



# Alumni News

Summer 2002 – Volume 41, Issue 2

The Original Father Flanagan's Boys' Home



## Alumni Strive to Make America Better



From the writings of  
Father Flanagan ...

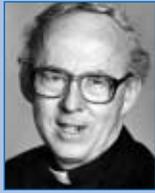
“About 23 years ago, I made the statement that “there is no such thing as a bad boy.” People laughed at me and said, “Well, he means well.” ... Boys Town was started as a protest. It was a protest against the manner in which the underprivileged boy was denied that chance which I spoke to you about a moment ago ... Hate for one another must be eliminated from the hearts and minds of people. And certainly in this great country of ours, there should be no place for such hatred of races and creeds ... At Boys Town we have been trying for the last 23 years to give the child an opportunity to rule himself.”

*The Original Father Flanagan's Boys' Home, Boys Town, Nebraska*

# Remember the Home and the Children in Need

Dear Alumni,

I am writing to invite each one of you to make plans to come back to the Home for the dedication of the Father Flanagan statue on Saturday, October 5, 2002. The night before, we have our Homecoming football game so come for that, too. It will be a grand weekend. Please plan to come. Also, please plan to come to Sunday Mass at 9:15 a.m. in Dowd Chapel...just like the olden days...or come to Chambers All Faiths Chapel.



I am also asking you to say a prayer for good Monsignor Peter Dunne. He has very bad hips and is trying to make a decision as to whether he should have two hip

replacements or not. I surely hope he will. His mind is sharp and his heart is as big as ever. He is so helpful to the kids in hearing confessions and preaching and saying Mass.

The kids say: "When Father Dunne preaches, it's just like Moses coming down from Mount Sinai."

And finally I ask you to pray for our recent graduates. So many are in the service in basic training and you remember how good it makes you feel to be successful there. So many other graduates are just starting college or technical school. Keep them all in your prayers.

I would like to share with you a reflection about patriotism from one of our little children. I hope it touches your heart. "There was a plane crash in New York. What happened that day made me feel more motivated to sup-

port my country. I learned a new big word called patriotism. I am proud to be an American."

Thanks for listening. Thanks for being such good role models. Don't forget to contribute generously to the Home and all of our needs. There are more and more kids in need of the love and care you received here. Thanks for being such good alumni. I pray for you and your families every day. God bless you now and always.

Sincerely yours,



Father Val J. Peter, JCD, STD  
Executive Director

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## Reserve Your Father Flanagan Statue Be Part of a Legacy

18" Miniature Bronze Replicas

Only 100 made – Collectors' Items

Internationally recognized sculptor Fred Hoppe

\$1,850 (*Monies received will be put toward the cost of the Father Flanagan statue at the Home as well as the statue presented as a gift to Ireland last October.*)

Payment plans available. Credit cards accepted.

Donations accepted.

Call: (402) 498-1150

Write to: BTNAA, P.O. Box 2, Boys Town, NE 68010

Email: alumni@girlsandboystown.org



# Keeping Father Flanagan's Mission Alive



In order for Father Flanagan to be canonized as a saint, it must be proven that he lived his life as a hero of his time.

The legacy of Girls and Boys Town began on December 12, 1917, when Father Flanagan opened the door to five boys in a drafty house on 25th street. Since then, thousands of children across America and around the world have had their lives touched by Father Flanagan's mission.

His mission was simple. He wanted to help kids who wanted help. His mission began as one of groundbreaking idealism. He wanted to help any child regardless of race or religion. Father Flanagan believed that it was his job to fix this injustice that had been placed upon the youth of his time. He felt that every child should be treated like an important part of society. He believed that with his help that young men could become productive citizens.

For more than three decades, Father Flanagan gave children love, support, guidance and hope. His passion and mission to help children has grown every day over the past 85 years with the determination and perseverance of his successors.

Because of its love and thankfulness for Father Flanagan and his work to give children an opportunity for a better life, the Alumni Association set a goal in 1999 to honor his life work by starting the process

of canonization that will hopefully culminate in his elevation to sainthood. For this to be achieved, it must be proven that he lived his life as a hero of his time and that without him life would not be the same.

The alumni association has formed a prayer group, led by coordinator Sharon Nelsen and alumni, including:

Stan Struble, '68, Ed Flanagan, '81, Steve Wolf, '80, and Andy Dopheide '88. The

prayer group meets every second Tuesday of the month by Father Flanagan's tomb in Dowd Chapel at the Village of Boys Town. During the prayer sessions, they read Father Flanagan's writings and offer prayers to him.

Since this movement began, other groups, such as the Catholic Daughters, St. Robert Bellarmine, Christ the King and many surrounding parishes, have begun holding seminars, leading their own prayer groups and telling the story of Father Flanagan in their masses.

The people in Ballymoe, Ireland, Father Flanagan's homeland, have also formed prayer groups to help the canonization efforts. The ruins of the Flanagan home in Leabeg is attracting visitors from around the world.

The alumni canonization effort is giving rise to a new awareness of Father Flanagan's work and, as a result of the achievement of another alumni goal, that of placing a statue of Father Flanagan in Ireland, is creating a resurgence of dialogue and action to help improve and reform child care in Ireland.

Another development is the forming "sister city" relationship between Ballymoe and Boys Town. The Boys Town Hall of

History is supplying Ballymoe with photos and facts to include in a museum the city is building in memory of Father Flanagan.

Throughout the years we have seen Father Flanagan's Boys' Home grow and transform with the changing times but the mission of helping and healing those who want to be helped remains the same today. Father Flanagan's dreams live on because of alumni, employees and friends who continue to share his good work with others.



Because of the newfound friendship between Ballymoe and Boys Town, the youth in Ballymoe and children at Wegner School in Boys Town have become pen pals. Above is a picture drawn by the children.

*Come Home for the historic dedication of the bronze, life-size Father Flanagan statue and celebrate Father Flanagan's efforts to help children around the world.*

**Friday, Oct. 4 -**  
Homecoming Game 7 p.m.

**Saturday, Oct. 5 -**  
Statue Dedication (beginning with mass at Dowd chapel)

**Sunday, Oct. 6 -**  
Omaha Chapter Social

## Get Involved, Give Back, and Be a Part of the Solution

Dear Alumni,  
I am privileged to have met many outstanding alumni. Ever since the horror of 9/11, public service has again come into vogue. It is interesting to note that many alumni have donated money and served as volunteers for many years. Some of these individuals are truly remarkable and have been placed in our Alumni Hall of Fame in the Hall of History here on campus.



The old adage, "cream rises to the top" is true, but doesn't tell the whole story. Talent is God given and must be developed. Natural ability and talent is of little value to humanity unless it is utilized to benefit society in some manner.

Although the BTNAA Board of Directors has recognized the talents and achievements of many excellent alumni, Hall of Fame member-

ship is not defined solely by talent. Character demonstrated through public service is the commonality that defines most of our Hall of Fame inductees. Character, as we all know, is developed at an early age, and for most of us this occurred at Boys Town.

What is truly remarkable is the range of our alumni's interests and contributions. Some do it with time and talent and others with their checkbook, but it all counts for the same. Most alumni engaged in public service do so with no desire for recognition. For instance, every year many of our graduating girls and guys enter the military. During times of war, this is especially meaningful public service, and last year's Purple Heart Ceremony at the biennial convention recognized this fact.

It would be impossible to count the number of BT alumni active in their churches. Some are deacons, ministers or priests. Almost all our alumni chapters engage in public service of some type,

many at our BTUSA sites. Some alumni currently hold public office, and every member of the BTNAA Board of Directors has an extensive volunteer background.

The list is endless, and all the good deeds impossible to document here. "We have all drunk from wells we did not dig," goes the saying. If you spent time at Boys Town, you benefited from the dedication and gifts of others: volunteer, monetary, or otherwise.

Maybe it's time to give back? You, too, can make a difference by setting an example for your children. Get involved if you want to be part of the solution. Character does count.

All best,



Stan Struble '68  
National Alumni Director

## Olivo '66 Succeeds Marshall '51 on Girls and Boys Town Board of Trustees

Alumni do not forget the Home when they leave it. Many play a significant part in serving today's youth as well as the youth of the future. Some of these individuals do so by serving on the Girls and Boys Town Board of Trustees. The Girls and Boys Town Board of Trustees is made up of businesspeople and child-care advocates across the country and consistently includes one alumnus in its membership. The Trustees provide oversight and advice for Girls and Boys Town's operations at each of its 18 sites.

Andrew C. Olivo '66, a Dallas, Texas attorney and civic leader was appointed in April to a three-year term on the



Andrew C. Olivo '66

board. Olivo serves as a member of the Carrollton City Council and is a candidate for the Texas House of Representatives. He is also a former president of the BTNAA.

Olivo has served his country and community with distinction. He joined the Army in 1973 and has served in active or reserve duty for nearly 30 years in various assignments around the globe, including Operation Desert Shield/Storm. Presently, he is a Colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve. In addition, he serves his community as a volunteer in many youth-related projects.

Olivo and his wife, Linnea Lynn, have one son, Andy Carl.

Olivo succeeds Elmer G. Marshall, '51 on the board. Marshall founded E.E. Marshall Construction Company in Boulder City, Nev. in 1962. His company contracted for Cal Pacific Utilities from 1962 to 1982. Since 1968, E.E. Marshall Construction Company has maintained a crew of 27 employees, specializing in building home subdivisions and pipeline constructions. Marshall is also a board member at Girls and Boys Town of Nevada and a board member at St. Jude's Ranch for Children.

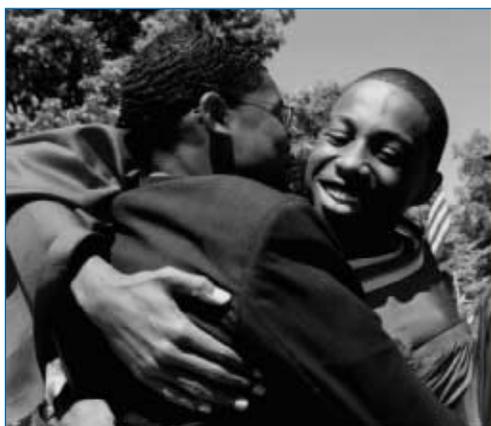


Elmer G. Marshall '51

# Happenings At The Home

## Welcome BTNAA Newest Alumni

In May, 63 Boys Town High School seniors crossed the Music Hall stage and received their diplomas, joining the other 5,161 graduates of Boys Town High School since 1937. We applaud the achievements of our newest alumni and wish them well. The following are reflections from members of the class of 2002:



“Girls and Boys Town has helped me throw away my selfishness and stubbornness. They showed me that I can change if I truly try.”  
**April**

“You have given me the most important thing in my life...faith in God, faith in others and faith in myself. Thank you Girls and Boys Town.”  
**Ashley**

“This is not a goodbye. It is just a see you later.”  
**Jerame**

“What Girls and Boys Town has done for me is more than I could ever imagine.”  
**Nathan**

“When you finally reach your destination, remember where you came from and the sacrifices you made. And be grateful to the people who helped you.”  
**Catherine**

“Girls and Boys Town has given me a real sense of who I can be.”  
**Montrel**

## Youth Elect 99th Mayor

More than 400 Girls and Boys Town youth cheered with joy after Father Val Peter announced Ashleigh Anikputa of Wayne, Neb., as their elected, 99th mayor.



Ashleigh, a 17-year-old junior, hopes

Former Mayor Amanda Martinez, '02, and former Vice Mayor Jeff Sweezy, '02, look on as 2002-2003 Girls and Boys Town Mayor Ashleigh Anikputa shakes the hand of Vice Mayor Benjamin Cooper Sims.

to serve the children of Girls and Boys Town and the Home in gratitude for the opportunities she has received here. “I want to make Girls and Boys Town the best place it can be so more kids have this same opportunity for a better home and a second chance at life,” she said.

Ashleigh came to Girls and Boys Town in 2000. She was named Girls and Boys Town Female Athlete of the year in 2002 and participates in basketball, track, drill team, band and swimming.



Mayor Ashleigh Anikputa and Vice Mayor Ben Sims took office on May 20.

She plans to attend Midland Lutheran College, majoring in education. She hopes to become a teacher and a volleyball coach.

Ashleigh succeeds Amanda Martinez from Mandeville, La., becoming the second consecutive and fifth girl to be elected mayor in Girls and Boys Town history.

Benjamin Cooper Sims, 18, of Chicago, Ill., was elected vice mayor. He came to Girls and Boys Town when he was just 10 years old. Ben plays football and basketball. After graduation, he plans on returning to Chicago to attend the Soma Institute to pursue a career as a sports physical therapist.

Father Flanagan conceived and initiated the self-government system in 1921 as a way for his boys to build citizenship and character.

**Congratulations to Chef Pierre Bossant, who began his 40th year of service to Boys Town in May!**

## Association Focuses On Uniting Our Alumni Family

Hello brothers and sisters in the Girls and Boys Town Family!

Your current board of directors is nearing its one-year anniversary in office. What do we stand for and where are we going?

The 2001 Convention and General Assembly ushered in the following platform:

- Improve the effectiveness and professionalism of how we operate
- Articulate a clearer vision and mission for the organization
- Increase our membership and the development of local and regional chapters
- Strengthen the association's relationship with and support of the Home
- Continue to perform works and deeds that bring honor and respect to our alumni family, the Home and



Father Flanagan's legacy and dreams

These elements point to one ultimate goal...uniting our alumni family. Reaching this goal is a complex effort. You have a wonderfully diverse and capable team in place to move the association forward and realize our potential as a viable asset in your life and in your relationship with the Home.

Enclosed in this issue is a survey. Please, fill it out and return it in the self-addressed envelope. We want to hear your voice. The survey will serve as an important tool to help the board define the direction and future of the Boys Town National Alumni Association during its annual meeting this October.

The association has been in a homecoming mode since our convention last summer. The alumni's gift of a life-size, bronze Father Flanagan statue to Ireland, in a way, brought him home to his native village in Ballymoe. Now, we are working on the final details for the Father Flanagan statue dedication Oct. 5.

Thanks to your votes, the statue will be placed next to Father Flanagan's house. It will be a true homecoming complete with the Boys Town Cowboys homecoming football game, Oct. 4. I hope to see you at the Home for these special events. It will be a weekend to honor Father Flanagan and celebrate the 85th anniversary of his legacy.

In the meantime, I encourage you to contact your regional board representatives or myself. We need your ideas to ensure the association is doing everything possible to reach out and unite every former boy and girl that has received help, healing and hope from Father Flanagan's dream.

Your Brother,



Steve Wolf '80

BTNAAPresident@cox.net

<http://members.cox.net/btnaapresident>

## Chapter News

### California

Don Burke '50 hosted a California chapter meeting and barbecue at his house in March. Individually and as a group, the California alumni continue to foster a relationship with Trabuco Canyon and Los Angeles Girls and Boys Town youth.

President Bob Nelson extended a complementary alumni membership to graduating senior Dan Jackson in January. On June 15, the California alumni helped organize and celebrate the graduation of eight Trabuco Canyon seniors with a barbecue and graduation ceremony. A dessert bakeoff was held for a \$25 prize and a scholastic award of \$250 was awarded in an essay contest.

### Kansas City

The KC Chapter held its annual summer picnic at the home of John Abare '81. Numerous alumni and their families enjoyed swimming, horseshoes, tale swapping and lots of food. Kansas alumni are planning to volunteer and be a highway sponsor.

### Omaha

The Omaha Chapter will host a social after the Oct. 5 statue unveiling at the Home. On Sept. 14, there will be an 18-hole scramble golf tournament at the Knolls followed by brats, burgers and drinks. There will be many prizes. Foursomes, twosomes and singles are welcome. Contact Lisa Torres, '89, at 402-571-6059 or Stan Struble, '68, at 800-345-0458 for registration information.

## In Loving Memory ...

**Harvey Nelson, D\*** '34, Jan. 24, Santa Paula, Calif.

**Marty O'Dea,** '38, Carlsbad, Calif.

**Hershel Tisheuar,** '49, March 12, Ocala, Fla.

**Earl Diltz,** '52, April 7, Avoca, Neb.

**Robert Lizama,** '43, April 2, Torrington, Conn.

**Frank Roe,** '46, April 17, Redmond, Wa.

**Aaron T. Skaggs,** '94, Omaha, Neb.

**Thomas Sibbitt,** former BT band teacher, May 10, Omaha, Neb.

# Where Are They Now

## Quick Glimpses

**Joe Schrantz, '47**, of Villa Park, Illinois has been a hospice volunteer for several years.

**Don Weindorf, '52**, heads the Nebraska Boys Home in Weeping Water, Nebraska.

**Stan Ries, '58**, a retired school superintendent, is starting up a residential youth care program in Minnesota.

**Jim Congrove, '64**, BTNAA Board Member representing region VI, is running for sheriff in Jefferson County, Colo.

**Joe Wherry, '66**, of Elkhorn, Nebraska, a disabled vet, has been active in scouting for thirty years.

**Jerry Burnett, D '67**, works with troubled kids in Tucson.

**Dan Shields, '78 and Sam Rivers, '87**, volunteer as reading or math mentors with our children here at the Home.

**Sarah Williamson, '91**, Boys Town's first female mayor, is a long-time youth care worker at Boys Town.

**Linda Cooley, '93**, is pursuing a bachelor's degree in business after a successful tour in the U.S. Army.

**Natalie Johnson, '96**, graduated from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln in May.

**Nicole Townsel Baker, '96**, met her husband during the course of her successful army career and, together, they are raising twin girls in Columbia, S.C.

**Jeff Watts, '96**, graduated from Wayne State College in May.

**Kelly Cervantes, '00**, is living in Kileen, Texas, and wishes everyone the best.

## Joe Schrantz, G '47

Joe, of Villa Park, Ill., reports that Infinity Publishing will publish his book, "Gladys—Love Conquers Alzheimers." Joe is a former Mayor of Boys Town and a Notre Dame graduate. He worked for more than 30 years as a writer and editor in the newspaper business.

He is married, has seven children and 21 grandchildren. Although he has written numerous manuscripts, "Gladys" is the first to be printed.

The story was inspired by his many years as a hospice worker, and much of the book's material was gleaned from his experiences.

Joe's opus is quite lengthy; it is really two stories in one. The novel relates the story of a husband caring for his wife in the last stage of Alzheimers. Book I recounts the events of Joe's sitting with Gladys once or twice a week for about a year, and Book II explores various topics relating to the couple and their very special relationship.

Anyone interested in aging, familial relationships, and the scourge of Alzheimers can find this unusual book at [www.buybooksontheweb.com](http://www.buybooksontheweb.com).

## Lamont Davis, G '89

Lamont served in the Navy for five years after graduating from Boys Town. He was in Operation Desert Storm in 1991 and returned again in 1992.

Lamont has been cooking at the Skyline Manor in Omaha for the last three years. He is married to Tracy and has a son and two daughters.

## Krissy Ensign, D '98

Krissy departed from Boys Town in 1998 and graduated from high school in Sarasota, Fla., where she currently lives. Krissy says, "I'm living a dream come true." She tells us she is engaged and has landed her dream job.

For the last two years, Krissy has worked for Rockaway Films. Several years ago a talent scout watched her practicing dance routines in a studio and decided to offer her a job. Krissy auditions and trains dancers and choreographs dance sequences for Rockaway Film music videos.

Krissy is grateful for the guidance she received. She especially wants to thank Father Peter, Family-Teachers Greg and Deanna Albertson, and Assistant Family-Teacher Chris Jensen

## Jesse Tague, G '96

Before Boys Town, Jesse Tague, '96, had never considered going to college. When he found out about the **W e g n e r A l u m n i** Scholarship he saw an opportunity he never thought was possible.



"Nobody in my family had ever gone to college, so it was exciting," he said.

Jesse graduated from Iowa Western Community College and began his career in August 1999 as an aircraft maintenance technician at Great Lakes Aviation in Spencer, Iowa. In January, he moved back to Omaha to work at Elliott Aviation.

Since his return to Omaha, Jesse has kept in close contact with Girls and Boys Town. He plans to do some volunteer work at the Home, in order to give back to the organization that helped him better his future. He said he is very fond of his time at the Home because of its atmosphere. "It was like a big family... it still is," he says.



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## The Original Father Flanagan's Boys' Home

# Join Hands with the Alumni Association

