

## A Tribute to the Women of Saint Benedict Academy

By Ann Comstock, St. Benedict Academy Alumnae Coordinator

The women of the Saint Benedict Academy Alumnae Association are awesome! The generosity of these women, who give their time and presence as well as their monetary support to the Benedictine Sisters of Erie and their various ministries, has made a huge impact on the lives of many.

June 2013 marks the 25th anniversary of the month Saint Benedict Academy closed its doors for the last time. Since that closing in 1988 the SBA alumnae have maintained their identity and remained strong in spirit. We continue to nurture our bonds to each other while supporting the ministries of the Benedictine Sisters and promoting Catholic Education.

People marvel at such loyalty: “How can a school that has been closed for a quarter of a century command such faithfulness, such fidelity, such commitment from its members?” they ask. The answer is easy — alumnae value the education they received from the sisters. We learned to appreciate ourselves, to live with purpose and to work as part of something greater than ourselves. We are committed to building community wherever we are and to offering our gifts for others.

We continue to be one of the largest contributors to the Benedictine community each year. We volunteer in many of the community’s ministries. We award \$4,000 annually in scholarships to relatives of alumnae attending Catholic Schools. We contributed funds for the building the bell tower at the monastery and the gazebo in the Garden of Memories, and countless camper scholarships for inner-city children to attend Camp Glinodo.

We maintain our bond to one another through well-attended social events and class reunions. We enjoy getting together to have fun, to share memories, and to support one another. We delight in each other’s company and like to celebrate the special bond of being SBAers.

We aim high! Remember ‘Encore 94’, a sold-out concert at Gannon Auditorium directed by our dear Sister Mary David Callahan where we raised \$40,000 to help start the Inner-city Neighborhood Art House? How about our Christmas Concert in 2005 — directed by Sister Marilyn Schauble and performed at the Warner Theatre for an audience of over 17,000 where we raised more than \$27,000 for the sisters’ Capital Campaign?

Remember all the Christmas parties held at the Avalon Hotel and the Ambassador Conference Center where we consistently have over 425 attendees each year? Remember the bus trips, the summer picnics, the Communion brunches and Walk the Halls? How about Christmas in July, 2012?

Thanks to all the good women of SBA for so many wonderful events and cherished memories. You are awesome indeed. And now, the future awaits us!

### Let us pray...

For our SBA alumnae who passed into eternity—

Ann Marie Seus Cage	’39
Mary Ernst Walczak	’40
Rosemarie Murphy Kohler	’44
Dolores Moritz Lorei	’44
Kathleen Louise Carey Dombrowski	’45
Mary Ann Kraus Wickham	’45
Alice Nevecki Dombrowski	’47
Shirley Ida Gertrude Becker Kiehlmeier	’47
Dorothy T. Kopkowski Kowalski	’47
DeSales Ryan Palkovic	’48
Phyllis Alamenciak Pihlblad	’55
Mary Ann Grutkowski Riddle	’55
Kathleen Barber Young	’58
Charlene Coleman Riblet	’59
Patricia Ann Wells	’70
Michol Lea Farmer Leasure	’80
Florence V. Dellecese Flamio Horstman	
Jacqueline A. Borgia Grygier	

“SPIRIT OF SBA”  
IS ALIVE AND WELL.



## Reunions

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. We'll send you an updated class list from our database and a set of mailing labels. 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](http://ErieBenedictines.org/sba-alum)). Classes who are planning reunions are eligible to receive a \$35 check to help defray mailing costs. We ask 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.

Please contact Ann Comstock. Call 814-899-0614 ext.2573 or contact by email: [sbaalum@mtstbenedict.org](mailto:sbaalum@mtstbenedict.org)

## Scholarship Winners 2013-2014

We are very pleased to announce that 20 scholarships of \$250 each were awarded to relatives of SBA alumnae who will attend grades K - 12 in Catholic schools for the 2013-2014 school year. This program has contributed over \$61,750 in support of Catholic education since it began in 1991. The alumnae association gratefully shows our support for Catholic education through these much-appreciated scholarships.

### SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Student	Alumnae Member	Relationship	School
Ben Bruno	Elizabeth Gawronski	Nephew	Cathedral Prep School
Sydney Moran	Kathy Little	Granddaughter	Our Lady's Christian School
Elizabeth Kerner	Karen Knoch	Niece	St. George School
Deangelo Malone	Nancy Malone	Grandson	Cathedral Prep School
Gallagher Children	Mary Ann Toohey	Grandchildren	St. George School
Jessica Rinke	Toni Griffith	Granddaughter	Mercyhurst Prep School
Katie Titus	Rosemary Niebauer	Niece	Our Lady of Mercy School
Garrett Hawley	Patricia Hawley	Grandson	John Paul the Great High School
Joseph Theiss	Evelyn Selleny	Grandson	Cathedral Prep School
Andrew Boothe	Patricia Mangold	Nephew	All Saints of John Vianney School
Victoria Murawski	Lucille Murawski	Granddaughter	Villa Maria Academy
Cameron Dunbar	Margaret James	Grandson	St. Luke's School
Sophia Skrzypczak	Susan Chase	Niece	Blessed Sacrament School
Morgan Szozorek	Mary Lou Schroeck	Granddaughter	Villa Maria Academy
Justin Cooper	Janet Benovic	Grandson	St. James School
Bryce Slomski	Colette Wisinski	Nephew	Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School
Bailey Witherspoon	Tracey Witherspoon	Daughter	Mercyhurst Prep School
Sean Reed	Mary Alice Wilczynski	Grandson	Cathedral Prep School
Hunter Neimeic	Nadine Laufer	Nephew	Cathedral Prep School
Ashley N. McWilliams	Judith Kuhn	Granddaughter	Mercyhurst Prep School

Visit [ErieBenedictines.org/sba-alum](http://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](mailto:sbaalum@mtstbenedict.org) to receive electronic reminders and sign-ups. If you don't use email, write to Ann at Mount Saint 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.

## RAVE Award

**Mary Hoffman, SBA Class of 1970**, along with her co-worker, Mary Ellen Lieb, received the 2013 RAVE (Recognizing Achieving Volunteers of Erie) Award for top adult volunteer. RAVE awards are presented annually by the Junior League of Erie to promote volunteerism. RAVE is a way to award those who have made a difference in Erie.

Mary and Mary Ellen, co-directors of the Inspire Organization (INSPIRE), were honored for the work they do to provide education and support to adults with special needs. Their goal is to help these individuals find independence within the Erie community. INSPIRE, like its name, is more than an educational center. Under Mary and Mary Ellen's leadership its students prepare a spring play replete with props, set design, choreography and costumes. They encourage the students to overcome the challenges of preparation and performance. The play performance showcases the skills and strengths that Mary and Mary Ellen help the students to discover. Through INSPIRE Mary and Mary Ellen give these adult students with special needs a supported platform from which to blossom and thrive.

Mark Your  
2013 Calendar

Tuesday  
December 3



SBA Christmas  
Party

Ambassador  
Conference Center

## Peppermint Twist 2012: SBA Christmas Party

At last year's SBA Christmas Party held at the Ambassador Conference Center, a beautiful sight unfolded as nearly 500 alumnae members gathered to share old memories and make new ones. Joy and laughter filled the room as friendships were rekindled and stories were shared as if it were just yesterday that we walked the halls of the Academy. Anticipation ran high as the everyone waited to hear if they were lucky winners of one or even two of the more than 90 beautiful themed gift baskets that were donated to be raffled off. The monies raised provided a generous gift of \$6,000 to the Inner-city Neighborhood Art House. As always, it was a wonderful event which grows and improves with each passing year. Thanks to all who made it such a memorable evening.



***Pictured above are some members of the Class of 1969 and the Class of 1974 who were part of the Christmas party Committee for 2012.***



*I am imagination. I can see what the eyes cannot see.  
I can hear what the ears cannot hear. I can feel what  
the heart cannot feel.*

*Peter Nivio Zarlenga*