



Franciscan Alumni Association

Established May 28th, 1989

Serving Provinces of Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. John the Baptist
www.franciscan-alumni.org

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Spring 2013

2013 Chapter—June 21 and 22 in Cincinnati

We return to the campus of the former St. Francis Seminary for our reunion in 2013. Everyone who was ever involved in any of the schools or formation programs for the provinces of St. John the Baptist and Our Lady of Guadalupe is invited. Feel free to bring guests, also.

It's always a thrill to visit the land of friars, prayer, Picnic Day, bun fun, sports, glee club, theater, college-prep classes, rules, and table cleaning.

Danny Trujillo ('80) is the Chapter Coordinator ("Big Chief"). Please contact Danny at

2013reunion@franciscan-alumni.org

to let him know which reunion events you'll be attending and to ask for any more details. Updates will also be provided on our website: www.franciscan-alumni.org

We've negotiated a special rate of \$92 at a very good hotel near the for-

mer seminary: Hampton Inn Fairfield, 430 Kolb Drive, Fairfield, OH 45014. 513-942-3440, www.cincinnati-fairfield.hamptoninn.com. We'll also be gathering in a party room there for the Friday evening social. Our group code is CHXFAA. Please be sure to reserve a room early to get the \$92 rate. If you make your reservation later, the AARP and AAA rates are only \$2 higher (\$94).

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Reflections on the 2012 Chapter in Bloomington Illinois

By Rick Gardner '75

The 2012 Franciscan Alumni Association (FAA) reunion was held in Bloomington, Illinois. The hosts for the reunion were Fr. Ric Schneider ('50), Dennis Kirby ('56), and Rick Gardner ('75). Thanks also to Rick Gardner's wife Kathryn and son Anthony, who assisted greatly.

The reunion opened on Thursday, June 21st with dinner downtown at Rosie's Pub and Restaurant, where several alumni and guests enjoyed good food and conversation in the relaxed atmosphere. After dinner, Dennis led a group on a walking tour of downtown Bloomington, followed by drinks at Rick and Kathryn Gardner's house.

The class of 1975's aspiring deacon, Butch Feldhaus, led Morning Prayers at the hotel each day before the group gathered for breakfast.

On Friday, Dennis Kirby ('56) treated more than 20 to lunch at Fiesta Ranchera, as Fr. Ric and others shared stories of the good ol' seminary days. After lunch, Fr. Ric led a caravan of vehicles to Covell Flying Field so several people could experience the thrill of piloting a remote-control airplane. There were a couple near crashes, but Fr. Ric was quick to grab the remote control and save the day. Fortunately for Dave Imhoff ('70) and Mike Niklas ('75), the Seminary Rule Book didn't specify how many swats the former disciplinarian (Ric) would have had to deal out for reckless flying.

The Covell flying field's claim to fame is that it is where Charles Lindbergh's plane crashed in 1926 after

it ran out of gas during one of his mail runs. Lindbergh parachuted safely from the plane, although he landed in a barbed wire fence.

On Friday evening, the alumni and guests congregated for pizza and drinks at the DoubleTree Hotel. Fr. Ric arrived with a DVD onto which many slides from his extensive photography collection had been professionally transferred. The slideshow was a huge hit! All eyes were glued to the screen as we commented on images of our much younger selves, classmates, and of course our most famous schoolmate, Tom Cruise, whom Ric had recruited in the 1970's. Later in the evening a few of the guitarists present had an im-

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FAA to the Rescue: Bibles for Jamaica

By Tom Shumate '77

Early in 2012, the Board of Directors of the Franciscan Alumni Association began looking more earnestly into ways of directly supporting the ministries of the Franciscans. Tom Shumate inquired of Fr. Frank Jasper, Vicar Provincial for the Province of St. John the Baptist, if there was something that the FAA could do for them. Fr. Frank informed Tom that the friars in Savannah-la-mar Jamaica were working on a summer bible study program that Br. Tom Gerchak was heading up. The project involved training catechists and letting them take the message to the children. In order to do that, they needed

500 bibles which could be purchased for \$1,075, but no funds were available.

Fr. Frank stated that he realized this was a lot of money and any portion that the FAA could contribute would be greatly appreciated. The Alumni Association came through with flying colors. Upon hearing about the need, a number of FAA members immediately stepped up with personal donations of \$520. Additionally, the Association itself contributed \$600 bringing total donations for the project to \$1,120. Fr. Frank, Br. Tom, and the Franciscans expressed their gratitude for the FAA's responsive assistance.

A note from Br. Tom Gerchak: "The Claretian Bibles are being ordered in bulk through the Antilles Episcopal Conference: the English, French, and Dutch speaking islands in the Caribbean and three countries - Guyana, Suriname, and Cayenne in South America. When we have the new bibles, they will be used primarily in our Catechism and RCIA programs. We are grateful for the generosity of the Franciscan Alumni Association which has allowed us to update the resources that are available to us in our schools and Catechetical programs."

Class-Reunion Determination!

By Phil Zepeda '66

As a point of clarification, the class of '66 did not have a reunion in 2012, per se. Instead, we had several sub-reunions centered around the stateside travels of one of our own, Dennis Sweeney ('66), as he connected with clusters of classmates in various locales. Dennis is a fine artist and founder of the Chinese-American Cultural Institute.

In Cincinnati, he met up with classmates Mike Doddy, Steve Englehardt, and Alan Kenkel to take in a Reds game

and lift some Hudepohl Golds. He also connected with the Michigan contingent in Wolverine country. Mike Kremm, Jose Garcia, and yours-truly got together with Dennis and our wives at Casey's Tavern and Weber's Inn.

Next — to Houston to visit personal friends/family and classmate, Tom Fry, who attended St. Margaret Mary's grade school with Dennis in North College Hill as well as St. Francis Seminary. From sultry Houston, he

winged his way to the balmy northwest and a visit with corporate lawyer and magnate, classmate Greg Sweeney, who is famous in Ann Arbor for bringing Aernova Aerospace to the scientific milieu.

Ultimately, though not a typical reunion, Dennis' sojourn in the States stirred the pot to show that God's work is alive and well among the Class of '66 as they continue in their efforts to make good things happen no matter where they are planted.



During the 2012 Chapter in Bloomington:

David Davis Mansion (left)

A great turnout from the Class of '70 (right)



Saturday Work Crew

We are truly grateful to the administrators of the Mercy Franciscan at Winton Woods, formerly known as St. Francis Seminary, for allowing our group to return there as often as we wish for reunions and Board meetings. The relationship has been mutually beneficial. Several of our members and their family members have become residents there, and the Alumni Association has helped restore and maintain the grounds, particularly Fr. Aubert's Peace Garden and the large pond/walking trails along Mill Road.

We are also grateful for our partnership arrangement with the Mercy Franciscan Garden Club, which is run by long-time resident Richard Eisele with assistance from several additional



Richard strikes a pose with The Garden Club's new chainsaw

energetic residents.

One of the Garden Club's major efforts in 2012 was the clearing of a number of large, dead trees and brush that had obstructed the view of the quaint Grotto and the stone bridge for decades. There was one problem: The Garden Club needed a reliable chainsaw and help with some heavy lifting. The FAA Board answered the call by providing a new 18" chainsaw along with safety accessories; then a few Board members and other alumni spent a full day working in the area of the stone bridge and grotto. The result is a spectacular view of the stone bridge that can be seen from several vantage points on the hill behind the Peace Garden!

Planning Ahead for 2014: Washington D.C.

By Ted Gomez '72

The Alumni Association is planning to hold the 2014 Chapter in the nation's capital!

The Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land is located in Washington D.C. and Fr. Larry Dunham (former Provincial Minister of Our Lady of Guadalupe) will be guardian for the facility as of July 2013. It is a spectacular place to visit. We intend to have a tour and lunch there.

Washington would be a great place to have a reunion, perhaps combined with a summer vacation, as there are many things to do and see in the area. The Metro subway system allows you to move around the city easily and economically. Most of the attractions

in the area are free or reasonably priced.

- Museums (Smithsonian, Air and Space, etc.)
- National Mall, Washington Monument, Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials
- WWII Memorial, Korean War Memorial, Vietnam War Memorial
- Ford's Theater
- Capitol, White House
- National Zoo
- Georgetown, Mount Vernon, Old Town Alexandria

Washington D.C. is one of the easiest places to travel to in the United States, with three major airports (National, Dulles, Baltimore). One

can often find great air fare and a direct flight. And by car, it's less than eight hours from Cincinnati. We're especially hoping to see alumni who live in the eastern states, New England, New York, Virginia, and as far south as Florida.

I am the coordinator for the event, with assistance from my daughter Rosie, who lives in the area and has experience with this type of thing. I could sure use some help! Please let me know if you can help me plan this reunion and make it happen. You don't need to be a DC resident - I'm in New Mexico! I can be reached via email:
ted_gomez@franciscan-alumni.org

2013 Franciscan Alumni Chapter Plan

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The newly renovated hotel includes a hot breakfast, king or two queen beds, free wireless internet, mini-fridge and microwave in every room, indoor heated pool / whirlpool, and fitness facility.

Thursday is the *unofficial* start of the reunion with a 12:35 pm Reds game in downtown Cincinnati, then 5:30-8:00 dinner/social at Haufbrau Haus, 200 East 3rd Street, Newport, KY 41071 .

Friday – 9 am Morning Prayer (hotel)
Morning—golf outing.
Noon—lunch at (Steve Simon's) Skyline Chili, 8635 Colerain Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45251 513-385 1244

2 to 4 pm—Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal, 1301 Western Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45203, 513.287.7000 or 800.733.2077 (toll free), approximately \$12 admission, \$16 with Omnimax movie.

www.cincymuseum.org
6 to 10 pm—Social at hotel party room , near the lobby; beverages and hors d'oeuvres provided.

Saturday – 9 am Morning Prayer at the hotel
10:30 am to noon—guided tour of underground crypt at St. Francis Seraph Church and Friary, 1615 Vine Street, Cincinnati, OH 45210
Noon—Angelus followed by lunch in the Refectory (Subway sandwiches)
1:00—National Underground Railroad Freedom Center (Museum), \$12 admission fee
50 East Freedom Way, Cincinnati, Ohio, 45202, www.freedomcenter.org

3:30 to 5 pm—Stroll the St. Francis Seminary campus, socialize
5 pm—Mass at the Fr. Aubert Grieser Memorial Peace Garden (former swimming pool)
6 pm—Catered dinner in Study Hall followed by Award Ceremony, Remembrance Service, and singing of the Ultima



Sunday – 9 am Morning Prayer
Noon BB River Boat Brunch, \$40

Please send email to:

2013reunion@franciscan-alumni.org
so we'll know you plan to attend any of the activities listed above, and for assistance with tickets and directions. You can also register by mail to the return address on this newsletter. Please sign up for Red's tickets by May 23 and other events by June 13.
We will rely on donations to cover the cost of food and drinks for the Friday night social and Saturday dinner. Recommended amount to drop in the basket on Friday night: \$10, and for Saturday dinner: \$15. Additional donations may be made to support the good works of the Franciscan Alumni Association.

Small
World

by Roy Brannan '75

The reunion in Bloomington was a good time. It's funny how you go for years without seeing each other, and then when you get together, you pick up like you've been talking every day!

The Mass at St Mary's on Saturday was beautiful, and the parishioners appreciated our singing by making a point to come up and thank us for visiting. Special thanks to Rick Gardner for getting free golf passes for us.

Here's a story I told Father Ric during our pizza dinner on Friday night: I have a part time job as a driving instructor. A few years back I picked up a student who lived out in the country on a family farm near Xenia, Ohio. The family's last name was Pitstik. On my first drive with the student, we were talking about his family and I asked him where his dad went to school. He told me his father graduated from Xenia High School, but had attended a seminary in Cincinnati. I asked him to talk to his dad, find out the name of the school, and let me know on our next drive. During the next drive, the student said his dad had attended St Francis Seminary.

When I dropped the student off at his farm, his father was out front. I introduced myself and told him I had graduated from St Francis. He informed me that he had only gone one year. I asked him why he left after one year and he replied immediately..."Father Theodorick" (who was disciplinarian at the time).

When I told the story to Fr. Ric, he immediately started laughing and said "Pitstik, I remember him!! You know me, Roy...firm but fair!"

Reflections on the 2012 Chapter in Bloomington IL

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promptu jam session.

Early Saturday, four of the alumni played golf at Illinois State University's pristine golf course, while others had a less humbling morning. At 11:30 we all convened for lunch on the grounds of the David Davis Mansion and visited the beautiful gardens.

After lunch, our group was given a guided tour of the mansion. The building and its artifacts were of particular interest to many, because David Davis was a personal friend of Abraham Lincoln and a justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Fr. Ric invited the group to celebrate Mass on Saturday afternoon with parishioners at St. Mary's Catholic Church, where he is the pastor.

His sermon was inspirational, humorous at times, and enthusiastic as ever! Several alumni played music for the Mass while other alumni lent their voices to fill the church with songs of praise, including the Ultima in traditional, three-part harmony – after which the regular congregation broke out in spontaneous applause.

The culmination of the reunion on Saturday was a catered dinner, followed by sharing of more seminary stories (there seems to be an endless supply!), and a touching memorial service for alumni and family members who were called to God during the preceding year. Paul Landers ('76), Franciscan Alumni Association President, served as master of ceremonies.

At the end of the evening, the 2012

Chapter closed with the singing of The Ultima, an emotional experience that unites all Franciscan Alumni in prayer to Blessed Mary and Jesus.

After Morning Prayer and breakfast on Sunday, Rick and Dennis said farewell to alumni as they left the hotel, looking forward to the 2013 Chapter/reunion



and Franciscan fellowship again renewed.

Being There by Danny Trujillo '80

I never knew that Veronica of Calvary was a saint. I mean, I didn't think she did anything all that "saint worthy." She may have tried to carry the cross for Jesus. We don't know. She may have pleaded with the Centurions to stop their brutality. We don't know. All we know is that she was there...with a piece of cloth. She wiped the face of Jesus and for that one brief moment in his life, when he wondered if everyone had abandoned him, she was there. I never really put much thought into the importance of St. Veronica's one simple and brief act.

When I reflect on my years at the Semi-

nary, there was always one constant. Someone was always there. On any given day it may have been a friar, a classmate, an underclassman, or the upperclassman (who assigned you table cleaning that morning...for no reason!). On any given day, any one of us may have been the person who was "just there" for someone. We probably didn't know the importance at the time. We were so young. Yet we did what we could for each other. I know that whatever we did it always started with "being there."

Rick Gardner and Dennis Kirby did a wonderful job hosting the 2012 FAA Reunion this past June. What struck me the most throughout the event was the feeling of "just being there." Just being there, with people I already knew or had just met for the first time, felt like I

was coming home. I left the reunion with greater understanding of how Jesus may have felt when he saw Veronica. I left with recharged spirit and strength to carry on.

I need to learn more about saints, especially those that I don't know are saints, and I look forward to attending the 2013 FAA reunion again this year. I hope you, too, can "be there."

Attending a Reunion Out of Town with People You Don't Know!

by Dave Gehring '72

My wife, Denise, and I had a great time in Bloomington for the 2012 Franciscan Alumni reunion. It was great seeing Fr. Ric and all the guys from The Farm. I expected to have a great time with the people who were at St. Francis Seminary at

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Franciscan Alumni Association

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www.franciscan-alumni.org

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the same time as me, but it is also a great experience talking with those I did not know, because we were not there at the same time.

The highlight of the weekend for me was Mass on Saturday night with Fr. Ric and his parishioners. I was happy to be a part of it by serving as a lector. Thanks to Rick Gardner for getting greens fees waived at the university golf course. I had a great time playing golf with Roy Brannan, Mark Kling, and Mike Niklas.

The 2012 reunion was the first one not held in Cincinnati that I have been able to attend. Because of the experience that my wife and I had, I'm sure that we will be attending other reunions besides those held at the former St. Francis Seminary.



The Franciscan Alumni Association newsletter is mailed to approximately 1,200 members for whom we have addresses. The only cost of production is the expense of printing and mailing. Additional stories and photos are available on the website. Thank you for your interest and support.

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