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Cydni's Courage

Cydni suffered a stroke during birth and had to be cared for by the neonatal

"I just can't say enough about St. Rita School. They gave my Cydni her wings. Thanks to their love and encouragement, she has a heart that global apraxia doesn't have a hold on and a love of learning that apraxia can't stop."

Marsha Baldwin, Cydni's grandma.

intensive care unit. Even though her beginning was rough, Cydni was ahead of her developmental milestones, except when it came to speaking. Cydni was unable to produce words such as 'mama' or 'dada.'

Martha, Cydni's grandma remembers when a daycare manager approached her and suggested that Cydni may be deaf, because she never spoke. "I told her she was crazy. My granddaughter was a bright little girl; who knew her colors, numbers, and letters. I could understand her even if no one else was able to. However, this moment made me really begin to pay attention."

At age 5, Cydni was diagnosed with global apraxia. A condition which describes the difficulty coordinating mouth and speech movements, as well

as, motor planning of the arms, legs and fingers. Cydni received speech, occupational and physical therapies several times a week. She missed so much time in the classroom therefore, Cydni was unable to be promoted to first grade.

In the meantime, Cincinnati Children's Hospital recommended a speech augmentation device for Cydni. Marsha recalls, "I cried because I thought this was the miracle that would give Cydni her voice." Undeterred when insurance wouldn't pay for the device, Marsha

Cydni continued on page 4



The school has 110 gallons of the famous mock turtle soup ready to sell. It will be the last time the St. Rita Fest tradition will be available.

The soup was made by the altar society at Saints Peter & Paul Catholic Church in Reading from the festival beginnings. The recipe is a secret and has only been handed down through the Wuebkenberg and Koenig families by word of mouth.

If you are interested in purchasing St. Rita Fest Mock Turtle Soup, please call the school at 513-771-7600 or email Mark at mdocter@srsdeaf.org.

Dear Friends,

With the ending of one year and the ringing in of a New Year, 2016, I want to reflect for a moment. The 2015 school year at St. Rita School for the Deaf was a year-long celebration of our 100th Anniversary. It's hard to imagine that the school was formed based on a community need, which has since grown into a leading educational institution for children, who are Deaf and have communications needs. We are blessed to have had 100 years of education excellence.

A New Year provides an opportunity for new challenges. The needs of our students continue to increase as well as the need for additional resources. We will remain diligently focused on meeting our students needs by continuing to campaign for tuition assistance and classroom technology. Items such as laptops, iPads and smart boards are vital to our teaching curriculum.

Our students are making tremendous progress. The toddler class is signing and rambling words. Naomi in the one year old class is using signs to communicate with her brother Eli who is Deaf. A little guy in our Montessori program is walking without the constant assistance of

We remain diligently focused on meeting our students needs by continuing to campaign for tuition assistance and classroom technology.

a walker. AJ is learning to develop muscle control and motor movement to produce sounds and words in her speech therapy sessions. The junior high students are learning how to communicate with those who don't know sign language by using iPads and pencil and paper, to become successful communicators within a hearing community. A couple of seniors made campus visits and are deciding on a college to attend.

Thank you to all of our donors who believe in our children and give to our mission by means of dollars, time and talents. To our corporate donors like SC Ministry, Sisters of Charity, Group Sales, Inc. and community partner Cincinnati United Way. Your donations impact the lives of our students daily. Our successes wouldn't be possible without you.

Happy New Year and May God Bless,



Gregory Ernst, Executive Director



Making an Impact Beyond High School

St. Rita graduates go on to further their education, or find meaningful employment. This can prove to be

difficult for young adults whose first language is not English.

As our students mature toward becoming adults, it is important that St. Rita School staff and teachers remain aware of students' growing and changing needs. In the State of Ohio, over half of Deaf and hard of hearing individuals are unemployed. This statistic is even higher when you include the population with other severe communication deficits. One of our greatest goals, as students wrap up their high school careers, is to see

difficult for young adults whose first language is not English.

In 2014, Kameron was finishing his senior year at St. Rita School for the Deaf. College was not an option for Kameron, so he and his family looked into transitional programs in the area. Nothing they found met his transition needs, or lined up with what he envisioned for his future.

Responding to the need for a program that included intense lan-

guage instruction, life skills training, and job interest related learning, St Rita School piloted the Career Plus program. In the Career Plus program, students' time is divided between classroom hours and practical experiences. Classroom hours include instruction in managing a home and budget, developing work-related and problem solving skills, completing forms (i.e. applications), learning to work with an interpreter; recognizing job interests, skills and vocabulary needed for employment.

Continued next page

Our philosophy is to focus on the potential of the individual student and help them follow their dreams for a meaningful life.

Kameron met the requirements of the Career Plus program: complete graduation requirements, defer his diploma; have the ability to follow directions and safely navigate independently in different workplace environments.

His first year in the program was spent with intense vocabulary lessons and working in various departments on St. Rita School campus. Through these practical life experiences, Kameron developed work skills and discovered what jobs interested him.

By the end of his first year in the program, Kameron had secured a part time job for the summer. He excelled in his summer position and secured 4 promotions with salary increases. This year, he is working off site in 2 local businesses gaining more skills through practical experiences.

The Career Plus program, though still in its infancy, is already bringing success to the lives of students like Kameron. Other programs tend to focus on the potential of their program's ability to place people in jobs. Our philosophy is to focus on the potential of the individual student and help them develop the appropriate skills to find and follow their dreams for a meaningful life.

For more information on the program or to offer a student an opportunity for employment, please contact Natalie Marsh, St. Rita School for the Deaf, Assistant Principal, at 513-771-7600 ext. 384 between the hours of 7:45 am–3:30 pm or via email at nmarsh@srsdeaf.org.

Leaving a Legacy of Love

Every act of kindness, leap of faith and memory made all ties into a legacy. It is about learning from the past, living in the present, and building for the future. When Mary Ann Stansfield applied to work at St. Rita about 37 years ago, she probably never imagined the impact and difference she would make in so many lives.

Mary Ann never had any children of her own so all the students became her children. She advocated for them, taught, cared for and loved them as any parent would for their own child. Her job consisted of many duties including teaching, cheerleader advisor, drama producer, principal, and Director of Special Services.

It is essential that this legacy continues for the future students of St. Rita.

She encouraged many people to jump in with both feet and to think out of the box for the benefit of the children. Her Master thesis is still thriving and a growing program at St. Rita; the LOFT program. When other schools didn't know how to teach or communicate with children with apraxia, Mary Ann took a leap of faith along with Greg Ernst and said we will give it a try. The school currently educates 55 children with apraxia.

Mary Ann made many memories with and for the students. When she was directing the musical "Peter Pan", she insisted that Peter Pan needed to fly. While others weren't quite sure, she made sure it hap-



pened. On opening night of the musical, Peter Pan was harnessed in and flying out above the audience.

Mary Ann Stansfield worked as a part of the St. Rita family. Her good work and contributions to students and programs will be remembered for years to come. Upon her retirement, Mary Ann set up a Donor Named Scholarship Fund to help continue the mission of St. Rita School for the Deaf. This past July, Mary Ann passed away but her legacy of love will live on in the hearts and smiles of the many lives she touched and those she will never meet.

A donor named scholarship can be set up for any occasion or reason. The scholarship funds are a great way to honor someone, show gratitude, or even celebrate. The fund is a lasting legacy because the principal remains untouched while the interest is drawn to be used for student financial assistance. To grow the fund, families and friends can contribute at any time, in memory or honor of their loved ones. All gifts to the fund are tax deductible.

If you are interested in establishing or donating to an existing Donor Named Scholarship Fund please contact Nyoshua Anderson at 513-771-7600 ext. 324 or nanderson@srsdeaf.org. It is essential that the legacy continues for the future students of St. Rita.

made sacrifices to pay for the device. She was ready to share information with the school on how to use the device. However, Marsha was confronted with a new dilemma, when a teacher, who had 25 other children to attend to didn't have the time to learn to use a device for one child.

Through Marsha's many frustrations and struggles, she often confided in a good friend. In several conversations, her friend would gently suggest calling St. Rita School for the Deaf. But after the last issue with the device, her friend insisted that she call St. Rita School or the friend would.

After Christmas, Marsha reached out to St. Rita School for the Deaf and made an appointment to bring Cydni in for a K-2 classroom visit. When Cydni entered the room, her eyes lit up and she began playing with the other children. Marsha knew Cydni was thinking, 'they're like me!' Marsha knew she had found the perfect fit for Cydni, but how would she pay?

“These were the first educators I talked to who understood apraxia and how to teach around it.”

For the past 100 years, St. Rita School has never had to turn away a family based on an inability to pay. Thankfully, this mission continues to be possible through private and corporate community donors (like you)!

“These were the first educators I talked to who understood apraxia and knew how to teach around it,” says Martha. At 17 years old, Cydni is a Junior at St. Rita School for the Deaf with straight 'A's. Thinking about her future, Cydni is preparing to take the ACT and SAT and recently went on a college visit. Cydni is dreaming of going to college to become a math teacher.



St. Rita Fest Discontinued

St. Rita School for the Deaf, in an effort to be more strategically focused on its core mission of teaching children and helping families lead more productive lives has made a decision to end St. Rita Fest, a long-standing summer family tradition. A review was conducted by St. Rita Limited Board of Jurisdiction considering costs and staff resources necessary to produce St. Rita Fest. It was determined that despite its popularity and nearly 100 year history, alternate fundraising efforts would better ensure the financial future of the school.

St. Rita will continue the annual Grand Raffle, which helps provide funds to support the school's programs. The Grand Raffle sells a limited number of tickets for a chance to win \$25,000 in cash.

“The school will focus on other funding avenues to ensure its future success. The quality and continued innovation of our programs and services is paramount to our mission. We realize that thousands of people in our community have fond memo-

ries of St. Rita Fest, and we feel honored to have been a part of so many people's lives”, said Gregory Ernst, Executive Director, St. Rita School for the Deaf. “We believe this is the right thing to do for the future of our students and sincerely hope that the people of Greater Cincinnati will continue to support us in other ways”, he continued.

St. Rita will continue the annual Grand Raffle, which has always been a cornerstone of St. Rita Fest. The Grand Raffle sells a limited number of tickets for a chance to win \$25,000 in cash. The Grand Raffle helps provide funds to support St. Rita School programs.

St. Rita School for the Deaf, a school of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, relies almost exclusively on the generosity of individuals, corporations, organizations, foundations and community partners to fund its operations and programs. “Our deepest and sincerest gratitude goes to all of our sponsors. Their gifts continue to enhance 100 years of education excellence. We also have sincere gratitude for the 2,000+ St. Rita Fest volunteers who have dedicated countless hours and years along with their talents into putting together a festival of this magnitude. It would not have been possible without them”, Mr. Ernst continued.

THE PIGGEST RAFFLE EVER!



BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

• CINCINNATI •
FLYING PIG
MARATHON



Piggest Raffle
www.piggestraffle.com

Support St. Rita School for the Deaf
and Win!



Buy a \$5 Piggy and select St. Rita School
for the Deaf as your charity.

The Piggest Raffle Ever will select 3 contestants as
prize winners during the Pig Drop, Friday, April 29, 2016

(you need not be present to win)!

1st Place: \$10,000 Cash (\$5,000 to winning ticket
holder and \$5,000 to the charity who sold the ticket)

2nd Place: 2 year lease on a 2016 Toyota Prius!

3rd Place: Cincinnati Get-Away Experience!
(Valued at over \$1,500)

How Do I Get Started?

Simple. All you have to do is purchase your Pigs
at www.piggestraffle.com and select
St. Rita School for the Deaf as your charity.



Memorial Program

Looking for a way to honor someone who has everything? Celebrate a special occasion, say thank you or remember an important person in your life by making a gift to St. Rita School for the Deaf in his or her name. Weddings, anniversaries, birthdays, and holidays take on a new meaning when your gift brings help and hope to families who are struggling with their child's special needs. Remembering those who have touched your life in a special way can comfort and console loved ones while also helping children to succeed in their life. People enrolled in the Memorial Program as well as the donor, are remembered at a special Mass and daily in the prayers of our students and staff. If you are interested in participating in the Memorial Program, please call 513-771-7600.

At the time of this publishing deadline, only 2 months of memorials were available. For a complete listing of our memorials visit www.srsdeaf.org.

November

50th Wedding Anniversary

Albert Danzinger

Mrs. Doris Schindler

Bill Duwel

Mrs. Geraldine Boehm

Anniversary of Death

Rollie Adamson

Ms. Helen Koch

Mildred Hartman

Ms. Jean M. Hartman

Gerry Klemann

Mrs. Jeanette M. Mather

Mary E. Marx

John and Maryann Murphy

Birthday Greetings

Rita Engel

Mr. Joseph T. Lohmueller

Mr. and Mrs.

James N. Reinhold

Birthday Remembrance

Tammy Calpin

Mr. James P. Sandy

John J. Morrison

Ms. Mary J. Massarelli

Mary Yvonne Napier

Mrs. Paula Downs

Edna Snelling

Ms. Helen Koch

Christmas Remembrance

Robert A. Blum

Mrs. Nancy Blum

David Hartman

Ms. Jean M. Hartman

Get Well Wishes for

Joann Corsmeier

St. Mary's Aux. No 346

Joyce M. Hoerst

St. Mary's Aux. No 346

Sandy Nierman

St. Mary's Aux. No 346

Judy Pilgrim

St. Mary's Aux. No 346

In Honor of

Anne Flake

Anne Flake

In Memory of

Eugene J. Billman

Mrs. Ruth Billman

Patrick Birrer

Dr. Donna M. Mather

Anthony Blessing

Mr. and Mrs. Carl Franke

Paul Braun

Mr. and Mrs.

Harold H. Heuker

William R. Burke

Mrs. Glenda Wills

Paul Bushelman

Ms. Judith D. Lopez

Mrs. Becky L. Sundstrom

Tom Chappelow

Mr. Tom W. Mahaney

Ken Cremers

Mrs. Carol S. Zins

Jack Deye

Wm. Kramer & Son, Inc.

Stanley D. Doerger

Ms. Patricia M. Mach

Connie Geckeler

Mr. and Mrs.
Richard D. Jackson

George G. Gibeau

Mr. and Mrs. Bob Perry

Arthur F. Hickham

John and Maryann Murphy

Gloria E. Hock

Schoch Tile and Carpet, Inc.
Whitmer and Company
CPAs, LLP

LaRosa's, Inc. —
Corporate Offices

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Frank J. Bachman
Molly Brandenberger

Mr. James D. Carey

Mr. John DaVita

Mr. and Mrs.

Robert J. Doerger

Mr. John Elsen

Mr. Robert D. Elsen

Mr. and Mrs. Donald Fries

Mr. and Mrs.

David Haarmeyer

Holly and John Hock

Rebecca D. Howard

Mrs. Jean A. Kessler

Mr. Robert Lang

Kathleen and

Chuck Levinson

Mr. and Mrs.

Donald Lienesch

Greg and Laura Lutz

Sally L. Luzader

Kay L. Manger

Michael and Heidi McNabb

Mrs. Patricia J. Mueller

Mr. William Rath

Mrs. Laverne A. Roberto

Mrs. Patricia Schlimm

Joan Schulte

Ruth E. Schwallie

Kristin and Tom Sheehan

Linda and Jim Tuttle

Joe and Michele Varick

Mark and Karen Vollman

Mr. and Mrs. Albert J. Yates

Mary Lou Young

Mrs. Adele Yung

Edward J. Hoynes

D A R John Reily Chapter

Gloria Jim

Mr. and Mrs.

G Michael Cappel

Johnny Kilcoyne

Ms. Irene Kilcoyne

Ron Koch

Ms. Helen Koch

John L. Magoto

Ms. Joan Magoto

Shila and Thomas Magoto

Scott and Beth Subler

John Mazurowski

HCR ManorCare Gives

Mr. and Mrs.

Stephen E. Nofziger

Charles R. McCafferty

Mr. and Mrs.

Lawrence R. Babel

Mary Jane Mauer

Bill and Cindy McCafferty

Donna H. Medlock

Mrs. Ellen A. Molitor

Cathy and Mike Voegelé

Mrs. Gertrude K. Whelan

Gayle Meyer

Mrs. Ginny Beemer

Alma Minnich

Mr. and Mrs.

James H. Bittner

Bernetta Mize

John and Maryann Murphy

Jean Munafo

Mrs. Theresa E. Munafo

Sharon Nichols

Ted and Tami Lee

Marion Puthoff

Mr. Robert G. Puthoff

Edna E. Ryerson

Mr. and Mrs.

Ronald R. Ryerson

Andrea L. Wilkerson

Suzie Seim

Mr. and Mrs. Dale A. Maris

Romilda Siefiring

Mr. and Mrs.

Clarence Siefiring

Mary Ann Stansfield

Northern Kentucky Services

for the Deaf

Mr. and Mrs.

Lawrence R. Babel

Dorothy C. Sullivan

Mrs. Barbara Hotopp

Joseph L. Ulliman

Precious Blood

Assembly #2947

Glenn Waller

St. Rita School for the Deaf

Mr. and Mrs.

Lawrence R. Babel

John and Maryann Murphy

James R. Waters

Mrs. Dolores A. Waters

In Thanksgiving of

Joan M. Bellman

Ms. Joan M. Bellman

Patricia A. Stibich

Ms. Patricia A. Stibich

Frank T. Thaman

Mr. Frank T. Thaman

Margaret C. Wilson

Ms. Margaret C. Wilson

Prayers Answered For

Jean M. Hartman
Ms. Jean M. Hartman

Prayers for

Harry Robben
Ms. Helen Koch

St. Mary's Aux. No 346
St. Mary's Aux. No 346

Special Intention for

Diane Bechtold
Ms. Diane Bechtold

December

Anniversary of Death

Vincent J. Blessing
Mr. and Mrs.
Vincent G. Blessing

Mary Lou LaPlant
Mr. James C. LaPlant

Charles F. Muench
Mr. and Mrs.
David C. Muench

Clarence E. Paff
Ms. Helen Koch

Birthday Greetings

Elizabeth M. Blessing
Mr. and Mrs.
Vincent G. Blessing

Dee Cianciolo
Mr. and Mrs. Barry J. Auer

Birthday Remembrance

Nicholas Massarelli
Ms. Carol C. Massarelli
Ms. Mary J. Massarelli

Raymond (Bud) Paff
Ms. Helen Koch

Edna Snelling
Mrs. Rita Mahoney

Christmas Greetings

Mary Kay Fischer
Mrs. Mary Ellen Trischler

Bernadette Marie Shumate
Mr. and Mrs. John T. Fogarty

Christmas Remembrance

Rollie Adamson
Ms. Helen Koch
Mrs. Rita Mahoney

Bill Bechtold
Mrs. Alberta T. Bechtol

Jack Betsch
Mr. and Mrs.
Henry Meyerrose

Juanita Cooper
Father Ronald C. Cooper

Clifford H. Gross
Ms. Helen Koch
Mrs. Rita Mahoney

Douglas Hitt
Mrs. Margie L. Hitt

Ron Koch

Ms. Helen Koch

Mary Martha Leistler
Mr. Kenneth Leistler

Anna Listermann
Tom and Lois Elsbrock

Daniel Mahoney
Mrs. Rita Mahoney

Mary E. Marx
John and Maryann Murphy

Leona Osner
Ms. Mary Gretchen Osner

Clarence E. Paff
Ms. Helen Koch
Mrs. Rita Mahoney

Richard Robinson
Mrs. Mildred E. Robinson

Garnett Snelling
Ms. Helen Koch
Mrs. Rita Mahoney

Dana Toney
Mary Toney Maines

In Honor of

LaRosa's, Inc. —
Corporate Offices
Worthmore Food Products

Fogarty Family
Ms. Kathleen A. Flory

Anne Flake
Anne Flake

John T. Fogarty
Mr. and Mrs. David Prenskey

Leo Gilpin
Mr. and Mrs. Kevin P. Gilpin

Anne Ohren
Denise Johns

Joanna Osher
Dr. and Mrs.
Robert H. Osher

Josephine Tipane
Mrs. Jeanne Fleckenstein

Mary Pennington Wolfe
Mrs. Jeanne Fleckenstein

In Memory of

Patty Affonso
Mr. and Mrs. Dale A. Maris

Lucille B. Alfing
Mr. and Mrs.
Frank Ramminger

Mary E. Backherms
Mr. and Mrs.
Edwin A. Strotman

John R. Barnes
Mr. and Mrs.
David A. Barnes

A. J. Bechtold
Ms. Diane Bechtold

Sandy Brose
Mr. and Mrs. Joe Appelmann

Harry B. Budke
Ms. Helen T. Lehn

Nancy Callahan
Janet L. Baker and
Diane M. Fowler

Bruce A. Carpenter
Ms. Mary Gretchen Osner

Michael Copelin
John and Maryann Murphy

Charles F. Curro
Mr. and Mrs. John J. Curro

Judith Day
Mrs. Donna Finley
Mr. and Mrs.
Robert L. Huneck
Ms. Carol C. Massarelli

Daniel T. Donovan
Mr. and Mrs. Mark Ernst

Thelma Enderle
Mr. Ronald F. Enderle

Edward Engel
Mrs. Rita Engel

Ginger M. Flege
Mrs. Ginny Beemer

Paul Francis
Mr. and Mrs.
Lawrence Huelskamp
Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Kohls
Mr. and Mrs.
Clarence Siefing

Rudolph D. Hachey
St Pius X Women's
Jail Ministry
Laird — Cleveland
Torti Gallas And Partners
B F Saul Company
Mark and Gail Andreae
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Phyllis Conklin
Jeffrey Dornoff
Margaret Fabry
Mr. and Mrs.
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Darrel Hachey
Mr. Keith Hachey
Mrs. Ann E. Harrigan
Jennifer and Michael Landis
Ted Mueller
Mr. Jim Owens
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Trevor Reitz
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Ashley Hale
Ms. Ellen M. Brigger

Dennis Hatfield
John and Maryann Murphy

Corinne Henkel
Mr. and Mrs. Tom Mooney

Emma Hermesch
Mr. Kenneth P. Scheffel

Alice Hillenbrand
Mr. and Mrs. Dan Johnston

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Tina Atchley and
Steve Schulte
Mr. Philip J. Hock
John and Fern Ketchum

Clement E. Hutzel
Mr. and Mrs.
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Geneva A. Kemp
Mr. Cal Kemp

Lou Kneuen

Mr. and Mrs.
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Carl D. Larson
Mr. and Mrs.
Daniel J. Vonderhaar

Ellie Lazarus
Ms. Nanci A. Lantz

Don Lehmkuhl
Mr. and Mrs.
Henry F. Pohlmeier

John Leitzinger
Macy's Foundation

John C. Losekamp
Mr. and Mrs.
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Katherine M. Oschp
Ms. Pamela M. Oschp

Rita Parkinson
Mr. and Mrs.
Donald L. Kramer

Richard J. Rauckhorst
Smart Move Realty LLC

Debra Re
Mr. and Mrs.
John E. Ruthven

Bill Ritter
Diana S. Gravitt
Bill and Jan Helmes

Elizabeth Rohs
Mr. and Mrs.
Richard H. Finan

Edna E. Ryerson
Julie and Dennis Yockey

Sharon Dymond Schlageter
Mr. and Mrs.

Richard H. Finan

Rita M. Schmitz
Dallas and Louise Todd

Elizabeth Schwegman
Ms. Carol C. Massarelli

Janice Smith
Mr. and Mrs. John C. Boyd

Mike T. Sumida
Mr. and Mrs.
Michael T. Eismann

Patrick D. Sweeney
John and Maryann Murphy

Charles Thompson
Ms. Ann L. Ramser

Anthony Trillo
Mr. and Mrs.
Joseph Palermo

Gary Vadnais
Mr. and Mrs.
Frank Ramminger

Larry Vogelpohl
Mr. and Mrs. Jay Janszen

Paul D. Walz
Norfolk Sheriff's Office
Mr. and Mrs.
Ronald W. Amend
Ms. Mary Walz Anderson
Hazel M. Caldwell
Mr. and Mrs. David H. Dean

Mrs. Shannon Durr

Mr. and Mrs.
Gregory R. Ernst Jr.

Norma Hahnel
John A. Herold Jr.

Kim Jennings
Ms. Nancy R. Keathley

Roberta L. Klare
Mr. and Mrs.
Richard J. McCarthy, II

Mr. Lou E. Poole
Audrey Roark

Ms. Rose Mary Sandfoss
Mr. Roger R. Schwartz

Tom and Rosie Tewes
Mr. and Mrs.

Robert W. Tomlinson
Ms. Paula S. Votel

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Walz
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Michael J. Winterman

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Jerome Wulker
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David R. Wulker

In Thanksgiving of

Harry E. Nolan
Mr. and Mrs. Harry E. Nolan

Special Intention for

Diane Bechtold
Ms. Diane Bechtold



DREAM. ACHIEVE. SOAR.



Celebration of Life, Patrick Sweeney

March 24, 1935–December 26, 2015



Patrick (Pat) Sweeney dedicated 47 years to teaching the students at St. Rita School for the Deaf. He was a Deaf teacher who taught math,

algebra, physics and calculus. Pat ensured learning was fun and laughter was abundant in the classroom. He was a man of patience, wisdom and passion.

His passion for coaching was shared with his students and the school. Pat was an expressive coach

who never sat down while coaching—not on the field or the court. He made sure his players were playing to their potential, he wouldn't accept less. Pat saw the potential in all of his players and encouraged that specific potential.

Greg Ernst, Executive Director, recalls a time when he coached junior varsity basketball the same season as Pat. "I thought I was walking into the gym to conduct tryouts for basketball but Pat just lined up the players and hand-picked his team. He knew the potential of each and every one of the players." Needless to say, Pat had a winning season that year on varsity and Greg ended his season with 0 wins and 23 losses.

The 64–65 basketball season

was his best year, with 18 wins and 3 losses. That same year, he received the Deaf American Basketball Coach of the Year.

St. Rita School for the Deaf was very lucky to have Patrick as part of the St. Rita family. The Einstein look alike, story teller and comedian will be missed greatly by the staff and students of St. Rita. However, the stories of his memory will live on.

To honor Pat's memory, his family requested that donations be made to St. Rita School for the Deaf. If you would like to give a gift in honor of Pat's life, please go online to www.srsdeaf.org and click on the donate now button or send a gift in the provided envelope.