



The Halo

A NEWSLETTER OF THE
SOUTHEAST CATHOLIC · BISHOP NEUMANN · ST. MARIA GORETTI · ST. JOHN NEUMANN
SS. JOHN NEUMANN AND MARIA GORETTI HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

VOLUME II ISSUE I

SEPTEMBER 2022

A Message from our President

Autumn is around the corner, and just like our nutty squirrel friends, the Neumann-Goretti community is all a scurry with back-to-school activities.

In this edition, you will find introductions to the new school administration. There is information about upcoming events such as our annual “All Class Reunion,” taking place on Saturday, October 1st, as well as featured stories from your fellow alumni and current sports updates.

In addition, don’t miss an opportunity to participate in our annual 50/50 raffle; last year’s winner received close to \$40K!

As always, we are seeking your input. Please, don’t hesitate to connect with us, and if you would like to be considered for a future position on The Millay Club Board, please drop us a line. You can help shape the future of our group.

*Ralph Grasso ‘71
President*

While Things Change, Some Things Can Never be Replaced

By Domenick D’Orazio ‘61

When I first began teaching at my alma mater, Bishop Neumann High School, in September 1965, very little changed since I had graduated four years prior in June 1961. I was blessed to feel the same positive atmosphere, see many of the priests and lay teachers who taught me, and experience the same social events and extracurricular activities that I took part in as a student.

The faculty was a great mix of Norbertines (who lived at the priory next door to the school and emphatically ran the school), Franciscan priests, the Scheut fathers (officially, a missionary order from Belgium known as the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary), diocesan priests, and lay teachers. Of the

Franciscans, there were two varieties: the black-robed Third Order Regular (or TOR), and the brown-robed Order of Friar Minor (or OFM). The camaraderie and banter among the faculty was great. I once asked an OFM priest what the TOR meant for the other Franciscans. And he told me the TOR meant Tramp On the Road! The principal was now Father John Cagney, a Norbertine priest who was my chemistry teacher. And of course, no student wanted to fall into the disfavor of Father John Cox.

Of course, not everything can stay the same. 1965 eventually gave way to the later 60s. By 1968, boys' hair was getting longer, and mustaches were coming into vogue. The Vietnam War was boiling,

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All Class Reunion 2022

Saturday, October 1, 2022 from 1 pm to 5 pm

By Pat Coggins ‘68

Come join the fun! The Millay Club Alumni Association invites you to join us and your fellow alumni at the 2022 All Class Reunion. The event will be held on Saturday, October 1, 2022, from 1 pm to 5 pm at Chickie’s and Pete’s Play², located at 1526 Packer Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19148.

Tickets for the All Class Reunion can be purchased online, by mail, or by phone. When purchasing online or by mail, please visit our website, www.themillayclub.org/reunions/all-class-reunion. To purchase tickets by phone, please contact The Millay Club Office at 215-389-0925. No tickets will be sold at the door. The price of the ticket is \$35 and includes a buffet, a DJ spinning your favorite tunes from those amazing school days, and a reduced-price cash bar! Hope to see you there!

50/50 Fundraiser Raffle

By Liz Farley ‘67

The Millay Club is excited to report that 50/50 Raffle tickets are selling like wildfire! The cash grand prize amount, as of Sept. 20, 2022, is over \$20,000 and climbing. Proceeds from this fundraiser will benefit need-based students attending Neumann-Goretti High School.

If you haven’t received tickets in the mail, it’s not too late to be included for the chance to win one of the fantastic weekly prizes that are listed on The Millay Club website at www.themillayclub.org and on our social media sites (Facebook and Instagram).

The grand prize cash drawing will take place on Sunday, December 4, 2022, at the Annual Mass and Communion Breakfast. Last year, the winning amount was **\$36,400**. To purchase tickets, just call the Millay Club office at 215-389-0925. Payment can be made by check, debit or credit card.

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Congratulations to Patricia Power from the Class of 1977. Patricia is the winner of the 2022 Membership prize drawing.



The Millay Club

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A Saint Chasing His Dream

By Joseph Messina '85

There is perception and there is reality.

When the average fan hears about someone that is a professional athlete, they think of those who stay in 5-star hotels and lead luxurious lifestyles.

Then there is the reality of the traveled path of Ss. John Neumann & Maria Goretti High School graduate Jimmy Kerrigan, Class of 2012. Kerrigan knows and understands that the road to which he hopes will land him the ultimate dream of playing in the MLB is actually paved with riding eight hour in buses, stopping for fast food along the way, and living in hotels in the middle of everyday USA. That is the reality Kerrigan faces, and he will continue to face that reality until his dream is ultimately fulfilled.

The road where the journey began for Kerrigan is on the playing field at 25th and Moore Streets, where he shined as a two-time, first team All-Catholic baseball player, and led the Saints to back to back Philadelphia Catholic League Championships in 2011 and 2012.

Kerrigan patrolled center field, and at the

time, and still today, is considered the hardest working kid to come through the program.



Jimmy Kerrigan (right) at the HR Derby with his father.

“NG prepared me for my professional career in many ways,” says Kerrigan. “My time at NG is where I got my work ethic. We worked harder than any other team, and it led to all of the success we had on the field. NG also taught me how to win and how to be a winner, and I was able to carry that into college as well as professional ball. I had so many good memories at NG, and I made friends that will last a lifetime. My favorite memory

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Administrative Leadership Changes at Neumann-Goretti

The Office of Catholic Education (OCE), in conjunction with the Saints John Neumann and Maria Goretti Board of Directors, have appointed Ms. Kim A. Eife as the new principal effective Wednesday, September 28th.

Ms. Eife has over two decades of experience as a Catholic Educator in the region at the elementary and high school levels. She has broad experience including positions as a classroom teacher, department chair, academic dean, and most recently served as principal at Bishop Eustace Preparatory School in Pennsauken, New Jersey.

She has played a key role in the growth and development of academic programs, supervision, visitation and evaluation of faculty, and creation of master schedules for teachers and students on a school wide basis. Ms. Eife earned a Bachelor of Science Degree from Temple University, Master of Science Degree from Drexel University, Teaching Certification from

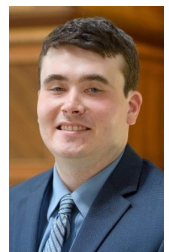


Kim A. Eife

Immaculata University, and a Graduate Certificate in Advanced Teaching and Curriculum from Drexel University.

In addition, Mr. Rory Sweeney has been appointed Interim President following his generous service as Acting Principal. He will begin this new role effective September 19th.

Mr. Sweeney has served the Neumann-Goretti community since 2019 as Director of Community Partnerships and most recently as Acting Principal. He possesses almost a decade of administrative leadership experience in Catholic secondary and higher education. Previously, he served at Saint Joseph's University's, Alliance for Catholic Education (ACESJU) as Program Administrator, Teacher, Coach, and Recruitment/Admissions Coordinator. During Mr. Sweeney's time with ACESJU, he was responsible for



Rory Sweeney

see LEADERSHIP page 3

In Memoriam Harry J. Booth, III 1940 - 2022

On Monday, September 12, 2022, the South Philadelphia community lost one of our beloved fixtures:

Harry Booth. Booth was a Bishop Neumann graduate, (Class of '58) through and through: he had the toughness, the grit, and the charisma. After graduating, he went on to



Harry Booth, III

St. Joseph's University, and in a rare move, was varsity head coach of both of their baseball and basketball teams. He also was a volunteer Assistant Coach at Villanova, working under Rollie Massimino when the Wildcats won the 1985 NCAA Title. During his tenure on both teams, he helped them reach admirable statistics that left his mark on their school, just like our own community. Throughout his life, Booth remained a steadfast advocate of the Neumann Goretti community by constantly supporting our school, and we will continue to honor and remember his legacy for years to come.

LEADERSHIP *continued from page 2*

providing instructional coaching for graduate fellows in the program, managing housing facilities, negotiating with contractors, managing building projects, recruiting qualified applicants, and selecting candidates to serve as teachers in Philadelphia Catholic schools.

Let's Give Them Something to Talk About!

By **Ciarra Bianculli '13**
The Halo, Editor

If there is one thing that my experience at Neumann-Goretti instilled in me, it's the importance of community, especially the one we have created in South Philadelphia. Us Saints pride ourselves on the life-long friendships, memories, and lessons that the Neumann-Goretti community gave to us, and we usually boast about them any chance we get.

What's so wonderful about leading and creating The Halo, the Millay Club Newsletter, is the ability to reminisce on Neumann Goretti memories made, our experiences in high school, while staying in touch with those we graduated with in the hopes of growing our alumni

KERRIGAN *continued from page 2*

was coming back from a 10-run deficit versus LaSalle in the 2011 PCL semi-finals. It's a memory that will stay with me forever."

After graduating from NG, Kerrigan went to Temple University on an athletic scholarship to play baseball, but after his sophomore season, they disbanded the program. He did not allow this hindrance to stop his momentum, and as a result, he moved onto Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), a strong baseball program in the Atlantic 10 Conference.

Kerrigan started for the VCU baseball team both his junior and senior years, and in his senior year, he helped lead them to an A-10 championship and a berth in the NCAA super regionals. Upon graduation, he was hoping to hear his name called in the MLB draft, but the phone never rang. Instead, he decided to pursue an opportunity in Indy Ball with River City Rascals in O'Fallon, Missouri. He played 62 games there and raked in impressive numbers, which led to the best moment of Kerrigan's life: the Minnesota Twins called and purchased his contract.

From 2017 through 2021, Kerrigan started his ascension through the minor league system, starting in single A and reaching triple A, knocking on the door of an MLB callup. At each level, he consistently produced. He spent time with the big club in spring training which led to his favorite professional playing experience: hitting a homerun over the Green Monster at JetBlue Stadium, the Boston Red Sox's

community.

Therefore, I am writing to you now, personally, to ask for your help in fostering our community by writing for our newsletter! We are constantly looking for submissions that highlight either your memories from your alma mater, your experiences, and what you and your classmates are up to now. If interested, please send an email to ciarrabianculli@themillayclub.org, and let's spread some messages of community together.



spring training home, in an MLB spring training game in 2019 that was televised on the MLB network.

In 2021, Kerrigan hit 19 home runs and was considered the top Defensive Center Field in the Minor League. Unfortunately, the cruel world of professional sports put a temporary halt to his MLB dream when the Twins released him at the conclusion of the 2022 Spring Training season. Kerrigan came home to South Philadelphia, where he still works in the off season as a trainer and instructor at the South Philadelphia Sports Training facility. He tried to clear his head through his work of coaching and training others, but within a week, he got an offer for an Indy Ball team in Illinois called the Kane County Cougars. Kerrigan went there and put-up extraordinary numbers, becoming a contender for MVP of the league. He even participated in the league's HR derby during the All-Star game and called his father to come attend and be his pitcher.

Not one to rest, Kerrigan is headed to play winter ball in Puerto Rico this winter with a team called Leones De Ponce (Ponce Lions). After that, he hopes to get an offer from an MLB organization for next year and build off what he achieved this past season.

The dream will not fade. The reality is that anyone who knows Jimmy Kerrigan knows that you can never bet against him fulfilling the dream.

SAVE THE DATE

SUNDAY, DEC. 4, 2022

FOR

THE 85TH ANNUAL
ALUMNI MEETING

AND

FR. GEORGE FEIDER, O. PRAEM.

COMMUNION BREAKFAST

*The Meeting, Mass,
and Breakfast
will be an in-person event
this year.*

CHANGE
continued from page 1

and some of our graduates were going off to proudly serve our country. Neumann's enrollment was bursting at the seams, and the school, with its large faculty, was able to offer a rich, varied curriculum. The very large populations in our feeder parish schools kept our enrollment healthy. The school was structured and well-run. For a period of time during the 1970s, seven languages were offered, two of which were Russian and Greek.

Following the canonization of Bishop John Neumann in 1977, the official name of the school became known as St. John Neumann High School, beginning with the school year that opened in September 1978. Indeed, the 70s were a period of growth and stability for Neumann and Catholic education in general.

Again, not everything can stay the same. And this was seen during the 1980s and 1990s in the declining enrollments of parish elementary schools as neighborhood demographics were changing. The effect, of course, was a slow but gradual drop in the student populations of many Catholic high schools. Rising tuition played a major role here.

But changes notwithstanding, Catholic education is indeed special, and for me and many of my colleagues, it was still a joy teaching at Neumann. Most of the boys were from the same neighborhoods in which I grew up, and I have always felt,

then and now, a kinship with them and their families.

As technology became an integral part of education, Neumann's leadership and faculty were more than capable of keeping up. I remember, in particular, the excellent initiatives and guidance undertaken by Father Richard Antonucci. (Richard, thank you for your service!) As Catholic high schools went to a president-principal model in the 1990s, our school was up to the task of brainstorming creative ways of blunting the effect of continuously rising tuition, thus helping as many students as possible to afford a Catholic education. In all of this, many teachers gave their all in their own unique ways. And speaking of unique ways, no one who attended Neumann from the mid-80s to the late 90s can ever forget the MOST UNIQUE teaching style of one Brother John Michael. God rest his soul.

At the end of the school year 1999-2000, the Norbertine priests and brothers, after many, many years of staffing the school, going back to Southeast Catholic days, were called to leave Neumann and reinforce their numbers at Daylesford Abbey in Paoli. Their absence was keenly and sadly felt. The Reverend Michael Olivere, a diocesan priest, was appointed President of St. John Neumann. Father Olivere did a wonderful job in his role and was a steady, competent steward in guiding and overseeing the 2004 merger of Neumann and our sister school, St. Maria Goretti High School.

Since retiring in June 2018, I have done my best to keep in touch with people still working at Neumann-Goretti. From the information I have gleaned, it appears that the school is thriving in its ability to offer students an academically-challenging, faith-based education that's rich in extracurricular activities. The leadership that was in place when I left had certainly done an admirable job.

I was asked by the Millay Club to write an article describing Neumann and Neumann-Goretti as I've seen the institution from my perspective of having taught there over the years. I hope I've provided some insights, and I am thankful for being asked to do this. I do hope and pray that Neumann-Goretti will continue to thrive for many years into the future, long after I'm outta here!

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Class Reunions

**50th - Bishop Neumann '72 /
St. Maria Goretti '72
October 7, 2022**

**40th - St. John Neumann '82 /
St. Maria Goretti '82
November 4, 2022**

**10th - Ss. John Neumann and
Maria Goretti '12
November 5, 2022**

More information, including who to contact can be found on the Reunions page of The Millay Club website, www.themillayclub.org

Don't miss out on information about your reunion, update your contact information on the Stay Connected page of The Millay Club website.



Alumni from the Class of 1972 attended the Baccalaureate Mass for the Class of 2022.