

marist|s all

Issue number 102 November 2010

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<http://academic2.marist.edu/foy/maristsall>

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Writers for this issue:

[Jim Friel](#) ('52) fondly recalls the impact of Don Ryan (Bro Joel Matthew), Bro John Berchman, and Brother Joseph Damian.

[Bob and Ginny Grady](#) ('53) invite readers to the Marist Spirituality Weekend to be held July 2011 at Marist College.

[Robert Judge](#) ('63) describes efforts to note the years at Cold Spring.

[David Kammer](#) ('42) describes his visit to Cold Spring before it was announced to be the Juniorate.

[Cheryl Mantia](#), Director of Alumni Affairs at Mount St Michae, tells us of Jack Garcia, MSM '70, best selling author of *Making Jack Falcone*.

[Bill McCluskey](#) ('74) has moved from corporate education to pastoral care at Summit Park Hospital.

[Gus Nolan](#) ('48) described the September picnic at Mount Saint Michael and mentions retirees and attendees

[Gus Nolan](#) ('48) relates the dedication of the Chemistry Labs at Marist College in honor of J Richard LaPietra and notes the establishment of scholarsip in his honor.

[John \(OKE\) O'Connell](#) ('58) reports on the many attendees at the Oh B/Brother Where Are Thou gathering in Methuen MA on 21 August 2010

[Vince Poisella](#), Editor ('63) notes that funds to publish MaristsAll newsletter are dwindling.

[John Tricamo](#), former student at Saint Helena's recalls having Mendes and Big Gil as teachers

[In Memoriam](#), notice of death of Brother Ken Marino

From THE EDITOR: Thank you to Joe Hores and Bill Kawka for recently assisting in replenishing our finances to support the continued publication of Marists All. Gus Nolan, our keeper of the books, has informed our team that we have funds for only this issue, "and then the mailing operation shuts down." Checks at times appear out of nowhere in a timely fashion, just as our literary contributions do. Allow this editor to make a gentle reminder to those of you who have been planning to send a little something and to thank you in advance.

From **BOB AND GINNY GRADY** ('53): We extend an open Invitation to the Marist Spirituality Weekend at Marist College to be held on July 8, 9, and 10, 2011. *Marist Laity Vocation/Apostolate* will be the theme. Sr. Sean Sammon will give a presentation on the Vocation of Champagnat's Marist Laity. We are very grateful to Br. Sean, Br. Hank Hammer, and the many other Brothers and speakers who have been presenters and supporters of the Marist weekends. On Saturday afternoon, July 9, 2011, a panel of five will give their personal insights and information on some of the present day Marist

apostolates. We will be posting more particulars on the weekend in next year's issues of *Marists All*. If you have questions, please call or email us at 516 796-4502 rrvgrady@optonline.net.

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From **GUS NOLAN** '48 (from a letter to David Kammer): I just returned from Mount St. Michael where we were blessed with glorious sunshine and a good turnout for the picnic. *Marists All* staff members present were Rich Foy, Vince and Jane Poisella, and I.

Members of the Mount community joined us: Victor Serna, Alphonse Matuga, John Colbert (very weak, but in good spirits), Eddie Vollmer, James Gaffney, Butts Ryan, Robert James (very infirm), Gus Landry, Bob Leclerc, Anthony Iazzetti, and Joseph Sacino.

Other notables included John Hermann, John and Lynn Scileppi, Betty Perrault, Marty and Anne Lang, John and Sue Wilcox, Joan and John Brady, John Sugrue, Bili Kawka, Frank Moran's widow, Maureen, Gene and Pat Zirkel, and Bob and Ginny Grady. There were others, whose names elude me, representing groups whose training days occurred long after my own or whom I cannot recall at the moment. Many wanted to be remembered to our *Marists All* readers.

There was no want of food. There was no want of bees either, but not as bad as in some previous years. The garth had been revitalized with cement walkways and equipped with new tables, umbrellas, and chairs.

As usual, good laughs, some old stories retold, and some new ones I had not heard. Really good cheer! The Marist spirit is still alive.

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From **GUS NOLAN** '48: In the middle of October each year Marist celebrates a homecoming weekend to honor past graduates. This year attention was focused on the graduating class of fifty years ago, the class of 1960. During the weekend

on Saturday, October 16, a special occasion was the dedication of the chemistry laboratories in honor of Professor Richard LaPietra '54 who passed away in February after a long illness. A large turnout of graduates, faculty, staff, and students attended the dedication.

Dr. Tom Wermuth, Academic Dean, and Dennis Murray, President of Marist College, offered opening remarks. The occasion was highlighted by a presentation of a former colleague and Dean of the School of Science, and Dr. Michael Cann '69, former student and Professor of Chemistry at the University of Scranton. Each speaker recalled eloquently Richard's unique ability to teach and serve his students and offered insights into Richard's unique character and sense of humor. A general theme seemed to be that Richard was happiest when he was at the blackboard, chalk-in-hand, expanding and enlightening minds.

To honor Richard's memory, his wife Barbara LaPietra has established a Student Research Fund that supports top chemistry and biochemistry students pursuing faculty-monitored research projects. The fund supports travel, lodging, and related expenses for such activities as well as the purchase of special supplies and instruments to advance the particular research projects. Alumni, colleagues, and friends may support the fund in memory of Dr LaPietra by contacting the Office of College Advancement.

>>[click here](#) to see a montage of the event prepared by Skip Digilio
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From **BILL McCLUSKEY** '74: I cannot tell you how much I enjoy reading each edition of *Marists All*. The many stories of faith and involvement continue to inspire me as Brothers and former Brothers contribute to the newsletter. And, with each edition, I fondly recall my time at Marist High School, Bayonne ('72-'79), Queen of Angels School ('79-'82), and Roselle Catholic High School ('82-'85). And, of course, there were the wonderful summers at Camp Marist under the direction of Br. Kenneth Robert. In the last year, at the invitation of Br. William Maske, I joined the monks for dinner at the Mount. How good it was to see Brothers Joe Sacino, Ken Robert, Dave Cooney,

Godfrey, Valerian, Armand, and Joe McAllister, just to name a few. Unfortunately, I missed Br. Robert James, who was visiting family at the time.

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After twenty-five years in corporate education, (Merrill Lynch, Prudential, JP Morgan Chase), I recently have taken a new turn as Pastoral Care Director at Summit Park Hospital, Rockland County's long-term acute care hospital and nursing care center located in Pomona, NY. We provide religious services, bedside visits, and counseling to patients/residents as well as to their families. On that note, if anyone has insights/best practices in the pastoral care field, I would be most appreciative. (85 Madison Avenue, Garnerville, NY 10923; bmcluskeypvb@aol.com)

From **JOHN TRICAMO**: I happened to see the August issue of *Marists All*, and, as neither a current nor former Marist Brother, I felt like an intruder as I began to read through it. It wasn't long, however, before I felt right at home, recognizing in Bill Byrne's piece about a legendary practical joke two characters out of my St. Helena's past (1956-60) -- Br. Martin Thomas and Br. Gilbert Osmund -- at least I think I recognized them. It is unlikely there could be more than one "Mendes," and, certainly, there couldn't be two "Big Gils." As an aside, I might mention that it was almost forty years after graduating before I learned that it wasn't older students but the brothers themselves who coined the nicknames that we used for so many of the religious faculty. I'm obviously a slow learner since nicknames like "Archie," "Dumbo," and "Harpo" clearly reflected too masterly a touch.

Among the flood of memories triggered by the mention of Big Gil, one in particular has always stood out. To appreciate it, a bit of background is in order. In my time--or, at least, within my experience and that of my friends--Br. Gilbert was an unknown entity until senior year in which he taught fourth-year Latin. Physically, Br. Gilbert's nickname says it all and then some; his size was, to borrow the oft-repeated words of Br. Lawrence Jerome, a self-evident proposition. By disposition, Br. Gilbert seemed world-weary, and despite the twinkling eyes, we tended to doubt the possibility that there might be a smattering of

good humor lurking beneath the brooding surface. In class he never stood; he never raised his voice; he rarely wrote on the blackboard and then only when it could be done from a seated position; and, definitely worth mentioning, in cooler weather he sometimes wore a cape! (During my four years at St. Helena's there was only one other cape-sighting: Br. John Luke, returning to the Brothers' residence after early morning Mass. Because he was one of the best faculty basketball players, his reputation remained intact.)

To any description of Br. Gilbert, however brief, one must add the *sine qua non*, the *tertium quid*: command presence. There was never a discipline problem in his classroom; the prospect was not merely remote but unthinkable. Nor was there a homework problem. Unprepared students learned very early in the year that when it came to pedagogical weaponry, Br. Gilbert could do with a look what Br. Faustin Damian and Br. Brian Francis could do with words. I don't think we feared him as much as being mystified by him—he was a puzzle, inside an enigma, wrapped in a cape. While we liked and respected him, we didn't feel we knew him. What I believe most of us were looking for, though we would have been unable to articulate it at the time, was some kind of a personal connection—something that would, if not eliminate, at least diminish the uncomfortable distance that seemed to separate us.

And then it happened—one of those big small moments that alter the chemistry of a class. Br. Gilbert had an inordinate and totally unshared fascination with Latin idioms—"phrases that add spice to ordinary conversation and reveal the educated man." He would frequently pause after the class translated a paragraph and ask if anyone spotted a worthwhile idiom. Better yet, on more than an occasional Monday, he would begin class by asking if anyone had an idiom to add to our ongoing collection. Needless to say, I was not alone in marveling at his idealized notion of how a Bronx teenager spent his weekends.

On this particular day, he paused between translations and called on a student—Charles F. Martin by name—and asked "Mr. Martin" if he had come across any good idioms lately. Smiling, Mr. Martin allowed that he had not; Br. Gilbert, reacting to the

smile, averred that Mr. Martin appeared to be making light of an enterprise of inestimable value. No response.

Br. Gilbert: "I would like you to know that I once had a student, who, by graduation, had amassed a collection of five hundred Latin idioms. What do you make of that, Mr. Martin?"

"I guess everybody called him the Village Idiom," came the response.

Now I would like to say that Br. Gilbert dissolved in laughter, but no one would believe me. What he did do was emit something akin to a clucking sound, immediately followed by a smile that tended to recur spontaneously throughout the remainder of the class. The caped classicist was indeed human after all!

Just as we saw a different side of him, it wasn't long after this incident that he seemed to become more relaxed with us and actually to enjoy rather than merely tolerate our company. We, of course, responded in kind, and for at least a few of us, Latin IV became our favorite senior year course. My memories of this class and especially its teacher would be no less vivid had the incident of the Village Idiom never taken place, but they are very much better because it did. (jtricamo@regis-nyc.org)

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From **ROBERT JUDGE** '63: I started at Marist Prep in September 1959 and moved to Cold Spring in 1960. The next move was to Tyngsboro in 1962. In June of 1963, I left the Marists and, like so many others, "got on with the rest of my life." Then in April 2009, I, along with two friends, visited Antietam and Gettysburg. A guide at Antietam suggested that our interest in Civil War history probably stemmed from reading Bruce Catton in high school. Well, he was right. I remembered that Brother Daniel Grogan had us read Catton's trilogy about the Army of the Potomac as seniors. Of course, that remembrance made me wonder where Brother Daniel might be today. The Internet is a wonderful tool for trying to find people. As I searched, I came upon *Marists All*. What a find! And thank you to all who put it together! I contacted David Kammer, who was Master of Novices when I was at Tyngsboro. I was able to

get a letter to Daniel Grogan. I also tracked down John Vecchione, who had left an address in the contact information at the *Marists All* site. It turned out that John and I were in geographical proximity and were able to get together. All of this is a long way around to saying that John and I realized that this fall marks the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of Marist Hall.

I have several pictures from Cold Spring and thought it would be great if somehow a site could be set up for people to share pictures and stories from our time together. Well, that led to Tim Brady, who had just the skill-set needed to provide the platform for sharing. He also had many pictures to share. Gerry Miller added a few. We have been working on it and see it as a work in progress, but we would like anyone who cares to visit the site to feel free to go to www.maristhall.pbworks.com and ask permission to visit. We also ask that if you know anyone who might have information about these early years at Cold Spring to contact me to share whatever you have. Think of it as a virtual reunion. (1862 Sanford Ridge Road, Queensbury, NY 12804-7547; robertjudge@roadrunner.com)

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From **DAVID KAMMER '42** (written to Robert Judge): You ask if I were ever at Marist Hall in Cold Spring. I have a brief story to tell you about an incident well before the property opened up as a juniorate. From Tyngsboro I was to go to a meeting either in Poughkeepsie or Esopus, and I had heard that the Brothers had bought a property in Cold Spring. I said to myself, I'm going to look up that place on a map and drive through there to take a look. I found it without too much trouble. The property was quiet except for one car. I started to snoop around and ran into Br. Mary Andrew, the province treasurer at the time, and Br. Nilus Vincent Donnelly of Marist College construction fame. They asked me, "What are you doing here?" Apparently the purchase was still unannounced and somewhat of a secret. Nilus and Mary Andrew were sizing up the situation in preparation for what had to be done to prepare it for use as a juniorate. However, the Brothers did allow me to look around. The beauty of the property and the possibilities for things Marist fascinated me. What remains riveted in my mind is the view of what was to become the dining hall, a full view of a cow barn

with cow stalls and all that goes with them. From there I climbed an upright wooden ladder through a square opening to the floor above to see the hayloft -- the future chapel! So I may have been the first "ordinary Brother" to see the Cold Spring property.

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From **JOHN (OKE) O'CONNELL** '58: I want to report on the "Oh-B/brother-Where-Art-Thou" Eighth Annual Gathering last August 21 at Ray Landry's "meeting house" in Methuen, MA. A picture-worth-a-thousand-words verifies that "a good time was had by all" and answers the question, "But are they happy, Brothers?" (*rhetorically asked of us postulants and novices "back in the day"*). It can be found at the *Marists All* web site: <http://academic2.marist.edu/foy/maristsall> > Photo Album > "Mini-album for Autumn 2010"> 3rd down.

Among the "gatherers" were "youngster" **Moe Lachance** '59 who bounded into our midst, literally, luckily without his accordion, from vacationing with his many grandkids in Vermont; and our long distance winner, **Richie Shaw** (and Carolyn) in from San Diego, would-be '58 habit recipient, whose temporary vocation, unfortunately for him, ended in Tyngsboro just weeks before our summer "escape" from there to Camp Marist in New Hampshire!

Other '**58's**, pre-gathering first in Maine's Boothbay Harbor (about sixty-five miles north of Portland): **George Bagnell** (and Leslie) up from Long Island with their 34' motor home, who started partying with us on the Tuesday before; and in from Sun Lakes, AZ (between Phoenix and Tucson) on the 15th, OB/bWAT "co-founder" **George Conboy** (and Janet), who along with the Shaws, started gathering in Maine a week before the "official" one in Methuen ... and **Vin Poisella** (and Jane), ex-guidance counselor, probably after a round of golf at his next-to-it home in Little Egg Harbor, NJ, arrived in time Thursday for lobsters, etc., in **John** (and Sandy) **O'Connell's** backyard (*where thirty caught-that-day, lobstahs joined us for dinner!*); also up from Jersey, **Bill Shannon**, whose current mission as Special Ed director in Asbury Park continues fulltime, hard-at-work; he came a day late for the backyard lobster feast; and

Bob St. Amand (and Joann), still teaching college chemistry in NJ, was there to eat both his and Bill's lobster!; and **Russ Therriault** (and Shirley), another long distance gatherer up from Pensacola (escapes from real heat and humidity), arrived early for a lobster bake that Tuesday along with the Bagnells. *Note, and this is true! As the folks were placing the lobsters on the seaweed, preparatory to steaming them, one unnamed '58er lamented, "Why don't they have any red ones?"*

Special guests graced our Maine gathering: **Bill Reffelt's** ('58, RIP) twin sister, Clare, and her retired Long Island police officer husband, John Treder. *(You might recall that we started OBIbWATs, motivated both by '58 **Vinnie Hall's** passing in February '02 and by our earliest "gatherings" with Bill Reffelt over the last ten months of his terminal illness, late '02 to September '03.)*

Brother **Ernie Beland**, the last "big 8" B/brother from our '58 group and the only Brother still teaching, with a full-load no less, at CCHS in Lawrence, was unable to join us in Maine but did win the shortestdistance-traveled-award and was a celebrity on Saturday in Methuen. *(If you don't recall, you might check out his very cogent, affirming, and much-appreciated, commentary on our OBIbWAT "Gathering," appearing in the August 2010 Marists All issue).*

"Elders" from among the '57 habit-takers joining the pre-Gathering in Maine: first.. **John Brady** (with Joan), a retired New Jersey guidance counselor, who, by the way, along with **B. Nick Caffrey**, managed to skip half a year of novitiate by showing up in Tyngsboro in *January* of '57; and **John Wilcox** (with Sue), still doing some "vision" work at Manhattan College as a part-time vice president, still commuting there from Danbury, but now less frequently. Another '57er, **Don Mulcare**, missed the pre-Gathering but was a "day-hop" that Saturday, and like "Willie" Wilcox, was a "higher educator" (U Mass, Dartmouth, biology) for thirty-plus years of his forty years in education.

Among the "eldest" gatherers was the much esteemed **Ray Landry**, a '56er, who not only opened his and Dorothy's wonderful home-on-the-lake to us in Methuen on 8/21 but also cooked for us (a skill acquired from his first "deployment" as a

monk). A "legend in his own mind" poet, Ray has one book of poems out and another on the way with whimsical titles too long to mention! (*Note: Ray has graciously offered to host and feed us once again next year ... on **Saturday, August 13th, 2010**. See last paragraph below.*) Thanks, Ray!

And, speaking of cooks and initial assignments, the Gathering was graced by a cameo appearance by **Artie Lavigne**, habit-group of '55, who, along with **B. John Malich**, actually fed all of the above, except Moe Lachance, at Marist College, during '59-60; and most significantly, perhaps, they were the first cooks at the college to trust us "consumers" enough to take off all the padlocks in the kitchen, all that stood between us and the food!

So mark your calendars now for next year's dosage of M/marist mutual respect and affirmation, all interested B/brothers, for the Ninth Annual OB/bWAT Gathering in Methuen MA on Saturday, August 13, 2011; and be sure to consider spending a few more days. doing a little vacationing beforehand for some pre-Gathering socializing in our Maine backyard on Thursday, August 11, before Saturday's session at Ray's in Methuen on the 13th. Please consider joining us both days. (*For more info and specifics, contact Oke in Maine at OBbWAT@aol.com or 207-841-9144*).

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From **CHERYL MANTIA**, Director of Alumni Affairs, Mt. St. Michael: On Thursday, October 28, 2010, the Fourth Annual Harvard Colloquium featured Jack Garcia, '70, speaking about the impact Mount St. Michael had on his life and his experiences as an undercover agent.

Jack is the author of the *New York Times* best seller, *Making Jack Falcone*. A movie based on the book and Garcia's life is currently in the works with actor Benicio del Toro cast to play the lead. Steven Soderberg is producer. The book and film detail Garcia's undercover cases and experiences with the FBI, including his successful infiltration into the Gambino crime family.

Garcia was born in Cuba and fled with his family to escape Fidel Castro's regime when he was nine years old. Jack's formative years as a grade school boarder at the Mount made a significant difference in his life. As Jack notes, "If it weren't for the Marist Brothers, especially Br. Charles Patrick, I would have been chased by the cops instead of the other way around."

View a clip of his CBS 60 *Minutes* interview on You Tube.

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From **JIM FRIEL** '52: Brother Joel Matthew is one of the finest teachers I ever had. I was fourteen and attending St. Ann's Hermitage in Poughkeepsie; Br. Joel taught English. He also directed a play some of us volunteered to act in. Since it was an all boys' high school, I was assigned to play an Irish woman. Br. Joel said that I had more of a Scottish accent. The acting was fun, and we all had a good time. We performed several shows for the high school.

Br. Joel was a superb teacher. I had him for an introductory English class. He helped me develop my writing, and he praised me for my work. Writing went on to become a major part of my life, and I taught it for many years on every level from grade school to college. When I left the Brothers in 1963, I lost track of Br. Joel. I reconnected with him through Vince Poisella and *Marists All*. Don Ryan (Br. Joel) and I are now in touch on a regular basis. We are both retired.

Br. John Berchman was also a major influence at St. Anne's. He was the prefect, which meant he did everything from directing all our sports' playing to running the dormitories where we lived and slept. He strongly urged us to take more showers when he

gave us his nightly talk before the lights were turned out. We also played hockey with him in the winter. He would carry the puck past twenty or thirty of us, and no one could stop him. . We found out later that he had played hockey as a young man. He was superb at it. Br. John retired to Esopus after a number of years, and some of his former students used to visit him on a regular basis. Br. John was a second father to many of us.

The Director of Juniors was Br. Joseph Damian, a superb person. He cared a great deal for us and did everything he could to help us. He would take us on walking trips around the area. One favorite place was the big park across the street: it was a mental hospital. One time Br. Joseph explained to us, as we looked at the huge hill there, that the inmates would sleigh ride down the hill to Route Nine at the end of the hill. I said to him, "You'd have to be crazy to do that!" He laughed. (20 Vail Street, Northport, NY 11768- 3038)

In Memoriam

BR. KENNETH MARINO '47 died Wednesday, November 10 in Lawrence. May he rest in peace! [click here](#) for short obituary

<<Photo Album>>

1. See a photo of the [Brothers](#) who made up the faculty of Saint Agnes High School in NYC in 1945.
2. See group of photos taken at dedication of Marist College Chemistry Labs in honor of [Richard LaPietra](#) on 14 October 2010
3. Or review the entire [photo album](#).

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November 23, 2010