

THE G A E L

The Newsletter for Alumni and Parents of St. Mary's/Kennedy Catholic High School

Three & OH!

Varsity teams all record victories on Homecoming as Kennedy christens new synthetic turf competition field. See cover story on Page 3.

Volume 11 - Winter 2011/2012



**KENNEDY
CATHOLIC
HIGH SCHOOL**

*Founded as St. Mary's
High School 1924-1966*

President's Page

December 2011



Dear Alumni, Parents and Friends of Kennedy:

For those of you who watched the inaugural season of HBO's Game of Thrones, there is a line that is repeated with some frequency: "winter is coming".

Spoken by the leaders of the northernmost kingdom, it refers to the long winter they know is about to settle in. A winter they know best how to prepare for and survive, unlike their more laissez-faire southern counterparts. In this Advent season, it reminds me of the biblical warning to always be ready, for we know not "that day or hour" when our Lord will come. Here in the Northeastern kingdom of Kennedy, winter may be coming, but we are more than ready. We

have been preparing for our future for a very long time.

In partnership with St. Joseph's Church and the Archdiocese of New York, we have completed a truly state-of-the-art athletic complex. Brand-new baseball and softball diamonds are now complete, as well as a synthetic turf multi-purpose competition field adjacent to our already existing one. Academically, we are proud to boast of 5 National Merit commended students, and an ever-expanding and improving college preparatory program. And from a spiritual perspective, we are thrilled to announce that this year's honoree at our annual President's Dinner will be the spiritual leader of our own Archdiocese, His Excellency Timothy M. Dolan, Archbishop of New York.

This summer we renewed our investment in the school's technology, bringing in all new computers for our primary student lab in the library, complete with Windows 7 and the latest software. We have transformed a classroom into a faculty computer lab so that our teachers will always have a place to work quietly, post grades and communicate with parents. We have also upgraded our in-house file and mail servers, moving to an Exchange system that will make electronic communication between Kennedy and the world beyond far more efficient. If you have been receiving alumni e-mails from our Vertical Response alumni account, know that we will be transitioning to Salesforce Foundation, a cloud-based database that will allow for greater management and communication with our alumni, this winter. These are all ways we are in a constant season of Advent, preparing this school and preparing our students for the future.

Although we are excited about our success, there is also a certain sense of sorrow at the loss of one of the great leaders of this school, Sr. Mary Christopher O'Toole, R.D.C. Sr. Christopher will always remain in our hearts as we fondly call to mind her love for learning and the students whom she taught. It is the dedication of religious women like Sr. Christopher that have made this school the great Catholic school that it truly is.

I encourage all of you to recognize that dedication with a gift to the Sr. Mary Christopher Tree of Life that has taken root in our Commons, fittingly across from the St. Mary's Chapel. Thanks to the generosity of our alumni and parents, the Kennedy Catholic Annual Fund topped \$100,000 for the first time this past year. While she did not live to hear the news, Sr. Christopher surely would have been proud of such success. As a former alumni director, she always knew our alumni and parents held the key to Kennedy's sustained future.

Winter is coming. And the keys are in your hands. Kennedy is prepared for the road to greatness. Where will you help take her in 2012?

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,

Rev. Mark G. Vaillancourt, Ph.D.
President/Principal

Winning

Varsity teams go 3 for 3 on Homecoming



Homecoming has traditionally been a big deal at Kennedy Catholic, as it is for most high schools anywhere. This year, in addition to a trio of winning teams, the Gaels had a little something extra to celebrate – a new home.

Over the summer, Kennedy completed construction on its new multi-purpose field, complete with synthetic turf and a midfield logo designed by Matthew Walker '93, of Walk Design. It is the second of three new fields the school has introduced as part of a capital campaign to improve its athletic facilities. The new multi-purpose field has been enjoyed by the varsity field hockey, football and boys and girls soccer teams.

"I said it in the spring when we officially opened our new baseball complex along Route 138, and I'll say it again," remarked the Rev. Mark Vaillancourt, President/Principal of Kennedy Catholic, "it was high time our championship caliber athletes had fields of equal measure to play on, and that's been our goal since we began this campaign."

And the teams responded in kind on Homecoming. Boys' soccer beat Pawling 7-0 as part of a 10-game win streak it rode into the playoffs. Girls' soccer beat up on Peekskill, 7-0, en route to an undefeated league title and 12-3-1 overall record. Even the football team, which had struggled all year, put everything together for a 35-24 victory over the Briarcliff Bears.

The teams all joined Father Vaillancourt at midfield just prior to kickoff to formally bless the new synthetic turf with a number of alumni, faculty, parents and students in attendance.



Photos courtesy of Davis Studio



Kennedy Goes 'Bionic'

New robotics club the precursor to nanotechnology program

As winter sets in, most students – in addition to homework, of course – spend their weekends at the gym for offseason workouts, perhaps on the hardwood perfecting a jump shot, or on the stage running lines and blocking for the spring musical. A new Kennedy team, however, will be doing something a bit different – building robots.

Introducing the Bionic Gaels, Kennedy's FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) team ever! The mission of FIRST, For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology, is to "inspire young people to be science and technology leaders". Mentor Joseph Higham, along with science teachers Laura Cascioli and George Petryczka, has begun that inspiration here at Kennedy.

In preparation for its first competition, the Bionic Gaels have assembled and deconstructed two practice robots, Ranger and Mantis, and begun learning the basics about ROBOTC programming language. Earlier this month, the Gaels spent a Saturday turning a portion of the cafeteria into a 12-by-12-foot practice field to get ready for the competition games.

The Rev. Mark Vaillancourt, President/Principal of Kennedy, hopes the robotics club will spawn renewed interest in the sciences as he looks to incorporate a nanotechnology program into the school's curriculum.

Follow the Bionic Gaels online at <http://bionicgaels.wordpress.com>

30th Anniversary Auction a Pearl

What began 30 years ago with the Rev. Robert DeJulio and a handful of dedicated parents continued on Nov. 12 in grand style. Led by Co-Chairs Allison Peters P '13 and Joanne Burke P '08, '10, '13, the 30th Anniversary Auction committee committed themselves to Kennedy's largest, oldest and most successful fundraiser. The result? The school's largest and most prosperous event to date.



Alumni, parents and friends of Kennedy graciously donated tens of thousands of dollars in prizes, and bidders generously grabbed them up in true fundraising fashion – great gifts for a great cause. With a little help from our auctioneer and alumnus Peter Ruvolo, of course.



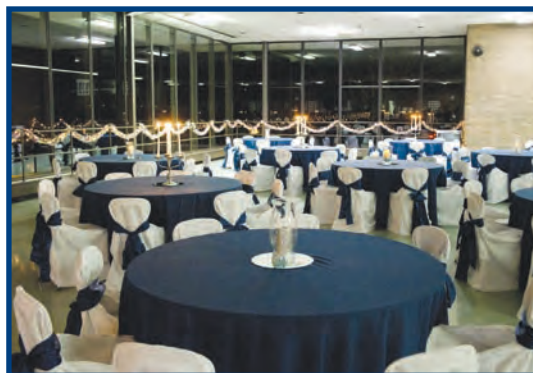
The committee beautifully blended the past – delightful decorations, fabulous food and cheerful company – with some new tweaks that made this year's Auction even better. Audiences raved about the more social seating in the Lakeview

Room; and the Silent Auction, which moved to the Commons, was even more profitable than years past.

Special thanks to retiring committee members Craig and Chris Cecere, Mike and Lynn Rendine, and Suzanne Jacobs, whose staunch support of the Auction have made it the premier event that it is.

30th Anniversary Auction Committee

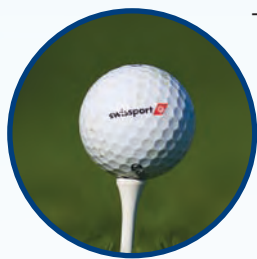
Joanne Burke P '08, '10, '13
 Pat Clair P '13, '15
 Craig & Chris Cecere P '10, '12
 Bob DeMicco
 Linda Devaney P '14
 Maura Devey '83, P '13, P '14
 Christina Hastings P '11
 Sr. Barbara Heil
 Suzanne Jacobs P '12
 Fedela Kessler '73, P '02, '04, '07, '11
 Alex Malecki
 Mary Martin P '13
 MaryEllen McLaughlin '82, P '10, '15
 Michele Napolitano P '08, '13
 Mike & Lynn Rendine P '11
 Donna Ruperto P '08, '11
 Father Vaillancourt
 Virginia Vettoretti P '11, '14



Photos by Jacob Bergmeier Photography

2011 Golf Outing a 'Classic'

Sponsored by **swissport** 



The 2011 installment of Kennedy's annual golf outing was indeed a classic, garnering the largest crowd ever and commandeering all 27 holes at Centennial Golf Club in Carmel for the very first time! The additional links proved to be the difference over last year, ensuring a smoother pace-of-play that made everyone happy and got them to the cocktail hour on time. The dinner also bore witness to a live auction for items such as Giants and Jets tickets, as well as a foursome to Trump National, all of which was well received.

Special thanks to Joe Pereira P '09, '12 and the boys over at Swissport North America, for once again sponsoring this growing event, as well as event chair Larry Dwyer '61, for putting together a fantastic day for the alumni, parents and friends of Kennedy.

Thank you to all who came out to play and dine with us in support of Catholic education. Mark Thursday, Oct. 4, on your calendars today for when the 2012 Classic comes your way!



Thank You to Our Sponsors

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Warren '72 and Susan P '98, '00, '04, '10

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Winners

1st Place – 54

Frank Lamberti, Kevin Liberati P '14, Brian Maini and Frank Petrocelli

2nd Place – 58

Danny Dwyer '07, Kevin Dwyer '72, Larry Dwyer '61 and David Goldsmith

3rd Place – 62

Bob Keating, Tracey Kydes, Ronnie Nunn and John Viniello P '98

Closest to Pins

#5 Meadows: Leon Drogy – 4'2"
#5 Lakes: Don Kenneally '00 – 7'
#5 Fairways: Jack Kennedy P '07, '12 – 4'11.5"

Longest Drives

#9 Meadows: Dan Beyrer '95
#7 Lakes: John Faeth
#8 Fairways: Brian Maini

Photos by Jacob Bergmeier Photography

Class of '61 Celebrates 50th

For some, it had been more than 50 years. But the ease with which the St. Mary's Class of 1961 slipped into conversation and camaraderie, you would've thought they'd been gathering like that for years.

Their golden anniversary began innocently enough, with reunion chair and Kennedy Trustee Larry Dwyer '61 having agreed to reach out to his classmates and fellow St. Mary's graduates as part of last year's Phone-A-Thon. Following some dissatisfaction with the accuracy of his class' list, coupled with some positive reconnections, a new plan emerged: get everyone together for the 50th.



And that's just what they did the weekend of Oct. 14-16. After congregating at the Dwyer residence the evening prior, the Class of '61 began its formal celebration with a tour of their alma mater's successor in John F. Kennedy Catholic High School, before hopping aboard the Kennedy buses for a trip down memory lane. Or more precisely, Valley Road in Katonah, where they visited the former site of St. Mary's and got a tour of the present school and church by the Rev. Paul Waddell.

Then it was back to the Kennedy Convent for Mass in memory of their deceased classmates, a champagne toast and some catching-up with the Sisters of the Divine Compassion. From there, it was just a short

stroll down the hill to the White House where dinner and drinks awaited them. The evening included a surprise visit from Jean Traynor via Skype, and one of the most entertaining sharing sessions the Alumni Office has ever seen, with former class president John Nimphius leading the hilarity.



It was a fantastic evening that has continued on the Class' Facebook group. And in recognition of their golden anniversary, the St. Mary's Class of 1961 has made a gift of \$1,750 to the Sr. Mary Christopher Tree of Life with a plaque that reads: "With appreciation for our rewarding years at St. Mary's High School – The Class of '61".

If you would like to make a gift to the Sr. Mary Christopher Tree of Life in the form of an engraved leaf (\$300), acorn (\$500), rock (\$1,500) or miniature tree (\$5,000), kindly contact Director of Advancement Bob DeMicco at (914) 232-5061 Ext. 121 or advancement@kennedycatholic.org.

Photos by Bob DeMicco & Alex Malecki

Class of '81 Celebrates 30th



The Auction wasn't the only thing to hit 30 years in 2011. On Oct. 8, the Class of 1981 celebrated three decades since they last walked the halls of Kennedy as students. As has been the growing trend, the Class made a weekend out of it, meeting Friday night at Al Jacobson's Roadhouse Tavern in Somers, formerly known as Charlie's Inn. The main event was Saturday night, featuring tours of the school, cocktails, music, dinner and dancing. The Class of 1981 also took a moment to pay tribute to three deceased classmates, and will be making a gift to the Sr. Mary Christopher Tree of Life in their memory.

Special thanks to reunion reps Angela Lynch Guerriero and Janet Lambert Smith for shepherding their reunion from start to finish. The Lakeview Room looked lovely, and the slideshow was spot-on. Thanks to all for sharing photos and memories, and of course, for attending. Congratulations on 30 years!



Photos by Bob DeMicco & Alex Malecki

Lady Gaels Own the Night

For the second year in a row, the Family Association's Ladies Night Out was an in-house hit.



Originally conceived as a start-of-the-school-year "friend-raiser", given its September date, Ladies Night has grossed more than \$30,000 over the past two years. The success lies in the blending of an elegant location (Le Chateau) and community spirit, with ample prizes and shopping (16 different vendors showcased their wares).

Kudos to co-chairs Olivia Kapush P '11, '11 and Peggy Kennedy P '07, '12, who conceived and shepherded this event. Theirs will be big shoes to fill as the committee begins its search for two new chairs for 2012.

Support Our Vendors

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Wilton Artisans

Zen Jen Jewelry



Photos by Mark A. Jessamy of Davis Studio

League Champs to Letter Signers

Kennedy's Bauer, Hogan ink intent to play for Marist, Lafayette

"This has been his dream forever," said Elizabeth Bauer, mother of senior Erik Bauer, who signed a letter of intent to play baseball for the Marist Red Foxes earlier this month.

For senior slugger Ailish Hogan, who signed with Lafayette, it was about finding someone who could come close to, if never succeeding, in replacing her high school coach—her mother and 2011 Section 1 League B Coach of the Year Pat Hogan. "Having my mother as a coach was obviously one of the best comforts for me," said the younger Hogan, adding that one of the reasons she signed with Lafayette was because Leopards coach Meaghan Asselta is a "mother-like" figure in her own right. It also didn't hurt that Hogan always seem to play better whenever Asselta was watching, rising to the occasion seemingly whenever scouts were present. After leading the Lady Gaels to two consecutive softball league titles, though, it's no surprise that Hogan excels under pressure.



Heading into her senior year, Hogan is hitting .507 with a .573 on-base percentage and a .887 slugging percentage. In three years she has cracked 12 triples, launched 9 home runs and driven in 22 runs. A utility player, Hogan can play first base, third and outfield, as well as behind the dish. And according to her mother, she's also becoming quite the coach, having assisted junior varsity coach Brent Tieber through his first year with the team. "I've been playing for so long, it just comes naturally," she said.

The same could be said for Bauer, another utility player who has been at it since he switched over from soccer around age 8. His father, Jeff, always knew his son had innate athletic ability, but

it was Little League when Erik began separating himself from the crowd. "The intangible is that he does work so hard," Mr. Bauer said. And that hard work has paid off. As a sophomore, Bauer's right arm guided the Gaels to its second state finals in three years. As a junior, it was his bat that secured a deeper playoff run, hitting a walk-off homerun against Byram Hills in a first-round matchup that was closer than expected.

"I don't want to be one-dimensional," said Bauer, who signed with Marist because it offered him the best opportunity to hit, play the field and pitch.

A hard-throwing, top-of-the-rotation starter and power-hitting third baseman for the Gaels, Bauer was a 2011 All-Section selection after batting .420 with five homers and 37 RBIs. Talented, yet humble, Bauer credits the team's strong leadership and positive role models such as 2010 graduate Joe Smith, who now plays for the Gaels of Iona College, with his ascendance. With their son having earned academic and athletic scholarship monies to play ball for the Red Foxes, Elizabeth and Jeff Bauer credit Kennedy for the fine young man Erik has become. "It wouldn't have happened anywhere else."

Memoirs of St. Mary's/Kennedy High School

By Sr. Alice Shannon (Mary Imelda)

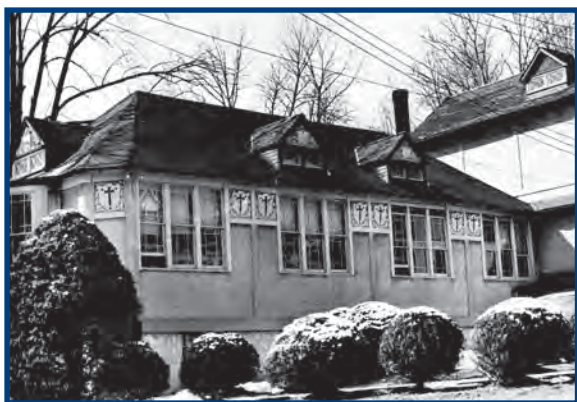
Editor's Note: This is the first installment in a series of memoirs written by Sr. Alice Shannon, formerly Sr. Mary Imelda, who was the last principal of St. Mary's High School from 1963-1966 and the first principal of John F. Kennedy High School from 1966-1972.



In late August 1951, I was assigned to St. Mary's High School in Katonah, N.Y., by Mother Mary Dolores, the new Superior General. Sr. Mary Gonzaga came at the same time, as the new principal and local superior at St. Mary's. That first year, I taught French 1, 2, 3 and third-grade – quite a combination. The following year, a third-grade teacher was procured and I taught three French classes and three in math, a total of six preparations.

The school had been co-ed since its founding in 1924. That was unusual at that time for a Catholic High School. In the early days, Monsignor Martin Scanlan, the school's founder, purchased a bus to pick up the students who lived at a distance. He, himself, was often at the wheel early in the morning.

When I arrived, Monsignor John Halpin was the pastor and each Friday he came to read the grades for each student. This practice had been started by Monsignor Scanlan. The Sisters handled all the extra-curricular activities with the exception of boys' sports. I was given French Club and three cheerleading groups.



Later, when Eddy O'Brien (now Archbishop) was editor of the school newspaper, I became its faculty advisor. Our students loved to stay after school and this meant a long day for us. However, in those days we were not allowed to attend evening functions or athletics games.

In 1959, a new grammar school was built next door. Since we previously had shared the old building, the vacated space enabled the high school to double its enrollment. This also meant doubling the faculty and hiring for the first time a number of lay teachers. For me, it meant teaching only French the whole day.

I was named principal and local superior at St. Mary's in August 1963. On Monday, Nov. 18 of the same year, the Archdiocese announced that a new archdiocesan high school was to be built for the students in Northern Westchester and Putnam Counties, and that St. Mary's High School would move to the new site. No name for the new school had been announced. By Friday of the same week, our President, John F. Kennedy, had been assassinated. Cardinal Spellman, who earlier had been called to Rome, returned to attend the President's funeral. He announced that the new high school would be named John F. Kennedy High School in his honor.

Father Vaillancourt Delivers Lecture at Oxford

Participating in the 16th International Patristics Conference at Oxford University this past summer, Father Vaillancourt delivers a lecture on the Eucharistic theology of St. Augustine.



Kennedy Welcomes Students from China

Kennedy Catholic expanded its International Students Program this past fall and congratulates its most recent additions on their successes. The students who have been admitted this year from China join students from Brazil, Japan and South Korea, who have called Kennedy their home for a year or more already.

Several of our new students have been recognized on the Honor Roll for academic excellence and have chosen to become involved in extracurricular and service activities. Their assimilation has been facilitated through exposure to the home life of Americans by residing with hosts selected from among the Kennedy community and local parish members. The host families have opened their homes and hearts, providing the new students opportunities to experience the interactions and routines of daily life as well as share in special events and pastimes.



The International Students Program is part of the ongoing commitment to grow and strengthen Kennedy by developing local and global connections through partnerships in education. If you would like to be part of our development and are interested in applying to be a host family, please contact Dean of Special Programs Samantha Black at sblack@kennedycatholic.org.

Turkey Bowl Alumni Take to New Field



Field conditions for the 2011 Turkey Bowl? How about awesome! Alumni took to the new synthetic turf competition field for the very first time on Black Friday, playing two simultaneous games of “rough touch” football in what has become an annual, albeit informal, Gael gathering. Special thanks to Finnegan’s Grill of Yorktown, which graciously donated a keg for the game, then welcomed everyone back to the restaurant afterward for dinner and drinks. Finnegan’s will also be donating a percentage of the bar tabs from that evening to be put toward Kennedy’s new fields – a gift for which the Kennedy community can certainly be thankful.

Photo by Bob DeMicco



KENNEDY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Founded as St. Mary's High School 1924-1966

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54 Route 138
Somers, NY 10589

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The Gael is produced by the Advancement Office of Kennedy Catholic. If you have questions, comments or news you would like to share with us, please call (914) 232-5061 ext. 134, or email us at alumni@kennedycatholic.org.

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DeMicco, Mark A. Jessamy of Davis Studio, Alex Malecki

Design: Delfino Marketing Communications, Inc.

Printing: Graphic Management Partners, Inc.

Madison Avenue to Monteverde

Too late, your Excellency. The secret's out. You're our guest of honor at the 2012 President's Dinner on Thursday, May 24, at Monteverde at Oldstone Manor. Details to be announced in the New Year. Mark your calendars now!

Call Director of Advancement Bob DeMicco at (914) 232-5061 Ext. 121 or e-mail president@kennedycatholic.org to get on our VIP list.



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