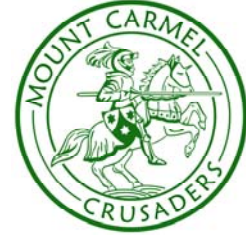


Christmas Crusader



'Tis the Season for Giving

Each year at Christmas the phrase "Tis the Season for Giving" is tossed around almost as frequently as saying "happy holidays" Thus as the holiday months creep up on us and everyone is busy scoping out the after-Thanksgiving electronic sales or scouting the mall for the perfect gift for a loves one that phrase '*tis the season for giving* sticks in the back of your mind.

Just as important as giving this season, is who you give to. Of course we think of our friends and family but if you take the time to think of those less fortunate you'll realize how important it really is to give this holiday season. Yet with these hard economic times, I wonder whether people will be as generous towards charity this season. According to Paypal's 2008 Holiday Survey (conducted by Ipsos) 73% of online shoppers intend to give to charity this season, as opposed to 60% in 2007 and 71% intend to give the same amount plus 10% plan to give more this year.

Despite these tough financial times many shoppers plan to continue with donations...but will you as a Mount Carmel graduate or friend of the Mount Carmel Alumni Foundation do the same?

Every year the Mount Carmel Alumni Foundation makes charitable contributions to Carmelite orders and Central Los Angeles Area Catholic elementary schools. These schools would not be able to exist without contributions like those from the MCAF. But we need more \$\$\$! This year the Mount Carmel Alumni Foundation instituted its AJHD program in support of 10 D-16 schools' quest towards the Los Angeles Area Academic Junior High School Decathlon. Each school needs at least \$3,200 for sponsorship to cover the cost of books and supplies, the entry fee, an ad in the AJHD event program, stipends for coaches costs associated with this extracurricular program. The AJHD program is completely separate from the annual gift giving program. To continue to support these schools we need the help of our Alumni and friends. These Central Los Angeles schools stay open only by the help of sponsorships and donations like those that the Mount Carmel Alumni Foundation provide. With out your help these school would have no hope in participating in programs such as the AJHD. Theo Mount Carmel Alumni Foundation is committed to seek funding for the Deanery 16 schools that are planning to participate in the AJHD. Sponsorship of a school in the MCAF AJHD program will go directly to aiding in the educational development of these Catholic elementary school students.



A letter from the Carmelites

Thanksgiving 2008

Dear Alumni,

St. Paul wrote in Ephesians about giving thanks for "... your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints." He further says "... I have not stopped giving thanks for you and remembering you in my prayers."

Well, the Carmelite Friars want to say the same thing to you.

We give thanks for your friendship and for your support of our ministries. Even in these difficult economic times, you have responded to us with generosity and selflessness. Joining us in prayer has enriched every Friar, because this is our true goal-to help you develop a deep spiritual life with ever-increasing love for God, the saints and Our Blessed Mother.

Your financial and prayerful participation has helped us to support our Foundations in Vietnam and Trinidad. It has provided for the education and training of our students. Your response to our emergency appeal for repairs to our Senior Friars' home has allowed us to provide safety and comfort to these cherished Carmelites as they age.

In return, be assured that we pray for you every day in our Community prayers and Masses. You are our dear friend and benefactor. We are grateful to God for sending you to us and hope you will continue to participate in all things Carmelite for many years to come.

Even as we face uncertain economic times, we continue to pray for your well-being and for your brothers and sisters in Christ. On your part, please pray also for the Carmelite Family that we can continue our good works and our mission to bring the love of God and Our Lady of Mount Carmel to all we meet.

Thank you, dear friend, for all you do for the Carmelites. May you have a happy Thanksgiving and May God bless you with His love and peace.

*With prayers and best wishes,,
Father Paul Denault, O. Carm.*

Tis the Season of Giving... Continued

Hope is the greatest gift we can give these children who are not afforded with all the opportunities that many of the Mount Carmel graduates, their children and grandchildren are. By donating to the MCAF gifting program and/or the MCAF AJHD program you are giving these schools and the children at them hope for a better future. Children and families within these poor communities feel the economic crunch the hardest.

So as you figure out the amount of money you were planning on donating for the 2008 tax year for charitable purposes or as you are filled with the 'tis the season for giving feeling don't forget about the Mount Carmel Alumni Foundation and its mission.

FULL Sponsorship of an elementary school costs **\$3,200** but donations of any amount are accepted and recognized. Please indicate which Deanery 16 school you would like your donation to go towards or just mark the box for AJHD general funds. All donations and sponsorships are tax deductible through the Mount Carmel Alumni Foundation as a tax exempt organization under IRC §501(c)(3) – tax ID #95-3864195.

-Katie Strachan





Mt. Carmel Alumni Strengthen St. Raphael School

It is no secret that Catholic schools face difficult decisions during financially troubled times. In particular, schools in the inner-city like St. Raphael, where budgets are tight during the best of times, feel the strain of reduced funding. "This is a hard time for us all," reports St. Raphael School Principal Barbara Curtis. "We are all suffering. During these times, we have to focus on the children. Watching them learn gives me great joy. I want to share the gift of our mission with everyone that I know."

In particular, Ms. Curtis says that the children are thriving as they prepare for this year's Academic Decathlon. "It is an exciting opportunity," she says. "The children gain so much thanks to the Mt. Carmel Alumni Association's support of the event." Additional much needed support comes through the St. Raphael School Development Board, which is responsible for advising the school's administration and helping raise funding for scholarships and programs.

"We are particularly blessed that many of our board members have a history of Catholic school involvement," says Ms. Curtis. "In fact, some of our founding members and several of our current members [Al Alessandra, Don McCammack, Kevin McKesson, and Kevin Pickett] are Mt. Carmel High School graduates. "They bring with them a special commitment to Catholic school education," continues Ms. Curtis. "They are among our most treasured members."

During these difficult times, Ms. Curtis and parish priest Father Tracy O'Sullivan, O.Carm., hope to bring more members onto the board. In particular, Father Tracy looks for candidates with an understanding of Carmelite schools. Mt. Carmel alumni who are interested in learning more about St. Raphael School and the Development Board are encouraged call Barbara Curtis at 323-751-2774.

What's Happening at St. John Chrysostom Parish and School, Fall 2008

During the entire month of January, St. John regularly hosts several Loyola H.S. seniors for their senior project. These students are the primary coaches for the academic decathlon, using a Jeopardy game format, among other strategies. Loyola students do everything from acting as classroom aides and tutors, to assisting with coaching and P.E., to special projects in the computer lab and elsewhere.

In the February 2008 Deanery 16 Decathlon, our school won the Logic competition and took 3rd place overall. Students are looking forward to sharpening their skills for the upcoming 2009 competition.

In November, St. John's hosted the 10th Anniversary celebration of the African American Catholic Center for Evangelization. A special Mass celebrated by Bishop Edward Clark, with Bishop Stephen Blaire as homilist, opened the celebration and was followed by a luncheon at St. Mary's Academy and a beautiful display of cultural exhibits in the Parish Hall.

St. John's also will be having special events, liturgies and exhibits, in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe, starting at 5:30 a.m. on December 12 and on December 19, in the church at 7:00 p.m., the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, under the direction of Ryan McAdams, will present a free concert featuring selections from the Nutcracker Suite, Mozart's "Exsultate Jubilate," and Vaughn Williams' Fantasia on "Greensleeves." Everyone is invited.



President in Poughkeepsie

Dennis Murray must have always liked the sound of the word...*President*. He was Carmel's Student body *President* as well as Long Beach State University's Student Body *President*. He may have had thoughts of being...*The President* in his younger years. Perhaps that would explain him running for congress twice before he was thirty. He was the Director of University Relations and Executive Assistant to the *President* at Long Beach State and Vice *President* of Development at Whittier College. Yes, the same Whittier College whose most famous alumnus was once our nation's *President*. This was a young man destined to be *president* of something...and at a very early age.

Dr. Dennis J. Murray...a Crusader's Son...became the youngest college *president* in America... when he was appointed *President* and Professor of Public Policy at Marist College in Poughkeepsie New York in 1979. He was only 32 years old.

Dennis was always focused and a hard working student at Mt. Carmel. He was a fierce competitor on the grid iron as well. I did not like practicing against him. He never took a play off. Dennis was a regular junkyard dog. I followed his career through mutual friends over the years. I even followed the Marist line scores in the sports page during football and basketball season.

Prior to 2005, I had not talked to him since a Carmel reunion nearly 20 years before, since then I have seen him twice on television, he was a fantastic speaker. After that I decided to try and reconnect and tell him how proud I was of him. I had recently joined the 21st Century and signed up for this cool new service called the internet. I found pictures of Dennis with the Pope....Dennis with the Dali Lama...and you guessed it...Dennis with the *President*. I thought...how perfect.

I e-mailed...Dear Dennis...if you were not so busy wasting all of your time with those guys...you could call your friends. He called me the next day.


He was still the same Dennis I knew at Carmel. We reminisced and laughed a lot. He was pleased to hear about the MCAF. When I casually mentioned Verbum Dei managing to be the last to hold on against all odds...he cut me off and said, "Send me some kids...I'll hook them up!" I told him about their financial situations. He said not to worry, he had programs. That was all that was said about it. I knew he meant it.

Today, there are 13 Presidential Scholars from Verbum Dei, St. Mary's Academy and Loyola High School studying at Marist College. Our first ambassador is a senior this year. His name is Marcus Scroggins. He is a third generation resident of the Nickerson Gardens Housing Projects. He had heard about Verbum Dei's Corporate Work-Study Program and walked over to take a look after his sophomore year at Jordan High. He was tired of dealing with campus politics (Bloods & Crips). He told Fr. John Welting that he could not afford to pay tuition but assured Father that he was a good worker and asked if he could transfer to 'The Verb'.

Marcus is the oldest of three children from three different fathers. His father is in prison. His mother is now on life-support after suffering a massive cerebral hemorrhage in October 2007 at the age of 37. She had stopped taking her medication two years prior because she felt she was too young to be sick...and the pills cost too much.

Fr. John told Marcus that he would be ineligible for sports for a year because he was not moving. He said that he did not care; he wanted to improve his grades and increase his chances of getting a scholarship. He worked for the Bank of California, tutored children from 112 st school, and wrote for the school newspaper. He cooked dinner every night for his younger brother and sister while his mother worked the swing-shift.

His senior year he made all-league in football and basketball, he had a 3.85 GPA and graduated #5 in his class. Today he has a 3.1 GPA majoring in Business and is waiting to hear if he has been accepted into the Naval OCS program after graduation.



Nearly 30 years ago...Dennis and Marilyn first stepped foot on the Marist campus... a school they had only recently learned was founded by an order of French priests and brothers called the Marianist...in honor of our Blessed Mother. They were carrying their first born...they don't know exactly why...but they had named her Marian... They were walking down the main street on campus called...Marian Way.

I wonder if Dennis was thinking of how many students' lives he would help change forever.

I wonder if the President in Poughkeepsie recalls...or... repeats the Carmelite mantra we prayed daily so many years ago...

Remember O most gracious Virgin Mary...that never was it known...that anyone who fled to thy protection... implored thy help...or sought thy intercession...was left unaided...

Class of 1958 Holds Reunion



Ed Fuess, Jim Brown, Jim Mooney, Mike McDonald smile for the camera

A hardy group of 40 Crusaders gathered on October 24, 2008 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of graduation from Mt. Carmel High School. The event was held in Newport Beach at the home of Tim Psomas. Representing the Carmelite Order were Fr. Gus Carter, Fr. Al Koppes and Fr. Peter Liuzzi.

Traveling the furthest for the reunion was John Cady, who lives in the Washington D.C. area. Memorabilia on display included letterman sweaters, class jackets, freshman beanies and assorted unmentionables. Several issues of the monthly school newsletter brought back memories of days gone by. An afternoon of food, refreshments, harbor cruises and endless stories brought back many memories of the good old days.



Steve Bixler and Bill Parsons are old friends from Carmel



Bob Blank, Ed Maloney, Ray Petty, Pete Arturo enjoyed each others' company at the reunion

The great response and attendance was testimony to the spirit of community and friendship that began over fifty years ago and lasts to today. Attendees contributed over \$2,500 to support the education of future Carmelite high school students. Plans are underway for a follow-up meeting in 2033 for the 75th reunion.

- Tim Psomas '58



Letters to the Editor

Thanks loads for doing such a great job and doing it in a much greater way!
God Bless,
Paul McCargar

Thanks for the newsletter! It keeps me in touch with the hood. I look forward to it when it comes in. - Leo

I have been looking for Harry Swinteck, graduated late 60's or early 70's for a reunion. Please have him contact me. Joe Gibbons too! Thanks!

Patrick Flannery
(Call Katie at (714) 918-4505 for Patrick's contact info)

Obituary

Dear Editor,

I am sorry to inform you that my brother Merlin Michael Witte (class of 1943) passed away on October 1, 2008. He was so typical of so many Mt. Carmel Graduates in that he marries a graduate of a Catholic Girls High school, Donna Hurth, raised a loving family (9 children), and had a very successful career.

Sincerely,
Norm Witte class of 1948

Merlin Michael Witte "Mike"

Born in Los Angeles, Ca March 28, 1926 Mr. Witte died at St. John's Health Center in Santa Monica on Wednesday October 1 at the age of 82.

After serving in the U.S. Air Force in WWII, he graduated from Loyola University in 1949 with a Bachelors degree in Business Administration, with a major in Accounting. He spent 3 years with the IRS before joining the Robert P. McCulloch organization as Tax and Investment Manager, which led to his founding of McCulloch Oil Corporation in 1955. Starting from zero, Mr. Witte built McCulloch Oil into one of the country's largest independent oil companies. While managing McCulloch Oil, Mr. Witte was instrumental in founding and organizing a dozen additional companies, including: McCulloch-Hancock Oil and Gas Inc; Ladd Petroleum, Inc.; Liberty North America, Inc. and Liberty Oil; Plains Exploration; Hershey Oil Co.; Offshore Exploration Oil Company and MCO Resources, Inc.

Mike was elected to the Board of Directors of several public companies and served as an officer and director of many other organizations including the Independent Petroleum Association of America, the IOGPA of CA and the western Oil and Gas Associations well as the Board of Regent at Loyola Marymount University, he has been listed in the Who's Who in America.

Mike was a family man and a regular member of his church. He was also an accomplished amateur golfer, participating in and winning many tournaments, including the Bob Hope- Desert Classic Pro-Am twice. He was a proud member of the Bel-Air Country Club and served as its president.

Merlin Michael Witte is survived by his wife of 60 year Donna P. Witte and his children James, Daniel, Michael, Robert, Anne, William, his 21 grandchildren, and his brother Norman. He is joined in death by his son Joseph and daughters Catherine and Janet.



Hey Crusaders! Don't Forget About Your \$50 Membership Contribution



The Crusader is a costly publication for the Mount Carmel Alumni Foundation but it provides a source of communication amongst alumni. We want to continue to reach as many alumni and friends as possible. Please do your part and make a charitable contribution to the Mount Carmel Alumni Foundation. Send \$50 or more for your continuing support and membership.



2009

Events to look forward to in 2009

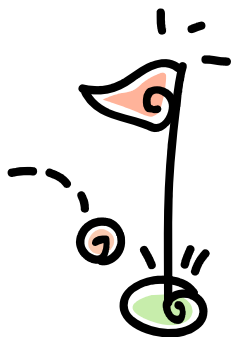
Mount Carmel High School's 75th Anniversary– 2009 All Class Reunion



The "all class reunion" committee headed by Chris Herrera has been busily scouting appropriate venues for a 2009 reunion to be held next year in August or September. An overriding concern is finding a location big enough to handle our group with overnight accommodations close by. One leading candidate is the Quiet Canyon Convention Center in Montebello. There is a Hilton Hotel on the same grounds as well as a beautiful Golf Course. Lounging in a lovely air-conditioned room or at poolside, or for the more adventurous, a round of golf with buddies are all in the works. More details to follow
-Al Prukop

If you would like to be on the Reunion Committee please contact Chris Herrera or Al Prukop at MCAF@mountcarmelcrusaders.org or 714) 918-4515

The Padre Golf Tradition Continues in 2009



The 2009 Padre Golf Tournament sponsored by the Mount Carmel Alumni Foundation will be held at Western Hills Country Club in the Carbon Canyon area of Chino Hills on Monday May 18th.

The tournament format will be a four-person scramble with team scores adjusted under the Callaway system. Prizes will be awarded for the first and second place teams along with prizes for closest to the pin and the longest drive. A putting contest will also be held. As in the past, you will have the opportunity to sponsor a high school student golfer if you are not able to play. As usual there will be a happy hour and dinner held after the golfing is completed. Alumni and friends are encouraged to attend this fun evening, which will feature a buffet dinner, silent auction and other activities.

Chairman Tom Forgue '60 and his committee have already met to begin the planning for this annual event, which is the major fundraiser for the MCAF charitable mission. Some new and exciting items have been discussed and will announced in the spring edition of *The Crusader*. Your help and contributions as a golfer, volunteer, sponsor or donor is essential to make the 2009 Padre Golf Tournament a bigger success than in 2008.

For further information, Tom Forgue can be reached at 714- 801-3045



Is your New Year's Resolution to get more involved?

The MCAF is always looking for a helping hand in planning events or volunteers at an event. Below is a list of committees and their chairmen:

Academic Decathlon: Rich Monteilh

Gift-Giving Committee: Jerry Kelly

Strategic Planning/Bylaws: Greg Williams

2009 Reunion: Al Prukop and Chris Herrera

Padre Golf: Tom Fogue

The Crusader: Katie Strachan (*you can send in an article!*)

**DON'T FORGET TO SEND IN YOUR
\$50 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTION!!!**