



# 50 Year Club Newsletter

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## Class of 1961 Celebrates Its 50th

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The class of 1961 will storm the campus on June 24 and 25 to celebrate their 50th year since graduation. The planning committee composed of John Egan McAteer, Bettyann Vensel Stewart, Pat Ryan Casey and Dick Hanlon is arranging for a memorable program on Friday evening and Saturday morning. Friday evening will begin with each member of the class of 1961 receiving their **50 Year Club diploma**. This will be followed by a cocktail party and dinner.



*Planning committee left to right Dick Hanlon, John Egan McAteer, Pat Ryan Casey, Bettyann Vensel Stewart,*

After dinner the class will conduct a program that will bring tears of laughter to your eyes. The stage

will be transformed into classrooms that portray the life and times of the class of 61 and some of their professors. Some of the classrooms and professors being considered are Bruno Hartung (Economics), the famous "checking your watch caper" with Father Kennedy (History), **One of the most memorable classroom experiences will be with Professor Paul Orr (he will be there to play the role).** The time will be Freshman year and Dr. Orr will be passing out blue books with some of his famous grades (C -++-). He will finally let us know what his famous grading system really means. (at least that is what he says he will do). I am betting that he gives us an explanation that may be just as understandable as C-++. This should prove to be the highlight of Friday evening.

The class of 61 would like to **invite members of the classes of 59, 60, 62, 63 and 64 to return and celebrate with them.** We all attended the college (University) together and share many common memories. This will be a great opportunity for the classes of 62, 63 and 64 to start planning for their 50th reunion and gift.



*Phyllis Faber Kelley and Al Reed class of 60 provide an overview of the 50 Year Club prior to distributing 50 Year Club Diplomas at last year's reunion. .*

## First Annual 50 Year Club Lecture Saturday 10 to 11:30 AM.

Two topics will be addressed. The first "Jesuit values at WJU how they have not changed" by Father Jim Fleming and "What's new about educational programs at WJU" by Mark Drnach DPT Clinical Associate Professor of Physical Therapy. John Egan McAteer will moderate a panel of 1961 class members who will respond to both discussions. Time for audience questions will be included.

## 50 Year Club

The 50 Year Club was created last year by the class of 60. All members of the class of 1961 will become members of the club on Friday June 24th. WJU President Rick Beyer (**will become an honorary club member**) and Alumni Council president Dick Riley will distribute the diplomas. There will be a brief meeting for all members of the club (**Classes of 59, 60, 61**) to approve the by laws and elect the first club officers. The club is an adjunct organization of the Alumni council. See **50 Year Club page 7**

## Pioneer Basketball Team 1956-57

The first formal athletic program at WJU AKA Wheeling College was basketball. The program started in the fall of 1956. The team was coached by Ed Coyne. The first game was against the West Virginia Freshman team on December 1, 1956. The team is pictured to the right. Team members from left to right are J. Dematte, R. Alexander, J. Mensore, G. Oryszewycz, A. Reed, Second row, D. Mercer, Pio Tei, J. Chalkley, E. Shahady, G. Reynolds, A. Yonovak, T. Jones, Coach Ed Coyne. Third row, Father C. Lewis, Managers: M. McSheehy, W. O'Toole



Jump ball for the first game at Mountaineer field house Morgantown. Don Mercer is at center (he out jumped the 6 ft 7 WVU center). To the left of him Johnny Mensore and Al Reed. In front of Al Reed #14 is NBA hall of famer Jerry West. The score was close in the first half but the superior height and ability of the WVU Freshman team proved to be too much. It remains a great memory for those who played in the game.

## Start Planning Your 50 Year Class Gift Now

The class of 1964 is the model for all of us to consider. They set a goal to raise \$250,000 by 2014 for a scholarship for future WJU students. Many of them have pledged a certain amount per month to be automatically removed from their credit card. That seems like a smart way to do it. Thirty dollars a month for 5 years would result in an \$1800 gift and \$15 a month for 5 years would be a \$900 gift. A Jesuit education is a treasure very few are able to experience. Our gift increases the number of students who will

nificant gift for your 50th. Let's follow the lead of the class of 1964.

Class member and scholarship supporter John Aluise said, "At this time in my life, I now can share some time, talent and treasure for the benefit of the institution that had a significant influence upon my values and my professional growth. The commitment that the Class of 1964 made to establish an endowed scholarship will enable Wheeling Jesuit to continue to shape the lives of young men and women. I strongly encourage my fellow alumni to return some of their time, talent and treasure to a most worthy cause. We have been touched for a lifetime. **Give a gift that can touch beyond your lifetime**".



*Jane Staub Friday and Pat Casey  
Ryan 1957 Freshman initiation*

have that chance and guarantees the high standards of a WJU education. Most of us are at a time in our lives when we can look back and realize our Jesuit education formed the foundation for our success. It is now time to give back. Give as much as you can (maybe a little more). A little bit every month from every member of

your class will make a sig-



John is a leader by example. In addition to the above contributions, the Aluise Family established a scholarship for a Huntington area student to attend WJU.

# Welcome to Rick Beyer our New President

Richard Allen Beyer became the ninth president of the University on January 2, 2011. "He brings a clear business mind to the position, a strong work ethic and a genuine respect for higher education and most importantly, the Jesuit identity in higher education," said

Mimie Helm current board chair. Beyer was unanimously selected by the WJU search committee and its board of directors. Beyer brings a unique combination of over 23 years of senior executive officer experience and over 16 years experience in higher education including board governance and financial modeling.

"I am honored to become the new president of Wheeling Jesuit University," said Beyer. The institution's commitment to educating the whole person,

for the greater good, via its traditional Jesuit values very much appeals to me. There are many people who care deeply about WJU, its history and future. I look forward to having an opportunity to work with all constituents."



Beyer first became affiliated with higher education in 1994 at his alma mater Olivet College, Mich. He served on the Olivet board of trustees beginning in 1994. He became its chairman in 2000 and was elected trustee emeritus in 2007. Beyer currently serves on the board of trustees at the American University in Washington D.C. and on the board of directors at the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB), a national higher education governance organization.

## Other new members of the Administration



**Rev James J. Fleming, SJ Chief Officer for Mission and Identity.** An experienced administrator and policy analyst, He will be responsible for developing university -wide programs that maintain and promote Wheeling Jesuit's distinctive mission as a

Catholic and Jesuit university. As a member of the president's cabinet, he will also serve as a resource for programs that promote the Catholic and Jesuit identity of the university in areas such as admissions and advancement, while collaborating in the development of programs in academic affairs and student development. He is an energetic creative leader with excellent communication skills.



**Larry Vallar VP Enrollment Management.** joins Wheeling Jesuit from his prior position as vice president for Enrollment Management at Olivet College, Mich. Over the past three years, his team set consecutive records in enrollment at Olivet, improved student satisfaction and raised retention among incoming freshman. Vallar brings significant entrepreneurial, marketing and operations experience to WJU. "I am confident we will attract the best and brightest students who thirst for academic rigor, are life long learners and who have a strong moral compass. These students will come from our home state, across the country and internationally," he noted. He is a graduate of Olivet College.



### Director of Planned Giving & Major Gifts

Attorney Joseph J. Buch brings a wealth of experience with regard to the many tax-advantaged techniques for institutional support to benefit the donor and University alike. Buch will assist in estate planning, charitable bequests, gift annuities, remainder trusts and other methods of planned charitable giving. Buch is a graduate of the University of Notre Dame and West Virginia University College of Law.



**Jim Holt VP for Institutional Advancement.** Jim will focus on the importance of growing enrollment, enhancing the capacity of our sponsored research programs, and overall institutional advancement. From 2000 – 2005, Holt was president of Acero, Inc., a Cleveland, Ohio and Palo Alto, California software pioneer for research in biochemistry, genomics and proteomics. He is a graduate of Westminster College, New Wilmington, Pa.

# *Fact Tell Stories Sell*

## **Stories from Classes of 59, 61, 62, 63**

### **Barbara Yeager 59**

Sunday September 25, 1955, my parents drove me from St. Albans to Wheeling to start the college experience. They took me to Mount de Chantal where I met my female classmates and my new home for the first time. That Sunday was my mother's birthday. She walked in the garden in front of the Mount admiring the flowers while my Dad helped me carry my many belongings up to the second floor to my all blue room where I met Rose Ann Ellem who would become my closest companion for the next 4 years. The priests from the college had arranged a mixer that evening to meet our classmates. There were eight girls living at the Mount: We were forever known as "the unholy eight." We were scheduled to walk from the Mount over the rise to the lounge in Swint Hall. We were told to take flashlights and walk together and beware of "the veterans lurking in the bushes who were not after our purses." Rain, however, interfered and Fr. Lewis had to drive to the Mount twice to pick up four girls on each trip and transport us to the mixer. If I remember correctly, Father Troy, gave us our blue and red beanies at that mixer so we could start class as official freshmen the next day. He thought that beanies would help us have a more "normal" college experience.

There were 21 students from out of town, living at the Mount and with families in the vicinity. The remaining seventy-five members of the first class were commuters. The mixer pretty much broke down that way too. The local students were friends from high school and those of us from out of town were pretty much scared and anxious to bond with someone. I do remember Bernie Glenn being very kind and he extended his Wheeling hospitality to us the lost souls and I remember that J.D. Graziano was already outgoing while his roommate Clayton Hudnall was rather quiet and reserved. This mixer gave us our first glimpse of "The Wheeling Girls," who had the advantage of high school friendship over the eight of us from the Mount who had to discover one another. After four years together, however, 49 of us graduated and our final week of parties was very different from our first mixer...but that's another story, and there are many, many more in between.

### **Dan Haller 61**

Late in my senior high school year, I became interested in

(Haller continued) Wheeling College. Since both my uncle and my dad had attended Georgetown, I wanted to go to a Jesuit college. I was especially attracted to Wheeling because it offered an engineering major and had a co-op engineering program with University of Detroit. In addition, my cousin, Fr Joe Haller, would be teaching accounting at Wheeling. It sounded ideal and was only 50 miles from home in Pittsburgh.

So, one fine Saturday, my mother, aunt and I set out for Wheeling. The campus, to say the least, was underwhelming, but we soon found ourselves just inside the main entrance of Swint Hall. There didn't appear to be anyone around when in the front door came a man dressed in old trousers, a heavy buffalo plaid shirt and muddy boots. With a quick warm smile and an apology for not exactly looking like a Jesuit, he introduced himself as Fr Cliff Lewis. He explained that he had been searching the grounds for Indian arrowheads and other artifacts. My mother and aunt were immensely charmed by the man. So was I, and thus began a friendship that years later culminated in a

phone call inquiring if I was interested in antiques. Indeed I was, as I had once told him. Well, he explained, he was planning to leave Wheeling for the missions, and, he had this nice antique bedside table his great grandfather and great uncle had made around the time of the Civil War. Would I want it? Indeed I would. It sits in our bedroom today. With it came pictures of the ancestors who had made it. I thought of that table and my first encounter with the wonderful man who gave it to me as Sam Selario and I sat in St Michael's Church for the funeral

mass of Fr. Lewis in March of 1983. The beautiful eulogy delivered by Fr Joe Hacala, at that time his rector, described a dedicated priest whose ready smile and gentle manner captivated virtually everyone he encountered. (Dan looks forward to everyone sharing their stories at the reunion. As is always true after 50 years "manipulating the truth" is expected.)



**Fr. Lewis**



**Dan Haller**

**Sam Selario 61****Sam Selario**

Here are some memories of Wheeling College and Father Ed Gannon. The last time I saw Father Ed Gannon was on June 27, 1985. Tom Carrigan asked me if I could meet Father Gannon at the Pittsburgh International Airport and drive him to Wheeling College for a class reunion. Naturally, I welcomed the opportunity. By coincidence, on the same day I took my two older daughters to the airport to leave on a trip to Europe. It was because of Father Gannon that I was able to go to Europe in 1958, the summer after my freshman year at Wheeling. He was pleased that I was now sending my daughters to Europe.

When I arrived on campus in the fall of 1957 from Clarksburg, West Virginia I had not traveled extensively -- not even in West Virginia. Father Gannon decided that I would go to Europe the following summer with him and other Wheeling College students. He made what would normally be a sightseeing trip a rich cultural experience. His knowledge of places, history and art was remarkable. Although an intellectual he could relate to others from different backgrounds as equals. My father left school after the eleventh grade, yet he and Father Gannon developed a close friendship. They had lively discussions and often disagreed but their relationship was one of mutual respect. I continued my correspondence with Father Gannon until shortly before his death in 1986. I hope to see all my classmates at the reunion to relive our great times in Wheeling.

**Fr. John DiBacco 62**

Wheeling College 1958! What a place -- three buildings and a great group of students. The Fire Ball, classes, the Jesuit priests, the professors, dorm life, the Gambol, the small trips to McFadden's and the Alpha, the Dorm dances and the open houses, the snack bar and the dress code, having five roommates in Swint Hall, senior research for Chemistry, the chemistry oral exam, the great students, classmates, and friends all combined to help me become a person "formed in the Ignatian tradition".

I was so appreciative of my Jesuit education when I entered the seminary in Baltimore. The only justification for an additional year at the seminary was that the philosophy

**Fr. Gannon**

*(DiBacco continued)* I studied at Wheeling College was not in Latin. Were they kidding? I had Ed Gannon and John Coll. Did they realize what it was like to have those five credit classes and the oral exams? My Jesuit liberal arts education truly prepared me for my life journey. The "formation" in the faith and in the intellectual life was really the basis for my vocation. If it were not for my time at Wheeling College, I am sure that I would not be where I am today -- a priest in Charleston- serving the people of WV

**Jim Dissen 63**

In 2013 the great Class of '63 will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup>!

We graduated from Wheeling College, married, went to war (separate from the marriage), raised families, put our children through school, paid off the house and now we are looking forward to the "golden years"; spoiling the grandchildren, cruises, golf or just kicking back. After all we have been through those boring Classes of '60, '61 and '62, who "hazed" us in 1959, made us wear "dinks" (I still have mine), dated our girls, would not help us with metaphysics, have issued another challenge—that their classes' can raise more money than the Class of '63. Are they serious—they forget we are "**BACCHANAL'S and BACCHANTE'S!**" (I could be wrong on that last word). In any event, we did survive and since most of us will be in our 7<sup>th</sup> decade when it's our reunion in 2013, it is time that we give back to "our school", the place where we lived, learned, loved, cried, worried and stressed, but it is also the place that laid the foundation to who we eventually became. Many of us attended other fine institutions of higher learning after WC and they also ask for donations, but there is only one "first" and that will always be WC/WJU in all our lives; however long or short it will be. As a new Board Member of Wheeling Jesuit University—yea I know what you are thinking—"Dissen on the Board"—what is happening at Wheeling! There is a lot happening at WJU. With our new President, Rick Beyer I see a bright future for the University. But "our" school needs our help and a great way to do it is for us, as a Class, to beat those upstart "pioneer" classes and begin planning for our "50<sup>th</sup> year Class of '63 gift". You will be receiving more information through the 50 Year Club Newsletter and from our new Class Representative, Aimee Noonan. Aimee will be creating a committee to determine the amount and designation of our gift. Renovations of Whelan Hall and other worthy projects (no new suit for Steve Haid) will be reviewed by the committee. So let's get geared up, Class of '63, and get ready to "rock and roll" one more time.

**Charlie Lloyd 63**

As a Naval officer in Viet Nam, my swift boat was sunk by a Viet-Cong mine February 14, 1966. After a few months in a Saigon field hospital I transferred to Bethesda Naval hospital for 16 months. **Fr. Troy** sensing my concerns about losing my men, wrote me a letter about the responsibilities of command, and that the people in charge have to make decisions that sometimes have negative consequences. He contacted two alumni from the class of 59 stationed in Saigon and they visited me (not sure of their names as I was a little "fuzzy" at that time). My first visitor to Bethesda was Diane DiPiero (Pappas). Diane, Denny Weitzel, Jim King and John Mitchell visited me frequently. Also visiting were Mike McGiveren, Jim Hobbs, Bill McGeehan and J.B. with Crow, Maureen McCarthy, Vicki DiPiero and Franny Bieglermeier (Denny's friend who became my friend) and Fathers Troy, Henderson, and O'Brien. On one visit, Diane brought her high school class.

They gave me a tape recorder as a gift. I was blessed by many friends, alumni and priests who took the time to visit me. Wheeling College was an extended family to me.

**Norm Koehler 63**

During a trip to Bavaria in the mid 70's with Fr. Gordon Henderson, (Gordo), he enlightened me on how

he became the sophomore men's proctor in Whelan Hall. He related how, during dinner conversations with the Jesuits, a different incident concerning the sophomore men came up each evening. One of the Jesuits mentioned that "Wheeling College could be the first Jesuit school to graduate an "all female class". When Gordo asked "Why?", the response was that "all the sophomore men would have flunked out by then". Gordo said he asked what was being done to try to turn them around. The response was something like "Oh, Gordon, you don't know those guys. There isn't anything you can do with them. They don't study, and all they want to do is party and drink". Wanting to take a shot at doing something he asked hall proctor if he would mind if he would work with us. Gordo realized we needed an identity that would make us proud. He suggested forming a club named BAKXOI, the Bacchanals, paralleling the names adopted by fraternities. We ordered jackets with BAKXOI inscribed on them. **The Bacchanals were born.**

**Father Troy****Dean's message 1961 class yearbook**

"The disadvantages of education come down to this: your eyes have been opened and you no longer can plead blindness. This is a burden to him who prefers shadow to substance and isolation to involvement. You, I would hope will draw stimulus from the more formidable challenge and use what you have learned to live lives on a more profound level than those who have not had your advantages."

*The stories told by our alumni indicate that many have learned "to live lives on a more profound level".*

**Class of 60 reunion gift**

In December of



*Europe trip-Summer 1960 Front row-L to R. B. Byrne, C. Cannon, C. Voight, B. Venzel, V. Fragale, J. Baldwin Middle row-J. DiFazio, T. Naugles, H. Loder, D. Terrese, ??, G. Perico, Fr. Gannon Back row-Don Bickler, N. Koehler, P. Noon, J. Mitchell, D. Weitzel, P. Jordan*

2011 classroom 224 in the McDonough Center became the best equipped classroom on campus. The room is now sporting a multimedia Smart Board Turnkey system. "This is a huge Christmas present. We haven't had this technology in the past. It's a major upgrade and we thank our alumni for making it possible," said physical therapy director Craig Ruby, adding that the depart-

ment has wanted this technology

for at least several years. "Part of our PT departmental strategic plan is to increase our use of modern teaching tools and improve our students' classroom experience. We now have the ability to create even better classroom presentations with more versatility" The need for the technology was defined by Information Technology Manager Greg Sheperd. Alumni Relations Director Kelly Klubert asked the class of '60 to fund the classroom as part of their 50th

anniversary celebration. The class also provided funds for remodeling the Erickson Alumni Center.



*Craig Ruby and Greg Sheperd with the new Smart Board Technology*

## 50 Year Club

The club is an adjunct organization of the alumni council. Its functions include honoring the 50 year graduates, conducting an annual lecture during the 50 year reunion, creating the senior ambassador-senior scholar program, helping 50 year classes with planning their reunion and encouraging development of a class gift for each graduating class. The governing board of the club will include members elected by the 50 year club, the alumni director, and a member appointed by the alumni council.

## Proposed By-laws

Active membership: (1) All graduates of Wheeling Jesuit University upon the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the graduation of his or her class. (2) All former members of the class who have attended for at least one semester. Charter Membership: indicating the original or founding members shall be open to all members of Classes of 1959 and 1960 who are qualified for Active membership. Honorary membership: shall be extended to the President of Wheeling Jesuit University and to any other friend of the university. Posthumous membership: shall be open to those who were otherwise eligible for active membership but are deceased prior to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the class.

**Annual meeting will be conducted at the time of the 50 year reunion.**

**Officers of the 50 year club** There will be 3 officers of the club elected by majority vote of the 50 year club at their annual meeting. Officers will have a term of 2 years. The officers of the club are President, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2nd Vice Presidents, and Secretary.

**An Executive committee** consisting of all 4 officers, the immediate past president, the alumni director and a representative of the alumni council will serve as the governing body of the organization. The president of the organization will serve as chair of the committee. The executive committee shall meet periodically by conference call or in person if needed. These meetings will be called by the Chair. The committee will meet in person at least one time a year at the time of the 50<sup>th</sup> reunion.

**Other committees Senior Ambassador-Scholar Committee** shall be composed of members of the club and faculty representatives. This committee in co-operation with the academic and administrative arms of WJU will develop the criteria for identifying and communicating with senior ambassadors-scholars. The Senior ambassador-scholars will be alumni who graduated 45 or more years ago who have been recognized by their professional organizations, universities of graduation, and other significant institutions as leaders in their field. They will be asked to volunteer their time to aid recruiting, fund raising and other forms of advocacy for WJU. Some will also be asked to consider being visiting professors at the University.

**Reunion Committee** Will be composed of 3 members appointed by the executive committee to aid other 50 year reunion committees with their reunion.



**1961 Class leaders left to right: Mike Santer, Alice Ann Croney, Eleanor Powers, Jim Kern, Dan Haller (standing), Leo Flanagan, Jane Staub Friday, John Egan McAtee, Denny Keogh**