

Through the span of generations, SPCC leaves indelible impressions

Fond and vivid memories abound for these classmates

The memories of their years spent in the classrooms at St. Peter Elementary School, and subsequently the High School, are remarkably fresh and vivid.

The school's current library "was Sister Alice's second grade classroom. Sister Francis Marie taught fourth grade and Sister Mary Grace taught sixth grade," said Betty Mahan. She and Francis Reed, who became acquainted as first graders in 1937, can still rattle off the names of most teachers from their 12 years spent at St. Peter's.

Continued on page four



Class of 1945 meets the Class of 2017.

Betty Mahan and Francis Reed made friends with a pair of first-graders during a recent visit to the school.

Class of '09 embraces new experiences



Destinee Lucier remains a lector at St. Peter's Church, a role she has occupied since her years as a student at St. Peter Elementary School.

The fondness and appreciation with which Sarah Fabricotti, Destinee Lucier and Nicholas Paul talk about their years spent as students at St. Peter Central Catholic Elementary School is undeniable.

Each graduated from the eighth grade this past June and in September Sarah and Nick entered St. Peter-Marian High School, while Destinee continued her academic journey as a freshman at Holy Name Central Catholic High School.

The threads that connect their experiences were quickly apparent as Sarah, Nick and Destinee recently recounted the memories of their years spent at St. Peter Elementary School.

Continued on next page

SPCC created solid foundation for recent grads

Continued from front page

The words “family” and “respect” were mentioned often during separate conversations with each of the students. There was no hesitation or lack of enthusiasm as each described the value of their elementary school experiences.

“It was just the best,” Destinee said after a recent Sunday morning mass at St. Peter’s Church where she serves as a lector, a tradition that began for her several years ago. “Everyone was always so close...it’s just one big family,” she exclaimed.

Destinee’s relationship with St. Peter Elementary started when she entered the first grade. Sarah’s experience began upon entering kindergarten, while Nick’s career spanned 10 years from his arrival in pre-school.

“They taught us about life and that treating people well and with respect is important,” Nick said as he reflected on the values instilled by his many teachers. “And the school has such a family atmosphere. It was always easy to establish relationships and friendships,” he noted.

Nick’s affable and confident demeanor, along with a dose of “inspiration from my family” prompted Nick to seek, and win, the freshman class presidency at St. Peter-Marian High.

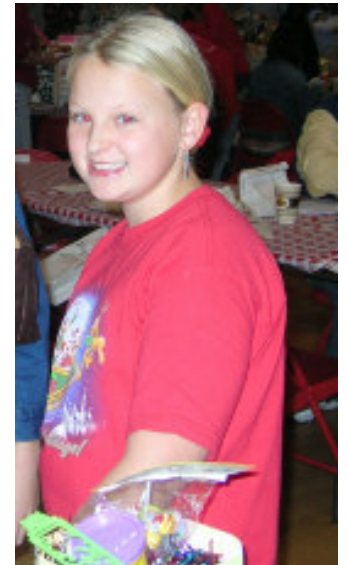
The elementary school’s Class of 2009 produced another officer in the high school Class of 2013 as Sarah secured the position of class secretary. “It was something I really wanted to do and an opportunity to put my ideas out there,” she said enthusiastically.

Her magnetic personality was a trademark during her elementary school years and though her current classes are bigger and “there are more kids in the school” Sarah gushes at the chance to participate in the many extra-curricular activities offered to students.

While numerous new opportunities await, Sarah’s fondest memories from elementary school include playing soccer in grades six through eight, and taking part in last winter’s “elf shop”, something made even more memorable by the historic ice storm that caused an extension of the traditional Christmas vacation.

Sarah’s bond with St. Peter Elementary remains strong as she was present on Nov. 21st to help serve pancakes to youngsters in the pre-school, kindergarten, and first and second grades during the school’s annual holiday fair that featured breakfast with Santa.

Sarah’s last father-daughter dance, which also occurred last December, will also leave a lasting memory. “I remember when I was younger watching the eighth-grade girls dancing in a large circle and I couldn’t imagine myself becoming that old,” Sarah said nostalgically.



Through the years

Sarah Fabriccotti, above, as a third-grader in the after-school program, and at right, as an eighth-grader at the 2008 holiday fair.

Destinee also immersed herself in several social and athletic activities while an elementary school student. “I was in chorus and I played basketball and field hockey,” Destinee notes proudly.

Memories of the many annual spring musicals and holiday fairs remain vivid for Nick Paul. His first encounter with classmate Peter Hovagimian also forged a path to a friendship that continues today, even as Peter has moved on to Wachusett Regional High School. “He’s still my best friend,” said Nick who is confident the relationship will continue for years.

Those friendships and life-altering experiences have emanated from a variety of sources. Destinee, for example, reminds that when she struggled for a time in her middle school years the school’s principal, Mrs. Kursonis, “was always there for me to talk to. That helped a lot.”

Where the future ultimately takes Nick, Sarah and Destinee and their many other former classmates remains unknown. They readily admit the foundation to becoming solid students and solid citizens was cast and molded during their years at St. Peter Elementary.

“I do know that I want one hundred percent to go to college,” Sarah said without hesitation. “And I want to major in business and start my own fashion design business,” she beamed.

Though Nick and Destinee are still charting their future career courses they, too, are grateful for the confidence instilled in them throughout their elementary school experience.

“My teachers always pushed me to achieve excellence. If they knew I could do better they asked me to do better,” Destinee concluded with a smile and note of gratitude.

'Time to Shine' annual auction returns March 19th

Can you imagine? Since it was first introduced in 2004 the school's "Our Time to Shine" auction and dinner has raised an impressive \$250,000 to help support several school projects, ranging from capital improvements to the school building, to the purchase of technological equipment and learning materials, to general operating obligations.

This signature event, which features silent and live bidding, has cemented itself as a staple among the school's many social and celebratory activities.

This next edition, which will take place **Friday evening, March 19th**, in the **Student Center at Worcester State College**, promises to generate as much fun and excitement as its predecessors.

The auction committee, chaired by Meghan McGuirk, welcomes assistance from the school's many families, friends and alumni, whether through a donation of an item for bid, the purchase of tickets to the event, or by spreading the word of the auction to personal acquaintances.

If you'd like to donate an item for bid, you are asked to contact the school at **508-791-6496**. Tickets to the auction and dinner will be available for purchase beginning in January and can be obtained by contacting the school after the holidays.



Prizes Galore!



Each year the "Time to Shine" auction features an impressive array of items for bid.

Among those that have been offered in recent years are tickets to Patriots and Red Sox games, lift tickets to Wachusett Mountain, family passes to such favorite New England venues as Davis Farmland and MegaMaze...**and much more!**

Looking for a way to beat the mid-winter blahs? *Our cabin fever carnivale might be the right Rx*

It might just become the latest in a series of annual family traditions at St. Peter's.

Our **Cabin Fever Carnivale**, presented for the first time last January, was so popular that it is being reprised this winter. The 2010 Cabin Fever Carnivale on Saturday, February 6th, will cap off the celebration of Catholic Schools' Week and will be held in Reverend Daniel O'Neill Auditorium from 5:00-8:00 p.m.

The event features a delectable array of foods, served buffet-style so you can sample of little bit of everything prepared and offered by our "chefs." There will also be a number of games, raffles and entertainment for everyone's enjoyment.

Tickets can be purchased at family-friendly prices (\$10 per adult and \$5 per child) by contacting the school at **508-791-6476** throughout the month of January. No tickets will be sold at the door.



Ready, set....POP!

Last winter's Cabin Fever Carnivale featured a variety of arcade-type games, including this balloon-pop which garnered the enthusiastic participation of dozens of youngsters.

Of another era

This photo taken during the first half of the 20th century shows a house where the school's O'Neill Auditorium now stands. Constructed in 1955, the auditorium also served for years as the parish center for St. Peter's Church. The building was named in honor of Rev. Daniel O'Neill, the parish's founder and first pastor who served from 1884-1916.



Memories rekindled during recent reunion

Continued from front page

It should come as no surprise then, that the students from what would become the elementary school class of 1945, maintained a close association that exists even today.

On a recent October Saturday afternoon members of the high school class of 1949, which included 21 people who had previously been elementary school classmates, visited St. Peter's to tour the classrooms and hallways they once occupied when the high school was co-located here.

"When we were here in the primary grades there were 40 students in a class. It was so large we had to stand in line and wait our turns to read. There were no little reading groups back then. Everything was very regimented," recalls Betty.

"The desks and chairs were screwed down and we would kneel every morning for prayer and with our hands folded," she recounts.

Much was different during that era. Franny Reed and his family lived near the old South High School (now Sullivan Middle School) while Betty and her family resided on Grand Street. They recall walking from school to home each day for lunch before walking back for the afternoon session.

"My brother Ken walked me to school every day but I traipsed behind because he wanted to walk with his friends," Betty said with a smile.

Among the first things Franny Reed remembers is his first-grade introduction to the Baltimore Catechism. "The first thing we learned was that God made us to love and serve and if someone grabbed hold of that they were set for life," he said.

"That's where we got our values. We learned that book by heart," Betty added.

Though the approach to teaching and learning may have changed a bit as philosophies have evolved, Betty proudly boasts that she and her classmates "could read, write and spell with the best of them. We were given a great learning foundation in this school."

In fact Betty ventured further into academia upon leaving St. Peter's, first as a student at Worcester State College and then as a faculty member for many years at Framingham State College where she "trained many teachers" and chaired the education department.

Franny Reed's road through life was one more travelled. He left St. Peter's after the eighth grade to enter the seminary but later rejoined his friends at the high school and graduated with them in 1949. From there he occupied a number of jobs, first with the now-defunct Brown Shoe Company on Grand Street and then as an employee of Town Talk Bread. He later worked for the Boston & Albany Railroad, a job to which he returned after a stint in the U.S. Navy. Ultimately he landed a job as a postal worker and a career that would span 35 years.

He says he and many of his classmates seemed destined to remain close, as they continued their encounters in other "spheres of life, including the military."

"We were all locals back then, especially in elementary school," Betty pointed out. "Almost everyone in our school lived in the immediate neighborhood," she added.

As Betty Mahan and Franny Reed continued their recollections of childhood and high school the names of their classmates rolled off their tongues. Names like Mary Cosgrove, Owen Coogan, Spanky Flynn, Francis Gibbons, Marilyn Miller, Joan Barry, Cathy Sullivan, Andy O'Keefe, Dave Power, and George Rueger.

They were then, and remain now, a very special class.

Wilson reading and language programs establish solid footprint in SPCC curriculum



Mrs. Robin Carlo's expertise as a teacher and reading specialist, is paying great dividends for SPCC students.

When children learn how to read a world of possibilities becomes available to them. As William James (philosopher) said, "So it is with children who learn to read fluently and well: They begin to take flight into whole new worlds as effortlessly as young birds take to the sky."

The teachers and administration at St. Peter Central Catholic (SPCC) recognize the importance of reading as an essential skill and the high level of success the students have achieved in reading based on the programs developed by the Wilson Language Training Corporation.

Although St. Peter Central Catholic has collaborated with Wilson Language Training Corporation for the last eighteen years, the exciting changes made over the last two years have enriched the education for the students. Last year, Wilson provided the school with a one-year grant that allowed Mrs. Robin Carlo, a seasoned teacher and Wilson trained reading specialist for 23 years, to provide reading instruction to the students and assist the teachers with the Wilson programs.

One group of students that saw a significant gain in reading was the kindergarten class. In the beginning of the academic year, approximately 30 percent of the kindergarteners were identified as "at risk", but after the implementation of the Wilson reading program, only 2 percent were deemed "at risk" at the end of the year.

This year, through Wilson's continued generosity, Mrs. Carlo's position has become permanent, which allows her to work with the students for three days a week, and provide coaching and training to educators on the other two days. This change has allowed the students in Kindergarten through Grade 5 to receive the Intervention Enrichment Program for 30 minutes three times a week, in addition to the 90 minutes per day of the language arts curriculum.

In the Intervention Enrichment Program, students are placed in small groups based on their needs, and progress is monitored monthly. The students in Grades 6 through 8, who have difficulty with reading and spelling, receive the "Just Words Program." In addition, Wilson has designated SPCC as a "Demonstration Site" which allows Mrs. Carlo to train educators from other institutions in the Wilson programs. They also have an opportunity to view students in the classroom.

Mrs. Carlo said that SPCC was chosen as a demonstration site due to "the dedication of the staff, the skill level of the teachers, and the commitment of the administration."

This collaboration between SPCC and Wilson Language Training Corporation has proven beneficial to the students. The reading programs, along with dedicated teachers, are providing a lasting foundation for success.

Time to Shine



*Time to Shine is a publication of
St. Peter Central Catholic Elementary School.*

*865 Main Street, Worcester MA 01610
508-791-6496*

*The Time to Shine newsletter can also be viewed on the
school's website at www.stpetercc.com*

A homecoming? What a great idea!

Most colleges, and even some high schools, host annual homecoming celebrations. But elementary schools? Not so many.

That will change next September as St. Peter Central Catholic Elementary School will invite all students and their families throughout the school's proud and lengthy history to gather at 865 Main Street for a day of special festivities.

The target date for the celebration is Saturday, September 18th. The homecoming will feature food and beverage, music and entertainment for all ages, a historical exhibit, as well as tours of the school. And, of course, the best part is the chance to renew acquaintances and to share fond memories with friends old and new.

Further details of the homecoming will be announced as they are formulated throughout the year.

In the meantime, a planning committee is being developed that invites your help and participation. If you would like to assist you can contact the school at 508-791-6496, or by email to: info@stpetercc.com.

Also, if you have contact information (especially mailing address and/or email address) for former classmates, friends or relatives who once attended the school, please share them with us by writing to:

St. Peter Central Catholic Elementary School
865 Main Street, Worcester MA 01610,
or by email to: info@stpetercc.com.

See you in September!



Special moments and memories

The annual father-daughter dance on December 4th, and the mother-son dance the following night, have long been a very special tradition at St. Peter's and this year's editions were no exception.



Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Worcester MA
Permit No. 552

St. Peter Central Catholic
Elementary School
865 Main Street, Worcester MA 01610

