THE CHALLENGE

St. Cyril Academy Alumnae Association, Danville, PA 17821-1699 Spring 2018

**FROM THE MODERATOR**

Dear Alums,

Guess what? The *fialky* are blooming! Wondered if that would ever happen after the blustery winter we’ve had. But the days are speeding by and it’s almost time to say goodbye to this school year. Now, our thoughts really move on to Homecoming 2018. You are thinking about coming, are you not? We expect you and are looking forward to seeing you all. Each time I pass the Homecoming photos in the corridor near the old study hall, I pray for all of you; recall each of you; and hope you’re happy. You will be in the photo of the alums this year, I know.

By now I feel a part of the mortar of the building and the plaster on the corridor walls. I have been here for 54 years—arriving in 1964—all of which have been exciting, challenging, and very happy. From teacher, to principal, to Community leader, to preschool and kindergarten principal, I have never been bored. The drama programs I enjoyed with the Academy students continue with the little ones each June. I am blessed!

Mark your calendars for October 20th. Contact your classmates; refresh your stories; be prepared to have a good time!

Lovingly with prayer,

Sister M. Donna Marie Ivanko (’52)

Moderator

**FROM THE EDITOR**

Dear Friends,

Thanks for your kind messages of support. The news is beginning to flow! You will see some notices that predate my editorship, published in the spirit of keeping you all informed. Thanks, too, for the news about your travels responding to an item published in the last issue.

In this issue, please note the changes to the Homecoming schedule. These changes respond to requests by alumnae to spend more unstructured time together, and also accommodate travel plans. Invitations will be mailed in August, but this early notice will allow you to better plan your activities for 20 October.

This issue also contains two questionnaires to help us get to know each other as the women we have become since leaving SCA. The idea of exploring our “grown up” selves came from a conversation with Sr. Teresa Urda at Family Day a few years ago. Sister was anxious that alumnae return to the school, at least for Homecoming, and enjoy the experience of seeing classmates and old friends again. We came down on the side of leaving the past where it was and advancing relationships whence we stand. Thus, the questionnaires, which I hope to continue for several issues until we all have a better profile of the WOMEN of SCA.

I hope you will participate by completing and returning a questionnaire when your category appears. The questions are straightforward; the results are not meant to be exhaustive or scientific. But your responses may help

engender new friendships and bring excitement to old associations through comfortable sharing of experiences and expertise. Results will be reported out in a future Challenge. I have started with what I perceive are the two largest professional groups among us: educators and nursing professionals.

Another form of connectivity begins with this issue. In an effort to help us appreciate the “quilt” of Academy families, alumnae connections will be reported when they are provided to me with a news item.

Mercy Kowalczyk (’64), Editor

**ALUMNAE NEWS**

Cynthia (Galinas) Al-Qawasmi (’81) welcomed a new grandchild on 11 October 17. Lillian Nicole Jones joins big brother Landon Christopher Jones, age 3. The proud parents are Cindy’s daughter, Ashley, and her husband, Christopher Jones.

Alina Rivera, granddaughter of Agnes (Drahovsky) Finkle (’56) and daughter of Eileen (Finkle) Rivera (’90) married in 2017. She and her husband are expecting their first child in July.

**MAY THEY REST IN PEACE**

Please remember in your prayers the deceased and their families.

Sister Maria Goretti (Hudak), SSCM, 16 February 18

**Alumnae:**

Joan (Dennen) Harner (’59)—14 September 16

Virginia (Kubko) Bryant (’59)—12 December 17

Helen (Horvath) McCarthy (’53)—17 November 17

Patricia (Lupinski) Andrezzi (’56)—30 January 18

Frances (Yenchik) Polchin (’46)—26 March 18, sister of Mary (Yenchik) Novotnak (’44), as well as Catherine (Yenchik) Bartol (’40) [d.] and Barbara (Yenchik) (’53) [d.]; aunt of MaryAnn (Novotnak) Askam (’67), Barbara (Novotnak) Mosca (’69), and Michelle (Bartol) Iobst (’73).

**Family Members:**

Alfonso Radwill, husband of Martha (Bensko) Radwill (’49)—18 April 17

Joseph Flaherty, husband of Terry Ann (Jacobs) Flaherty (’55)—20 October 17

Margaret Spodnik, sister of Josephine (Spodnik) Anderek (’51)—2 February 18

Michael Dean, husband of Marie (Sofianek) Dean (’60)—7 March 18

William Dolehide, son of Judy (Mensik) Dolehide (’59)—8 March 18

**PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED FOR:**

The special intention of Martha (Bensko) Radwill (’49)

**HOMECOMING:**

**Please mark your calendar: 20 OCTOBER 18**

**The schedule has been revised as follows:**

**Registration in the Study Hall, concurrent with Continental Breakfast in the Dining Room, will start at 9:00 AM (travelers don’t have to stop at a restaurant *en route*). Registration will be followed by the group photo and the business meeting. A reception and dinner will begin at 1:30 PM and the (Sunday) liturgy will be celebrated at 5:00 PM in the Basilica.**

This year the following Jubilee Classes will be celebrated:

1938-1939 80 Years 1958-1959 60 Years

1942-1943 75 Years 1967-1968 50 Years

1948-1949 70 Years 1992-1993 25 Years

1952-1953 65 Years

Please contact your classmates to assure broad circulation of these changes. Homecoming invitations will be mailed in August. If you don’t receive an invitation, or you know of a friend or classmate who would like to receive one, please contact Joanne Stahura.

**DUES:**

Alumnae Association dues remain $10 per year. You are not required to pay any dues in arrears, just start with 2018. Please send your dues directly Joanne Stahura. Make your check out to: *SCA ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION*. In the memo portion of the check please write: “ Dues” and the year.

**THE WEBSITE:**

Alumnae are encouraged to participate in the Academy website. The site is well maintained and contains information about alumnae, activities, photos, announcements. You can also post messages to classmates. The site address is: [www.stcyrilacademy.org](http://www.stcyrilacademy.org). Sign in and select a password.

**HAPPY TRAVELERS:**

This summer, Agnes (Drahovsky) Finkle (’56) plans to head for Myrtle Beach, SC, for sun and sand, and to Cleveland, OH (where she will view a replica of the Ark). At the end of September, she will travel to Ontario, Canada. Agnes enjoys being on the move and has toured numerous sites in the US and Canada, including Mackinac Island, Michigan, and Branson, Missouri. Agnes will also be traveling to family weddings this fall with a son scheduled to be married in September and a grandson marrying in early October.

In the winter issue, Grace (Zaretti) Conti (’67) extended an invitation to any alumnae who wished to join the “Girls Only” travel group formed many years ago by members of her class. Their most recent destination was Las Vegas. The group usually includes the following, all from the Class of ‘67: Grace (Zaretti) Conti, Connie Gordon, Kathy (Hritz) Briant, Margaret Mary Baran, Ellen (Kerr) Ryan (and her sister-in-law Bette Ryan), Elaine (Kopecky) Sweeney, Eileen (Kusbel) Schneider, and Carol (Kessler) DeSilva (along with her daughter). Other trips have included Patricia (Pachence) Gaebl, Cyrila (Gerdelan) DiGiovanni, and Janine Corbett. Friends and relatives who are not SCA graduates join in from time to time. Grace reminds us that all alumnae are welcome to join in. Contact Grace directly for more information on future plans.

Most alumnae are familiar with the art of Kristyna (Szajowska) O’Hop (’62). Kristyna has made gifts of her work to the Sisters; a limited edition of prints of “Angels of the Tower,” honoring SCA alumnae, was available at Homecoming a few years ago. Kristyna has a particular interest in capturing less-widely-known religious figures. Much of her work is donated to benefit religious sites and organizations, involving extensive travel for presentations. In 2017, Kristyna presented paintings of San Bruno’s “Profession of Faith” to the Carthusian Monastery at Serra San Bruno, located in Vibo Valentia, Calabria, Italy. She returned at a later date to attend the San Bruno Festival; this visit inspired new efforts. Later, in Malaysia, at the Refugio en el Bosque (Shelter in the Forest), Kristyna designed a booklet as a guide for visitors. A red maple, in honor of her late husband, Bill [d.2015], was planted there.

Christina (Valenta) Sams (’64) sent in a marvelous recounting of her family’s visit to the Czech Republic (her Father was born in Vresovice) and Slovakia (her Mother was from a border town near Vresovice), in 2013. The trip included 10 family members and was planned by Chris’ sister-in-law who was interested in discovering her own ancestral roots. The group was fortunate to have an excellent guide, Marie, who hired buses, arranged hotels, meals, passes, etc., for the 10-day adventure. Marie diligently arranged visits to villages identified by the family as part of their history. Then she went the extra mile and contacted the mayors of these places to assure that nothing of importance was missed. Consequently, two cousins were located in a different part of Vresovice who, heretofore, were unknown to the family. A proposed 20-minute meeting in the morning resulted in a delightful party that lasted deep into the afternoon, with the sharing of food and drink, family stories, and photos. The “new” cousins, Josepha and Vera, remain in contact and hope to visit family in the US in the near future.

**SUBMITTING NEWS:**

Please include your full name, class, mailing address, phone, and e-mail (we will use this to keep mailing lists current as well as confirm receipt of your item and contact you with any questions/clarifications).

If you are reporting a death, please give the full name of the individual, their connection to you and/or other alumnae, the date of death, and any other salient information. We are interested in the births of children/grandchildren and their educational and other major achievements. If you travel, we’d like to hear about your adventures. Please submit all items to Mercy Kowalczyk.

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