



The Spire

St. Stanislaus
Alumni & Friends Newsletter

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 2

JULY 2015

8 PAGES

What is next?..... Mark Your Calendar!

❖ **Alumni & Friends Picnic & 10th Anniversary Celebration**
Sunday, August 9, 2015 – Klima Garden Pavilion
1:30 Mass / 2:30 Picnic
Class of 1965 – 50th Class Reunion Weekend
See details on page 4.

❖ **St. Stan's Polish Festival – Social Hall, Baxter Avenue**
October 2, 3 & 4, 2015

Alumni Sponsored Mass – during Festival Weekend
Saturday, October 3rd at 5 o'clock Mass, then meet at the
Festival at 6 o'clock for food & friendship.
Purchase the **Special Parish Cookbook** –
all proceeds presented to the 'Pipe Organ Fund'

Highlight of This Issue: page 7

"My Favorite Memory"
By Bill Dix



World Tid-bits

by the Staff's BIG BOY

Norman Pieschalski



What has happened?

- Chili Cook Offpg. 2
- Dyngus-Smigus.....pg. 2
- Four Eagle Banquet.....pg. 3
- Fr. Rob Ramser Ordination & Mass.....pg. 3
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- Raffle results.....pg. 7



'New' Alumni Logo

Updated version of Sr. Alberta's 1949 St. Stan's book covers logo. Thank you Gene '61 for customizing it for our current needs.

☪ Welcome Back ☪

Throughout his high school years, Norm had a regular Spire column: "World Tid – Bits". It included interesting stories as well as Norm's thoughts. After a 55 year hiatus, the alumni Spire is glad to have Norm Pieschalski '60 and his column back...editor and staff.

I have been thinking about School Spirit. I remember when it was a vital part of going to school, sharing with friends and enjoying the St. Stan's experience. Sadly, after 55 years my school spirit is a vague memory. I'm sure that many of you feel the same. I'm fortunate to still be vertical most of the time and I don't need a grand illusion from my past to keep me going. I mention this because as a member in good standing of the St. Stan's Alumni Committee I don't want to get overly sentimental about my request to you.

I would really appreciate it if you could take some time in your busy lives to try to recall your memories of St. Stan's. I want you to think about the friends you had (and still might have). Try to recall the happy, joy-filled experiences but don't forget the sad moments as well. I want you to remember the priests and nuns and it goes without saying Len Janiak. I know that some of you had rich fulfilling experiences at St. Stan's. And others had bitter resentful times. I can honestly remember each side of the St. Stan's experience in my youthful life.

I have been going through old copies of the original SPIRE and I see many names I recall having been scholars, artists, athletes and genuinely helpful people in our community. I remember their contributions to Saints' High as well as their fellow students. I believe that they were the living examples of School Spirit. I recall these young people striving to do well and lead others by their examples. As I viewed these past accomplishments I'm reminded that it wasn't a grand illusion, I recall it was the wonderful friends of my past doing their best and being there for me and others.

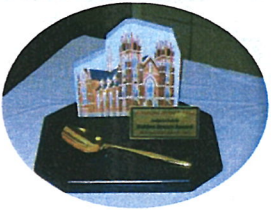
I have now grown old and forgetful and it takes a lot of prompting to take me back in time. The original SPIRES help, the prayers I say daily for friends passed away, and the good wishes for those sick and ailing also help. I cannot undo the past whether it was good or bad for you. I would not attempt to revise your memories. I try hard not to romanticize mine. I see the St. Stan's experience as a key ingredient in my life no matter the quality of the past recollections. I'm glad to still be here and to have some wits about me so that I can navigate this part of my life. I hope you feel the same.

I thank you for reading this far if you are still with me. I hope that a rekindling of your school spirit will take place. I fervently hope that you will become active in the St. Stan's Alumni Committee I know that all of you have time, talent and treasure in varying amounts. I would consider it a privilege if you would share with the Committee whatever you could of your attributes. But most of all I would like to see you or hear from you regarding your St. Stan's experiences.

So far this year...January to June...

**5th Annual Chili Cook Off
Saturday, January 24, 2015**

Thank you



Emcee: Jon Loufman, Meteorologist



Judges



Anthony Brancatelli
Ward 12
Councilman



The Most Reverend Roger
W. Gries, O.S.B.,
M.Ed., V.G.
(Retired)



Pam Cabral
2014
Golden Spoon &
People's Choice
Winner



Chili chefs:

Robert Bartzczak, Ralph Tatulinski, John Fijalkovich, Jim Walkuski, Linda Golubski, Ann Armen, Norm Pieschalski, Jim & Mary Vaughan, Jen Dupont, Christy Hudek Bartley, John Duhanich, Phuzzie Haag, Skip Wilson

Winners:

Judges Choice—1st Place—Ann Armen (Teacher at Elementary School)

2nd Place—Norm Pieschalski (Class of 1960)

3rd Place—Jen Dupont (Friend of Alumni & St. Stanislaus)

People's Choice—Jen Dupont

Congratulations to all the winners and Chefs for a wonderful evening of chili and friendship.

Dyngus-Śmigus Celebration – Saturday, April 11, 2015



Frankie Yankovic

July 28, 1915 – October 14, 1998

Again this year to celebrate the end of Lent and the joy of Easter our idea of a good time is to meet the following Saturday. This year was special because it marked the 100th Anniversary year of the birth of the Cleveland Polka King—Frankie Yankovic.

Ron Zeszut (below: Parish Pastoral Council Chairperson) was the DJ.



and— Hank Wroblewski (above: Class of 1960) was great on his accordion!



The "Donnas"
Side Board Sellers:
Donna Ciborowski
&
Donna Larca Burovac



**But for us...
it was also the date for our
'BIG' ALUMNI RAFFLE!**

See page 7



Four Eagles...May 8, 2015

The Four Eagles Event was started in 2003 and is celebrated near the Feast Day of St. Stanislaus in May. It was created in order to give recognition to individuals or groups who have demonstrated outstanding commitment to the St. Stanislaus community. The fundraiser is a magical evening which includes a silent auction, appetizers, gourmet main course, open bar and presentation of the annual award followed by an outstanding dessert station.

This year's award recipient, Third Federal Foundation has annually been committed to the St. Stanislaus community and Slavic Village.

- 2003 Ben Stefanski, II
- 2004 Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth
- 2005 Jane Campbell, former Mayor of Cleveland
- 2006 Franciscan Friars
 - The Province of The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus
 - The Province of The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- 2007 Cleveland Police Department, 3rd District
- 2008 Anthony Brancatelli and Edward W. Rybka, Jr.

- 2009 Bican Brothers, Fortuna, Golubski, Komorowski & Mosinski Funeral Homes
- 2010 The DiGeronimo Family and the Kurtz Family
- 2011 Bishop Anthony M. Pilla
- 2012 Alfred Geis and Katherine Geis
- 2013 The St. Stanislaus Alumni Association*
- 2014 Stanislaw Kardynal Dziwisz
Archbishop of Krakow
- 2015 Third Federal Foundation

If anyone would be interested in attending Next Year, use our contact information to let us know, because we can help organize alumni tables. Invite friends, family and classmates to join you.

*Note: as you can see in 2013 our Alumni & Friends Committee was recognized, and we are humbled and honored by the recognition.



Third Federal Foundation Honorees.



Event Chef, Rick Sklodowski with his family members.



Fr. Jerzy caught David Krakowski trying to steal a gourmet pierogi!!



Alumni Friends enjoying a toast!

Congratulations Rev. Fr. Robert Ramser

Fr. Rob Ramser was ordained a priest on Saturday, May 16, 2015. After ordination, Fr. Rob had his first Mass at his "home parish" – St. Stanislaus on Sunday, May 17th. Following are photos of the Mass and reception. His first assignment started on June 9th at St. Ambrose Parish (929 Pearl Rd, Brunswick, OH 44212).



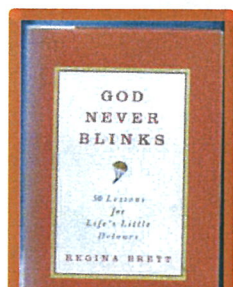
10th Anniversary of Alumni Origin

In 2005, Fr. Mike Surufka asked Sharon Kozak, Rita Golubski and others about creating a New parish organization – St. Stanislaus Alumni Association. (See: *The Spire* Vol. 1 Issue 1 July 2013. “From the Beginning” by Sharon Kozak on the parish web site under Alumni – Newsletters₂). The first major event was to celebrate Catholic Schools Week in January 2006. Over the years our group has evolved into a larger group – encouraging family and friends to enjoy our events, so we have become more of an “*Alumni and Friends*” organization.



This year, 2015, marks the 10th Anniversary of the planning for the social in the Elementary School. To help celebrate this occasion at our Alumni & Friends picnic on Saturday, August 9, 2015 at Klima’s Garden (4646 East 71st Street) Fr. Mike will preside at the 1:30 Mass at the Picnic Pavilion. Join us for the Mass and Picnic (\$10 admission for food AND one raffle ticket), and a chance to see Fr. Mike and rekindle friendships with classmates and family / friends.

In this newsletter we are including an extra feature from Regina Brett’s book *God Never Blinks – 50 Lessons for Life’s Little Detours*** . It is a wonderful book to read and especially meaningful for us after the murder of Fr. William Gulas on December 7, 2002.



Following is the excerpt from *Lesson #15: Everything Can Change in the Blink of an Eye. But Don’t Worry; God Never Blinks.*

In one of his novels, Chaim Potok describes how God sees versus how humans see. We see the world as fragmented, because we blink. But God, who never blinks, sees the entire universe as we cannot see it. Whole.

Imagine what we might see in a lifetime of not blinking?

Some people believe that a rare few others see in the blinks. The art critic Sister Maria Gloria Riva once told an interviewer that saints and artists can see between blinks. If you examine their creations, the beauty of wholeness shines through. They see with the vision of faith. To paraphrase her, if you have faith, you can see beyond the limitations of most vision. You can see the light of a “now” where others see only the darkness in the “not yet.”

I once met a man who could see the now in the not yet. Everything in his life changed in the blink of an eye one Christmas.

Father Mike Surufka got the call while he was out of town on December 7, 2002. His home, the church rectory, was in flames. He rushed back to news that kept getting worse. His best friend, the church pastor was missing. No one could find Father Willy.

Then the bishop called. Firefighters had found the body in the rubble. It was Father Willy. The investigation revealed a new horror. The priest didn’t die in the fire. He had been shot. Who would murder Father William Gulas?

Everyone at St. Stanislaus Church in Cleveland’s old Slavic Village loved Father Willy. He was pastor of the beautiful, ornate Polish church that the Franciscan priest shepherded. The day of the fire, Father Mike arrived at the church for five o’clock Mass just as the people prayed, “Lamb of God, have mercy on us.” He held it together until he looked up and saw all the altar boys and girls. Every single one of them had showed up. They had called one another and come to the church. They stood there in cassocks, their faces soaked in tears.

Father Mike wept.

It got even tougher for him. Police charged a Franciscan brother for the murder. Brother Daniel Montgomery had lived with the two priests but had not yet taken final vows to be a Franciscan. His behavior was odd and made people uncomfortable. Father Willy had to break the news that it wasn’t working out.

Brother Dan shot him. Then he set the rectory on fire to cover up the murder.

That night Father Mike lay in bed knowing he’d lost everything—his possessions, his home, his friend. He wandered through the rubble the next day, through blackened halls, the stink of smoke, the shards of glass, the bare wires.

He was homeless. His dear friend was gone. Everyone in the church was devastated. It was the most despair he’d ever felt. When he opened the door, a woman approached him. An angel, he calls her now.

“How are you?” she asked.

He told her the truth. “I have nothing.”

She looked at him and said three words that changed his life.

“You have us.”

Since then, he’s recalculated.

“I’ve got everything,” he says.

That night took him to the essence of what it means to be Franciscan: when your only attachment is to God and to love, you have everything that matters. He had worn the long, simple brown robe of Saint Francis for 20 years, but that was the moment he became a Franciscan.

At the core of the Franciscan order is brotherhood. That's what made Father Willy's death even harder. A brother killed one of his own.

When Father Mike walked through the burned rectory, his sandals crunched shards of glass on the blackened carpet. He stopped in his old office, where pushpins were melted to the bulletin board, where photos of friends curled into black claws. He walked down the tunnel of black, past boarded-up windows, past charcoal doorframes, into a room that should be a chapel. On the wall blackened by smoke, a cross left its imprint in bright white—so bright, it seemed to glow in the dark.

He walked through the kitchen where he and Father Willy shared meals. He paused in the doorway where they found Father Willy. He stopped in the living room where they had put up the Christmas tree. How would the people of the parish celebrate Christmas? How could they celebrate anything?

The people at St. Stanislaus knew that Christmas would be tough, so they found the widest, tallest tree for the church. It climbed 17 feet. They covered it in lights, and everyone from this tough old Polish parish brought an ornament from home to decorate it. It was the most glorious tree they had ever seen.

A smile comes over Father Mike whenever he talks about that Christmas, the darkest and brightest Christmas of his life. He picks up a worn black Bible bent nearly in half down the middle, creased from being opened so often. He skims John 1:5 and grins when he finds the passage. "This is so Christmas," he says, then reads aloud:

"The light shines on in darkness, a darkness that did not overcome it."

He closes the book. On the cover, on the bottom right corner, stamped in gold are two words: William Gulas.

It was Father Willy's Bible.

Saint Francis once said that there is no darkness that is so dark that the light of a single candle cannot pierce it.

That woman was the candle.

A single flame.

A blink.



Regina Brett

**Permission for use by Author Regina Brett, GOD NEVER BLINKS. WWW.REGINABRETT.COM
Other Books: 'BE THE MIRACLE' and 'God IS ALWAYS HIRING'.

<p><i>Francis</i> by Patrick J. Marrin May 25, 2015</p>			
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<p>Stephen Todorovich</p>	<p>Dyngus Day at Seven Roses</p>	<p>Ania Potrzuski</p>	<p>Seven Roses Sophie Tyl and Staff</p>	<p>Constitution Day Parade</p>

One of those memorable lifetime happenings!!!

By Jim Ducato '52

This year Cleveland Central Catholic High School again recognized outstanding founding school athletes. St. Stanislaus 1952 graduate, Jim Ducato was inducted into the Sports Hall of Fame at the ceremony on Sunday April 19, 2015.

You can read Jim's story in the January 2014 Volume 2, Issue 1 of The Spire on the Parish web site:

"My Pal...Buddy Ward and other Remembrances..."

Jim wrote back after returning home to Texas from the ceremony weekend:

I was aware that a Sports Hall of Fame had been started, but I did not know much about it except that my best high school friend, Buddy Ward had been inducted in 2014. Many thoughts ran thru my mind about attending the Hall of Fame Ceremony such as, I had graduated 63 years ago, I have lived in Texas the last 36 years, I knew very few people in Cleveland, and it would be a long plane ride. As a result I initially decided not to attend.

However in March I was informed that several of my classmates were planning to come to the induction on April 19TH. These were friends that I had not seen in 63 years. If they thought enough of me to attend, I would surely be there.

My daughter, Kathy Robinson, and her husband John, said if I was going to attend so would they, as well as my wife, Pat.

When I got to Cleveland and drove over to CCC/St. Stans I was blown away by the beautiful football field and the school addition.

A lot of effort and preparation had to be done for the really first class award ceremony.

There was assigned seating, pictures on the tables, past inductees pictures displayed, just an outstanding event.

When my old classmates from 1952 came into the hall, I could not have been happier to see them. There was Marge (Cytlak) and Ed Sopata, Dolores (Macek) Dobransky and Lottie Kwiatkowski. Also attending, from the Class of 1954, Sr. Madeleine Rybicki and Jack Toronski and his wife, Diane. I am a very emotional person and I become teary very easily and it took a lot to hold back.



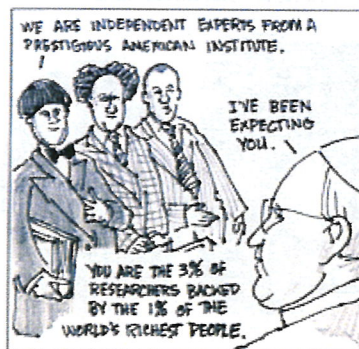
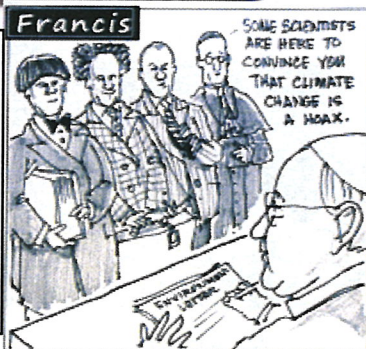
L-R: Marty Hopkins, whose father was one of my best friends, Jim and Pat, Kathy and John Robinson.

During my presentation when talking about some of the greatest people I have know, I broke down a little.

The whole day could not have been better. St. Stans has always meant a great deal to me. Although I received an award, the reward should really go to St. Stan's, Sr. Sophia, Sr. Alberta, Sr. Patricia, and coach Janiak. They all had a tremendous impact on me.

I know I could not have achieved what I did in sports and life without St. Stans.

THANK YOU ST. STANISLAUS!!!



Francis
by Patrick J. Marrin
June 8, 2015

Stephen Todorovich
Cub Reporter -- St. Stanislaus Elementary School

What I Believe - In 2015

The thing I believe in the most is Love. I believe in Love because it is one of the things that hold the world together. Without love people would be lonely and sad. I believe that when the world was created, love was the first thing on it. Love is the best thing anyone could ever have.

The main purpose of love is that it keeps people happy. Love is the reason we wake up in the morning. Love keeps you safe from the bad things in the world. Love is why you are alive. Most importantly, love keeps you healthy.

From the moment you were born, you were loved. You will always be loved until the day you die. Even when you feel like you are not loved, just think of the people you have ever known. Someone will always be there to love you.

That is why I believe in Love.

Editor's Note: Stephen has been a Junior Member of the Alumni & Friends Committee for 5 years now. He has attended every committee planning meeting and event. Stephen is responsible, energetic, hard working and enthusiastic. As he is maturing he is playing a greater role in his volunteer assisting, such as; carrying boxes up and down the stairs, as a Greeter at the Parish Festival, assisting in setting up for the various events the Alumni Sponsor and most importantly distributing and maintaining the soft drink/water bar at all of the events. Stephen is the son of Linda Sickora, Alumni Committee member and will be in the 8th grade this coming year.



"THIS is why, after 10 years, we are so grateful that we can order new Bibles."

Mrs. Martin

From the Principal:
 Deborah Ann Martin
 Principal, St. Stanislaus School
Bonitatern, Disciplinam, Scientiam

Thank you, Thank you, and Thank you.
 I will be able to purchase 5 classrooms a full set of Bibles.
 On behalf of our students we thank the Alumni & Friends Raffle Results.
 Thank you for taking such good care of our students.



Raffle results and recognition for a Super Alumnus...

Once the raffle costs and prizes were taken care of there was a profit of \$4140 from the 802 tickets which were sold. The alumni committee decided to distribute the funds as follows—

- \$2000 to Mrs. Martin for the Elementary School Bibles
- \$2000 to Fr. Eric for the Rectory Roof Repair fund
- \$ 140 for the Alumni & Friends Development fund

Winners:

\$2000 – Carole Nowak
\$ 500 – Tom Sklodowski
\$ 350 – Anonymous – donated to Elementary School & Pipe Organ Fund

The "Count Me In" campaign (alumni and friends who offered extra help and were given 6 tickets) sold 46% of the tickets sold. Folks who received two tickets sold 25%, another 25% were sold after the Masses and 4% were sold by the Elementary School Faculty. **Thank you to ALL who bought and sold tickets!**

This raffle also provided an opportunity to recognize a Super Raffle Ticket Seller—

Donna Ciborowski.

By herself, mainly selling after Sunday Masses, Donna sold 111 tickets!

The combined sales for the next TOP 5 ticket sellers – Bob Sledz 30, Mary Ann Sklodowski 18, Rita Golubski 18, Norm Pieschalski 18 and Barb Sledz 14 – was 98 tickets. Donna sold 13 more than those five COMBINED! What a DYNAMO! Plus, Donna was just elected to the Parish Pastoral Council. Donna, the council is fortunate to now have your dedication, knowledge and enthusiasm, **Congratulations**



Moments to Remember by Bill Dix, Class of 1960 – St. Stan’s High School

St. Stan’s Elementary School: early 50’s—fourth grade—I believe, can’t remember Sister’s name (repressed memory of her).

It was a “Marian Year” and we were told we had to make miniature parade floats for a display honoring the Blessed Mother. A grand prize would be awarded for the most beautiful and creative one.

I used my favorite toy, a Dick Tracy Police Squad Car as the foundation for my float. Dick was the driver and Fearless Fosdick the passenger. It had a wind-up motor, siren and flashing red light. Beautiful!

Pieces of my Erector Set formed a frame onto which I glued sections of balsa wood from a model airplane kit (Spark’s Hobby Shop—remember them). All of this formed an altar complete with mini-candle holders and birthday candles. From a night light, I rescued a hollow “Virgin Mary” statue which fit perfectly on the center of the altar above the red light. It was fantastic!!

The sisters had two long tables set up in the basement community room for our projects. The principal and, I believe, Father Agnellus, were the contest judges.

Each of us had to explain our creation. There were mobile manger scenes, an Ascension scene float and many more. When my turn came, I explained my altar dedicated to Mary. Then: THE FATAL MISTAKE! I flipped the switch under the car’s rear bumper and my float took off screaming down the length of the table knocking several other floats to the floor. It flew off the table’s end and landed in a waste basket. I rushed to retrieve my treasure but Sister stopped me saying: “It’s where it should be—I’m calling your mother.”

I was crestfallen. I deserved the prize. After all, mine was the only float that was self-propelled, had a blaring siren and most importantly, a flashing red Holy Mother!

P.S.: I got a good spanking when I got home, and never got my Dick Tracy Squad Car back.

P.P.S.: years later, Fr. Agnellus told me, laughingly, that he loved my float!!

**“Moments to Remember” –
Your Input**

If you have a special memory or story related to the St. Stanislaus Schools – or – growing up in the neighborhood – you can share it with others through The Spire. Try to limit your essay to around 500 words and send it to the address below.



William J. Dix



Look for details about entertainment, food and activities in the church bulletin, parish website and the

**Facebook Alumni Page at
Alumni of Saint Stanislaus (St Stans) in
Cleveland Ohio**


Contact information:
The Shrine Church of St. Stanislaus
3649 East 65 Street
Cleveland, OH 44105

Rectory and Parish Office:
216-341-9091
www.ststanislaus.org

Alumni Association Chair:
Bob Sledz: 440-333-7827
sledzbob@yahoo.com

Special “\$5 CUT OUT” Raffle Ticket:

To help support *The Spire* Newsletter printing and mailing, we are having a **SPECIAL \$100 DRAWING** on the Saturday evening of the Polish Festival... Oct 3rd. All you need to do to be eligible is cut out the form, fill it out and return with your contribution of \$5 or more to the **Parish Office and make all checks payable to ‘St. Stan’s’**. If you would like two or more chances at winning the \$100 prize and you send in \$10 or more, we will **reproduce your ticket according to the amount you donated**. Example: \$5 – one ticket, \$25 – six tickets, \$50 – 15 tickets! Thank you for your support and Good Luck!



\$100 Prize Drawing – Supporting *The Spire* Newsletter

___ \$50 ___ \$25 ___ \$10 ___ \$5 ___ other amount

Name _____

Address _____

City, State & Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____