, Kevin was the Director of the Crisis Intervention Unit (CIU) for the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision and was based in the Department's Central Office in Albany, NY. This position oversaw CIU teams in all 54 state correctional facilities at that time. In May 2024, Kevin will achieve 30 years of state employment.

1996

Michael Kozemko

Was recently promoted to the rank of Lieutenant in the Elmira Police Department.

2017

Tyler Baxter

Graduated from the Mansfield campus of Commonwealth University in December 2023.

2020

Erik Charnetski

Graduated from St. John Fisher University's pre-med program with a bachelor's degree in psychology. Erik plans to attend LECOM in July 2024.

Peyton Maloney

Was named to the President's Honor Roll List for the Fall 2023 semester at the University of South Carolina. The President's Honor Roll List recognizes full-time undergraduate students who have earned a GPA of 4.0

2022

Rachael Simpson

Was honored as a scholar athlete at California State University at Northridge. Rachael competes on the CSUN Cross Country team.

**PRAYERS FOR OUR DECEASED ALUMNI
2024**

January

- 18 Mary Theresa (O'Brien '48) Martuscello
- 29 Maureen (Holleran '69) Lutomski

February

- 12 Dale Ramich '72
- 14 Aaron Mekos '92

March

- 3 James P. Weingart '73
- 14 Stephen Chely '71
- 22 Marianne (Clune '61) Wichtowski

April

- 11 Richard McGill '54
- 14 Bridget (Sweet '67) Wetmore

CLASS REUNION



The Class of 2004 held their 20th reunion the weekend of April 12-13, 2024. Activities included a Friday night mixer and a tour of Notre Dame with lunch in the cafeteria, followed by dinner at the Elmira Country Club, on Saturday. A special thank you to **Mike Collins** who donated his Crusader Razies '03-'04 t-shirt to the ND Alumni archives!



Left to right: **Aubrey (Homan) Bowman, Amy (Niemiec) Becker, Molly Galvin, Brigid (Landy) Khuri, Krissy McNamara, Mike Collins, Carmen Abbey, Ashley (Lepkowski) Oatmeyer, Brandy (Wakeman) Gadsby, Pat Buckley, Mollie Hurley, Leeann Sowers, Paul Ryan**



Throwback
2004



Are you on Facebook?
Join the Notre Dame High School Elmira, NY - Alumni Facebook page

UPCOMING CLASS REUNIONS

2024

CLASS OF 1964 60TH REUNION

SEPTEMBER 20-22, 2024

Friday, September 20
5:30 pm Bernie Murray's

Saturday, September 21
6:00 pm Lib's Supper Club

Sunday, September 22
TBD

CLASS OF 1964

Plans are underway!

Please contact
Don Miller at
hdonaldm@yahoo.com
or 585-202-8094
with any questions

CLASS OF 1974 - 50TH REUNION

Friday, September 20, 2024

6:00 - 10:00 pm Judy's Place, 510 W Gray St
snacks, hors d'oeuvres, beer & wine

Saturday, September 21, 2024

Optional Golf Scramble at Soaring Eagles
Optional boat ride on Captain Bills on Seneca lake
7:00 pm Ill Eagle Taphouse, 200 E Church St
Food with cash bar

Sunday, September 22, 2024

9:00 am Mass at St. Mary's 224 Franklin St
10:30 am Tour of Notre Dame
12:00 pm Brunch, West Elmira Fire Hall

CLASS OF 1974

Additional information on cost, lodging
and RSVPs can be found [here](#)

Please pass the word -
we are missing contact info for a
number of classmates - we need
addresses, emails, and/or phone
numbers to ensure we reach everyone!

Please email NDclassof74@stny.rr.com
with any updates or questions

UPCOMING CLASS REUNIONS

2024

CLASS OF 1981
GET TOGETHER
SATURDAY
JUNE 15, 2024
3:00 PM
O'RYANS SPORTS BAR
159 PRESCOTT AVE.
Please text Tom Lepkowski 607-738-5565
or Bill Seymour 607-331-1737
if you plan to attend or have questions

CLASS OF 1984
40TH REUNION
OCTOBER 4 - 6, 2024
FRIDAY, October 4
TBD
SATURDAY, October 5
HillTop Inn 7:30 - 10:30 pm
appetizers, dinner & DJ
SUNDAY, October 6
TBD

CLASS OF 1994
30TH REUNION
PLANS ARE UNDERWAY!
DETAILS TO FOLLOW

CLASS OF 1984

Check out the Class Facebook page [here](#)

For information on cost, please contact Konnie Davis
konniedavis8@gmail.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

Notre Dame High School
2024 ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT
 Captain and Crew

MAY 19, 2024
12 NOON SHOTGUN START

MARK TWAIN GOLF COURSE

Rain or Shine!!

LIVE AUCTION
SILENT AUCTION
RAFFLES
AND
MORE!!!!

AGENDA

10:30 - 11:30	Check in, Mulligans, Skins, 50/50 Raffles
12 Noon	Shotgun Start
At the turn	Hot Dog, Chips, and Drink
5:00	Dinner, Awards, Live Auction, Silent Auction and 50/50

Sponsor and Register Now

Linn - 607-481-3949 redderl@notredamehighschool.com

STUDENT LIFE

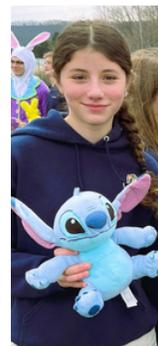
CAMPUS MINISTRY

The Class of 2024, under the guidance of Campus Minister Marie McCaig, presented "Mary's Way" during Holy Week in the Charles & Mary Crossed Auditorium. The powerful meditation of the Stations of the Cross, as seen through the eyes of the Blessed Mother, was a compelling and poignant presentation leading up to Easter Sunday.



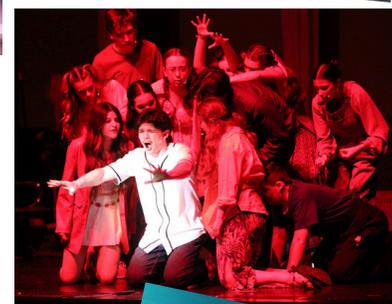
The Class of 2025, with Theology teacher Jessica Ryan, sponsored an Easter Egg Hunt for ND's Junior High students. The students spent an afternoon in the Brewer Memorial Stadium collecting treats & prizes before departing for Easter Break.

EASTER EGG HUNT



THEATER

The Notre Dame Spotlighters' spring musical, *Godspell*, was performed in the Charles & Mary Crossed Auditorium on April 12-13, 2024. Structured as a series of parables, primarily based on the Gospel of Matthew, ND's production of the musical was set in an airport. Theatergoers entered the auditorium through a lobby staged as an airport ticket area and exited humming classic songs such as "Day by Day". Bravo to the cast and crew!



Did you know?

Notre Dame High School's legal name is Notre Dame de Lourdes High School

The Elmira Advertiser of Feb. 12, 1953 reported that "a commemorative prayer with the words 'let the little children come to me' formally launched construction of the Notre Dame de Lourdes Catholic High School yesterday afternoon before an estimated gathering of more than 1,500 persons." The day celebrated "the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, who will be the patron of the school." Bishop Kearney dedicated the new school in 1955.

Notre Dame celebrates Mass each year in honor of the feast day of Our Lady of Lourdes; this year's Mass was on February 9, 2024, with **Father John DeSocio '66** as celebrant.

CRUSADER ATHLETICS



Senior Jeremiah Parker, was named the MVP for IAC South Large Schools and earned first team honors along with junior Gabe Patterson who was also a first team pick. Junior Luke Richards and sophomore Finn Schweizer were named to the IAC South Large School Second Team.

CONGRATULATIONS!!

Sophomore Makenna Keough competed on Saturday, March 4, 2024 at the New York State Indoor Track Championships at the Ocean Breeze Athletic Complex on Staten Island. This meet brings together the best track and field athletes from across the state. Makenna finished 22nd with a time of 9.23 in the 55m hurdles. She finished 22nd in the triple jump with a mark of 33' 1.25".



Photo is from a previous Indoor Track and Field meet. Credit Sheila Sutton

In early April, Makenna joined the Section IV Girls Soccer All-Stars on a soccer tour of Spain. The team explored renowned landmarks through Spain and competed against top Spanish soccer clubs. Makenna's team won 2 out of 3 games with Makenna scoring a total of 3 goals overall.



CRUSADER DECALS!

Show your Crusader pride with these ND decals! ❤️💛
6 inch vinyl, self-adhesive decals for your car, windows, laptop, etc.

Pick-up & delivery options available
Order here: <https://tinyurl.com/42bu3udp>

\$10 each



*What is it like to
be a Crusader
today?*



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT EMERITA



by Sister Mary Walter Hickey, RSM

"We are told to let our heart shine, and if it does, we won't need to tell anybody it does. Lighthouses don't fire cannons to their shining –they just do."
 Dwight L. Moody

This quote reminds us of our students – who, in their words and actions, shine – radiating their goodness and generosity. Throughout this school year, from Mercy Week in the fall to the spring of new life at Easter, they have in words and actions been a light to many. In September our students went out into the community to volunteer and support our local senior population, our animal shelters, the Food Bank and Catholic Charities. Throughout the year the ND Supper Club prepared and served a dinner at the Community Kitchen on the 4th Tuesday of every month. This will continue throughout the remainder of the year. The Golden Mass, an annual tradition, celebrated the true meaning of Christmas, blessing gifts and food items collected for 21 families and 73 children in our community. In February, our International students entertained senior citizens from Appleridge Senior Living Community for lunch in our school cafeteria.

Recently, our Campus Minister, Mrs. Marie McCaig, initiated Lenten Project 2024 by introducing our students to a mother in need of a car. Currently, they are on the way to change the trajectory of this woman's life. Our students are learning there is nothing we can't do together.

Imagine what Catherine McAuley, foundress of the Sisters of Mercy, and the Notre Dame Pioneer Sisters of Mercy in the 1950s would say about Notre Dame High School students and their service to others. We believe they would be as proud as we are. We are grateful for their service and love for those in need.

Our community and the world is a better place because of our students.



SPONSOR A STUDENT

Are you interested in sponsoring a Notre Dame student?
 Your financial support can cover a student's tuition, sports fees, graduation fees, lunch payments, exam fees, or Mercy Online tuition fees.

If you are interested in supporting a Notre Dame student, please contact Eileen Ruppenthal '81 at ruppenthale@notredamehighschool.com

Thank you!!