



From the
Director
By Ann Comstock, Oblate

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



Upcoming Special Event: Mark your calendars now!

When the Sisters of St. Benedict arrived in Erie to begin their mission of educating young women, they could not possibly have envisioned the changes that would take place in the future. Since that time, their mission and ministries have adapted to the changing needs of the Benedictine community and the communities they serve.

It was those changing needs that led the sisters to face a very difficult decision, the closing of St. Benedict Academy in 1988. Although there were other schools to meet the need of educating young women and men, very little was being done to provide services for the inner-city. The sisters decided to adapt their mission to provide for the needs of immigrants, the disadvantaged, and especially, the children of Erie.

Throughout these changes, the SBA Alumnae Association remains one of the primary supporters of the Benedictine Sisters and their inner-city ministries. Each year they contribute to the Annual Alumnae Appeal, attend functions whose proceeds are channeled to various inner-city ministries and participate as volunteers at the Inner-City Neighborhood Art House, Emmaus Soup Kitchen and other inner-city programs run by the Erie Benedictines.

The 2018 Spring Luncheon, scheduled for Saturday, May 26, will be a celebration of all that has been accomplished in the 30 years since the Academy closed and became the St. Benedict Education Center. The liturgy at the monastery on the following Sunday, May 27, will be in thanksgiving for all of the alumnae and sisters who are part of this amazing group of women who by working together have transformed the lives of so many. Without a doubt the SBA SPIRIT is still going strong!

Saturday, May 26, 2018 **Spring Luncheon**

Ambassador Conference Center
7792 Peach Street
Erie, PA

Vendor Shopping: 9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Lunch: 12:30 pm
Cost: \$25

Saturday, May 26, 2015

St. Benedict Education Center – formerly St Benedict Academy
330 East 10th St
Erie, PA

Open House: 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Sunday, May 27, 2018

Mount St. Benedict Monastery
6101 East Lake Road
Erie, PA

Liturgy: 9:30 am
Social: 10:30 am to 11:30 am



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.



Class of 1967 Reunion

Fifty six ladies from the SBA Class of '67 gathered together on Saturday, July 8, to celebrate their 50th Reunion. It didn't take long for everyone to re-establish friendships, join together, and spend the evening reminiscing and catching up on their current lives.

They enjoyed watching a DVD of photos from the high school years, alumnae functions, past reunions, and class events. Two lucky ladies took home a designer purse, and one, a matted print of the Academy, signed by all of those in attendance.

A table with the senior photos of deceased classmates, lighted candle and a dozen roses commemorating the flowers carried by everyone at graduation was how the group remembered the 23 members of their class who had passed away.

On Sunday, July 9, the reunion continued at Mount St. Benedict Monastery with mass, hospitality and refreshments provided by the sisters. A special treat was the company of Sister Mary Grace Hanes and Sister Mary Louis Eichenlaub, beloved former faculty members of St. Benedict Academy.

It was a memorable event, and everyone who attended agreed that it would be good to get together sooner rather than waiting for the next reunion in five years. They will continue their annual picnic, scheduled next year for Wednesday, August 8, at Glenwood Park. In the meantime, they will continue their support of the Alumnae Association by attending events such as the Christmas Party and Spring Luncheon.

If you do not receive class e-mails, and wish to be added to our Class of '67 list, please send your address to Janet Romanowicz Hammond at hammondjanet@hotmail.com to receive future notices of events.



Class of 1982 Reunion

SBA class of 1982 celebrated their 35th class reunion on Saturday, September 9, 2017 at Jr's On the Bay. There were 31 classmates and 7 guests in attendance. The unanimous report – "We had a wonderful time!"

SBA ALUM SHARE THEIR MEMORIES

Reflections, memories and thoughts from several alums were shared on the SBA pages in the Spring/Summer 2017 issue of *The Mount*. Their topic centered on the difference the Benedictine 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. As promised, here are more of their responses.

“With friends we never can Forget” What a perfect motto! My mom, Margaret Schloss-Whitby ‘39, my sister, Marybeth Whitby-Veshecco ‘73 and myself, Sheila-Whitby-Anderson ‘82 all had/have friends from SBA that we regularly get together with and consider family. I know of no other high school that still fosters these relationships like SBA. When I tell people that I still have many high school friends and we regularly meet, including our annual Christmas party, they are amazed! Thank you SBA. I treasure you still. **Sheila Whitby-Anderson ‘82**

My paternal grandfather migrated to the US from a small Polish town that was built around a Benedictine Abbey founded in 1065. So it is not surprising that my grandparents sent their daughters—my aunts—to SBA and then my parents did the same. Scholarships helped. But what I received from my Benedictine teachers was more than historical tradition, cultural continuity and economic assistance, as important as those things are. In the early 1960s, when I was at St. Ben’s, the nuns taught us about civil rights and witnessed on behalf of those rights, as they still do today. Young teachers not much older than us (I think of Sister Alfonse and Sister Teresita in particular) taught us how to think and how to be confident in ourselves as women. They were on the progressive, pro-equality side of history and this strongly reinforced the values I had already absorbed from my beloved parents. The Benedictine community’s work since the school closed is of a piece with those values and continues to make me proud and grateful after all these decades. **Sandra Polaski ‘65**

The year was 1928 and six young ladies entered St. Benedict Academy. They graduated four years later and this band of young women carried with them a good education and more than that, the spirit of the academy. The Alumnae Association was the glue that held them together as they traveled down life’s road, with all of its twists and turns. They attended card parties and communion breakfasts, worked rummage sales and festivals, all in the spirit of St. Benedict. My mother, Dolores Liebel, was one of these women and she instilled that spirit of the alumnae in me from a very young age – to live life with a compassionate heart and a giving spirit. Fast forward to 1966 and I graduated and walked into a very different world but filled with the same fervor that my mother had in 1932 and gifted to me. Even though I have spent all of my adult life away from Erie, I come home each year for the SBA Christmas party. When this band of 400 plus women stand and sing the school song, I realize that the words of this song and my mother’s example have guided me through all the days of my life. I will forever be grateful to the Academy, the Alumnae and most of all, my mother. **Mary Margaret Pfister Joswig ‘66**

I feel so blessed that my dear mother insisted that I follow my sister’s footsteps and attend SBA. THE MOUNT magazine helps me to stay in touch with the SBA happenings and the various events and luncheons in which we are invited to partake. Also I become aware of opportunities to volunteer in the inner-city that make me feel, in a small way, that I can make a difference. The influence of the SBA approach will stay with me always. **Marilyn Bowers ‘65**

I graduated from SBA in 1957. When I applied for my first job two days after graduation, my employer asked where I went to high school. I replied “SBA”. I was hired on the spot. It was the same over the next twenty years...one only hired SBA graduates. SBA has been a part of my life for 65 years. It is where I learned tolerance, love, empathy, compassion, giving and the spirit of God that is with me today. **Adrienne Cunningham Manning ‘57**

Nuns. Hated school until I went to SBA in 1955. Learned to love learning in an environment where I felt I could do anything. It was never expressed in words by our teachers but it was communicated to us by their lives as smart, competent and ever so kind and patient women. Forensics and debate team. Maybe I’ll become a lawyer. English class and Tolstoy. Live the gospels, not just preach them. Perhaps a social justice advocate and a better Christian. Sports and class parties equaled cooperative learning, smiles, development of interpersonal skills and laughter. Fun. Accepting peers. Actually SBA must have enrolled the nicest girls in Erie. Life was “wonder-full”. To this day the only emotion that I feel when I think of my SBA experience is WOW, how lucky I was. **Elaine Vladimiroff Retzlaff ‘59**

I often reminisce about my days at St Ben’s – as we called our school – as some of the best times from my youth. The days in high school and the assignments were not easy, but I grew to appreciate the type of education I received and have been grateful for to this day. I moved to different parts of the country over the years and was blessed to experience responsible and challenging administrative positions in the work place due to the caring of the faculty and the knowledge imparted at St Ben’s. I was also motivated to continue studying and was able to eventually receive my B.A. degree. I attribute my interest in learning and the discipline involved to the study skills I received early on. I admire the continuing work that the sisters do in the community and am very proud to be part of the Alumnae of St. Benedict Academy, Class of 1963. **Barbara Pohl Brinkman ‘63**

Ever since the Neighborhood Art House has been having the Art and Sole race it has given me an excuse to get in shape. I start in January or February so by the time the race date is here I am ready to walk. I cannot walk fast but each time I join in it is so much fun. Last year my family raced as a team and did very well. Each time I am with the St. Benedict Alum I feel very lucky to be included in such a great group of women. Another reason I am glad I graduated from St. Benedict Academy is that Sister Mary Philip taught us how to sew. I am still sewing. Making quilts is my main hobby. *Carol Fischer Kuna '56*

SBA was the most constant event in my life in the 9 years I lived in Erie. The impact of the education and community of a small school has had a lasting effect on the many, many choices I had to make once high school was over. There was an aura of kindness, a memory of someone forgiving me of a misdeed, the steady guidance brought carefully and persistently by the sisters and lay staff...all nudging me in my personal life, and impacting my career path on the importance of making a positive difference. I give full credit to the kind and authentic spirits of the Benedictine Sisters who continue to not only display the distinguishing characteristics of love, energy and humanity, but also continue to have an effect, to matter and to change outlooks for so many in need of their selfless offerings. Special thanks to Sister Mary David...no one quite understands why I need to listen to classical music REALLY, REALLY LOUD! And Sister Placid, I speak French much better now...but keep my English to French phrase book handy... Mrs Kohlmeier, you had the patience of Job, and the kindness of a saint, and of course, Sister Anthony...you took what tiny talent I had and have doomed me to a life of seeing the art in everything...to refinishing furniture, making stained glass windows, planting gardens, painting on canvas, cutting old clothes and recreating new garments, designing greeting cards...All your fault...and I thank you...!!! *Evelyn Schultz Mihok '66*



"Spirit of SBA" is alive and well.

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.

Let us pray...

For our SBA alumnae who passed into eternity—

Natalie Krainski Crynock.....	'41
Patricia J. Brader Staaf Buetikofer.....	'47
Therese Marie Grutkowski Palotas	'49
Elizabeth "Betty" Orzel.....	'50
Janet D. Milewski Lee Dawson.....	'56
Rose Marie Antoinette Wienczkowski Benkoski.....	'56
Veronica Worjasik Hartstein.....	'57
Barbara J. Dobrowolski Miller	'59
Marie A. Nowakowski	'59
Lois K. Koziarski Baker	'60
Marjorie A. Rutkowski.....	'62
Patricia Ann Schroeck King.....	'63
Sandra M. Kierzek Buffalari.....	'64
Michelle Csop Byrne.....	'71
Kathleen O'Rourke Masolotte.....	'73
Kathleen (Katie) McCormick Van Cleve.....	'81
Alicia D. Bielamin McDonald.....	'90