St. John's Lutheran School
Alumni News

Newsletter 14

The Principal's Perspective

Greetings to all of you! I am so happy to report that we have been in school the entire year to date! We have been blessed to have only a few cases of COVID-19 and had to quarantine classes for brief periods of time but the rest of us are here! We hope to finish the year in this manner and pray that all stay well.

Our school day has really changed. Each class is kept separate for the entire day. We all wear masks and try to stay socially distant as much as possible. We have had to cancel many activities, and so many more nights are spent at home. We strive to make memories for the students as well as we can.

We were glad we could have Christmas Worship services with the students so they would always have this special memory. We were able to record these services for friends and family to join, remotely! The message was the same, and the students all did a great job! We miss all our school families and friends; this year has been like no other.

A special friend reminded me of a quote from Corrie Ten Boom: "If you look at the world, you'll be distressed. If you look within, you'll be depressed. If you look at God, you'll be at rest." **God with us**, I am so thankful for what this means: We can rest in our identity as His children, rest in His eternal love and powerful grace, rest in His constant presence and faithful provision, rest in His patience and forgiveness. Rest! May knowing God's gift to us, His son Jesus Christ, give you rest.



God's blessings to you,
Deitt Schneider

The Pastor's Perspective: Rev. Mark Nebel

I write this article in the days leading up to Christmas. Today, the students have their last day before Christmas break. The 3rd-8th graders led us in our virtual Children's Service this morning using the Road to Bethlehem Pageant script that we were not able to do this year due to Covid-19. We have been blessed to have been in school with in-person education this semester. It has been an adjustment and a sacrifice for our staff. I am proud of them for their diligence and dedication to their students and families during this time. The students of St. John's and throughout the Red Bud School District will notice the benefit in years to come from this time of being in school while their contemporaries in other districts have been trying to learn in a remote manner.

These days of preparation for Christmas always remind me of my time at Trinity Lutheran School in Jefferson City practicing for the Christmas Eve 7 p.m. Children's Service. Over 700 people would pack the sanctuary and overflow room to watch 200 plus elementary school students share the message of Christ's birth. We would carry in battery-operated candles, the batteries of which usually died when we were about half-way down the aisle. It was a pretty sight to see all those children holding those lights in a darkened church. Afterwards we received the customary brown paper bag with an orange, apple, and some candy. I think there must be a biblical command that addresses such a practice, because it seems universal in Lutheran congregations. Adding to the excitement was that my family always opened presents after we got home from this service.

Much of December was taken up by practicing for this Children's Service either in our classrooms or in the church itself. There was processing in and recessing out until we got it right. There was singing again and again until the principal thought we were loud enough. The same went for the individual parts that we spoke from memory. And there was a lot of sitting around doing nothing while other classes sang their songs and other students recited their parts. We spent that down time playing, not with a cellphone, I-pad, tablet or any other electronic game, but with a pencil and piece of paper. I think that the game was called "Dots." We would fill a page of paper with lines of dots. Then two, three, or four of us would take turns connecting the dots with lines. It took forever, but we had the time while sitting in those hard pews over hours of practicing. The goal was to finish a square in which we put our initial(s). Once all of the dots on the page were connected by lines, we would count the number of squares with our initials in them. The person with the most squares won. I don't know about the educational value of those days, but you don't get those fond memories from remote learning.



God's blessings,
Pastor Mark Nebel

A Visit With an Alumnus: Roy Wirth

Greetings from Prairie du Rocher, IL. My name is Roy Wirth, and I am a proud member of the class of 1951.

My story at St. John's Red Bud started 75 years ago on Monday, December 3, 1945. This was one of the scariest days of my life. My parents and I had moved to Red Bud rather suddenly. Imagine an 8-year-old farm boy from Baldwin, IL (St. John's Lutheran School there too) coming from a one room school house, heated by a pot-bellied coal stove, outdoor bathroom facilities, and a well pump for drinking water. Then being thrust into the midst of a multi classroom school with central heat, indoor plumbing, drinking fountains, a cafeteria, and not knowing a soul. That was the definition of scary.



My third-grade teacher was Mrs. Ella Schrieber, wife of my teacher Mr. Walter Schrieber at St. John's Baldwin. I didn't really know Mrs. Schrieber, but she was a familiar face. But then my luck changed. I met this kid with a funny first name---C John. Little did I know that fateful day that C John Prigge and I (*pictured at right*) would become the lifelong friends that we did. C John became the brother I never had. We both had different interests. C John excelled in music, was a Boy Scout, and loved camping later in life. I was more into sports but never did excel. The common thread was our love of cars, especially old cars. On October 9, 2020, God called C John into his heavenly presence. I miss him every day.



The three other teachers I remember C John and I terrorizing were Karl Eisele, Jr., Evelyn Guebert, now Evelyn Muench, and A. J. Sommerfeldt. All three of these fine teachers were very instrumental in teaching us the three R's, but more importantly, they taught us to be strong in our faith, love God, and trust Him in all things.

During my years at St. John's, there was no organized sports programs. The Red Bud Public School had a basketball team that played a regular schedule, had uniforms, the whole nine yards. My eighth-grade year we took it upon ourselves to visit their after-school practices. Soon we were scrimmaging against them with some degree of success. Their coach, Adrian Phegley, asked us if we would like to be entered in the Randolph County Basketball Tournament. We replied with a hearty "YES!!" When the pairings came out, Mr. Sommerfeldt was not happy with us as no one had consulted with him. He did let us play. We lost our first round to a team from Percy, but better things were yet to come.



1951 Confirmation Class: Left to Right 1st Row: Mary Ann Huetsch, Viola Voss Loretta Liefer, Pearl Koenig. 2nd Row: C. John Prigge, Roy Wirth, Oliver Liefer Roger Sathoff, Robert Rehmer. 3rd Row: Rev. Edwin Sommer, Mary Ann Guebert Grace Burgdorf, Jane Guebert, Shirley Kueker, Mr. A. G. Sommerfeldt.

Later in the season, the conference tournament that Red Bud Public played in came around. We and a team from Kaskaskia Island were invited to play as guests. We brought home the third-place award and thus, St. John's basketball program was born.

As I stated in my opening paragraph, I am proud to be a member of the class of 1951 but more importantly I am proud to be an alumnus of St. John's Lutheran School—Red Bud.

Over the years, I have read of the accomplishments and accolades heaped upon my fellow alumni. I am sure St. John's has produced more Valedictorians and Salutatorians at Red Bud High School than any other feeder school. Keep up the good work. St. John's is truly a blessing to all who have attended.



Roy and Joyce Wirth celebrating their 50th anniversary with their family. Middle, from left is Karen Wirth, Kelcie Gaultney, Annie and Karen Dent. Back, from left is Mike Wirth, Patrick and Joe Dent.

A Visit With an Alumnus: Dylan Roscow

My family has a long tradition at St. John's Lutheran in Red Bud. My grandparents, Carl and Betty Becker, were members of the church since the early 1960's when they moved to Red Bud when my grandfather, Carl, opened a law practice here. They both served the church for many years. My grandfather served as an Elder and Chairman of the congregation. My grandmother was an Evening Guild member, was the first woman to serve on the school board, member of the PTL, and many remember her as a volunteer in the office for many years up until we lost her in 2009.

My mother, Jennifer Becker-Roscow, and all of her older siblings, Michael, Ann, Matt and Carl, attended St. John's Lutheran School. My mother graduated in 1983. She often tells me stories of when she attended St. John's including the use of "paddles" which she says she never was on the other end of. Those paddles are now displayed in the teacher's lounge. My aunt and uncles tell me stories of playing four-square on the playground and reminisce about the teachers, especially Mr. Snyder, who I even had as a substitute teacher. My mother said the values and foundation that were instilled in her is what inspired her to send me and my brother, Samuel, to St. John's. Having a safe and Christian school environment was a wonderful way to start my years as a student. I attended St. John's from 3-year-old pre-school to 8th grade. My class did see several students come and go, but many of them that I started with as 3-year-old, I graduated with as an 8th grader. In fact, I am still friends with many of them today. Some of my highlights were the school trips, especially the 8th grade trip to Washington DC, winning the school Geography Bee, then going onto to State, and being co-Valedictorian with Benjamin DeRousse.

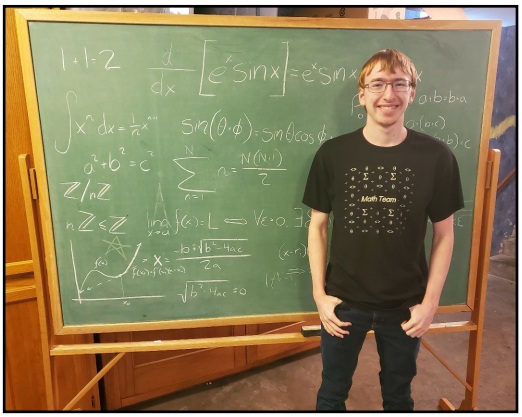


Dylan, front left, with his brother, Sam, and parents Mike and Jennifer.



Although I only graduated St. John's in 2017, it seems like a life time ago. I now attend Red Bud High School and am a Senior. The education I received at St. John's really helped me to excel in high school. I am a member of the Math Team and ACES academic challenge team with several of St. John's alumni winning many individual and team awards. I also played golf all four years and earned my Varsity letter this year.

I am happy to still be a part of St. John's as a member of the Senior Youth serving as the Treasurer for the past two years. The highlight of my time as a Senior Youth member is when we attended the National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Worshipping with youth from all over the country was very inspiring. Just knowing that I am not alone in my faith with others my age gave me great comfort. My mother is also still active in the church as a leader of the Junior Youth. My brother, Samuel, is an 8th grader at St. John's so my family's time with the school is coming to an end. However, I am sure we will still be there to support the school in any way we can as it has been a blessing to my family.



This past year has been challenging with the pandemic, but I always know God is here and is in control. I will be graduating in May 2021, and I am currently deciding which University I will attend in the fall of 2021. I am hoping to get a degree in mathematics which I have a passion for. No matter where my life takes me, my time at St. John's has given me a foundation on which to live my life. I am truly grateful for that.



Photo submitted by proud alumnus no relation to the Roscow family.

A Visit With an Alumnus: Kevin Liefer



I was a member of the class of 1968. Our family lived just south of Red Bud. My parents grew up in the Evansville area so we were members at St. Peter's. I was baptized there, and we were members there until I was going into the first grade. My Mom and Dad then became members at St. John's so I could attend school there. I started first grade in the old two-story school (*pictured below*). The new school was under construction and nearing completion. One day in the late fall, our restrooms were not working so we got to walk over to the new school and use the restrooms there. Shortly after Christmas, the new school was finished and we got to move in. I was privileged to be a member of the first class to go through all eight years in the new school. Toward the end of the school year, we all got to go out to the playground and watch as George Deterding and his crew pulled down the old school and began to haul it away. I had many good teachers during my grade school years. Mrs. Erna Kuring was my first-grade teacher. Mrs. Isabelle Stellhorn and Mr. Ron Snyder made a lasting impact on me, especially Mr. Snyder. I still remember things they taught me about life over 50 years ago.

Our class was Pastor Holstein's first confirmation class. My sister, Kimberly, was a member of the class of 1971, my brother, Kalin, class of 1975, and my sister-in-law, Kathleen, class of 1976. We all received an excellent education in both religion and the secular subjects. One of the highlights was our school Christmas Program every year with Mr. Snyder playing *Little Babe* on the piano.

Over the years, students from our school have consistently excelled in high school, college, and life. In 1976, my wife, Kathy, and I were married. We have been blessed to have four children who have all graduated from St. John's: Kirk (Stephanie), Kent (Karen), Kara (Ray), and Kristopher (Danielle). They are all married and they and their spouses are all members of St. John's. They have blessed us with 11 grandchildren. Sophia and Simone have graduated from St. John's. Karson, MaKayla, Kade, Karleigh, Norah, Holden, Liza, and Kolton are currently students at St. John's. Kendall is 1-1/2 and still at home. My parents were graduates of St. Peter's Lutheran School and strong believers in Lutheran education. They passed that onto my siblings and myself. We in turn have passed that onto our children and grandchildren. The most recent addition to our school will enable our congregation to continue its ministry for graduates to come.



Kevin and Kathy Liefer with their family.



If you would like to receive your newsletter by email,
please send your email address to alumni.stjohn@gmail.com,
and we will remove you from our mail list while adding you to our email list.