

Cotter

# Ramblin's

Spring 2012



*Celebrating 100 Years*

# Cheers to 100 Years!

# birthday Bash

Cotter Auction: April 28

## 33rd Annual Cotter Auction Saturday, April 28th, 2012

*John Nett Recreation Center:  
360 Vila Street on the Cotter Campus*

**Silent Auction • Live Auction • Food & Drinks**

5:00 p.m. Doors Open • 7:30 p.m. Live Auction Begins



Learn more at [coterschools.org/cotterauction](http://coterschools.org/cotterauction)

Reservations are \$15 in advance or \$20 at the door.

Reservation price includes bid number, auction book, hors d'oeuvres, and drink token.

Auction admission reservations are available at the Advancement Office at Cotter Schools from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday or register online.

To make a donation to the Cotter Auction, stop by Cotter Schools at 1115 West Broadway Street or call 453-5100 for more information!





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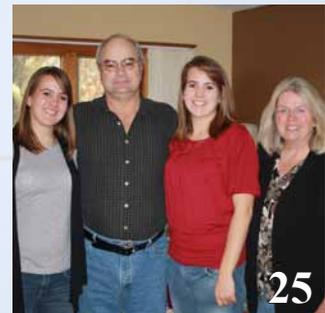
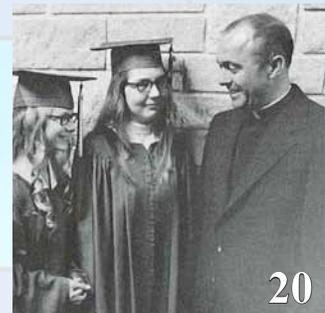
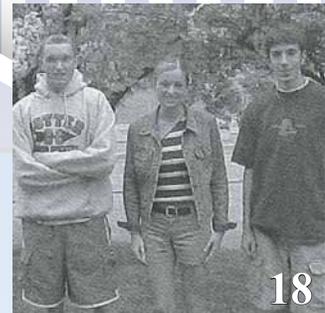
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### COTTER ADMINISTRATION

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DIR. OF ACTIVITIES

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### COTTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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ANNMARIE DEMARAIS

MARSHA STENZEL



Dear Alumni and Friends of Cotter,

It has been an exciting year. Our Centennial celebration has given way to pause and to look forward. As I mentioned in our previous issue, our Board of Directors set the course for strategic planning to begin. The following progress has taken

place. Five committees comprised of community members, faculty, staff, parents and students came together to develop a set of initiatives for the President and the Board of Directors to review. This collaborative dialogue was complimented by the diversity of each committee. Our vision set forth by the Board of Directors at the beginning of our 2011/2012 school year helped to name our committees: Catholic Identity, Finance, Facilities, Academic and Student Life. The Academic Committee was large enough to define two sub-committees: Technology & Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment. The long range initiative recommendations were presented at the board meeting on March 1st. A follow-up working session has been set with the President and Board of Directors to establish the top initiatives for the next one to two years. The Board of Directors desires to release its strategic plan in April 2012. It has been a rewarding time for me as I participated in all the committees at various times and listened to the concerns, hopes and dreams of the committee members. The passion for Cotter Schools is one of a true family relationship.

It is normal within family relationships to experience times of change. I marvel at the rapid growth of my own children. It was not long ago that they were in kindergarten and now they are adults. Recently, while meeting with faculty and staff, I stated that "change" is evident. Without change we cannot have growth. It requires that we step out of our comfort zone and do what we do best but do it even better! I reflect on the times that Cotter has experienced change over that last 100 years. In 1953, it was the change to a co-ed school after operating as an all boys' school for 42 years. In the 1990's it was a move of the school to the college campus of St. Teresa with the addition of a boarding program. Look how far we've come. We are now stepping into a new century of opportunities for Cotter. This is truly a great time in Cotter's history and one that I am proud to be a part of.

As a result of the recent accomplishments of our Board of Directors, the NCEA Boards and Councils awarded our Board of Directors with the 2012 NCEA Outstanding Board Award. This is a prestigious national award being given to four boards

by the Department of Boards and Councils of the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA). Read further in the subsequent article of the Rambler's regarding their story.

In gratitude, I lift up the dedicated men and women of our Board of Directors who have committed many hours towards the planning of Cotter's first step into the next century. We cannot forget the other members of the Cotter family, our dedicated staff, administration, community members, parents and students who have also participated in this venture over the last few months. I continue to be in awe and remain grateful for their commitment to Cotter Schools and their dedication to seeing this effort through. "We are Cotter"!

I remain yours,  
Joyful in the service of Christ,

Jennifer A. Elfering  
President of Cotter Schools

*"Veritatem Vereantur" - Let them Respect the Truth*

*"Where revealed truth has given the aim and direction to knowledge, knowledge of all kinds will minister to revealed truth." Cardinal John Henry Newman*

#### Our Mission:

Cotter Schools, a premier day and boarding school, provides a Catholic education centered on scholarship, world citizenship and stewardship, guiding students to reach their full potential in a nurturing environment.

#### Our Vision:

Cotter Schools is dedicated to: a strong Catholic identity and gospel-inspired values which reside at our school's core; an exceptional, individualized educational product for all learners; fiscal responsibility and stewardship; campus facilities that fully meet the needs of the programs and services offered; and the growth and development of the whole person.



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What a great year we have had celebrating our Centennial. Much importance has been placed on all that has gone on before us to ensure our existence today. Thoughts of the past and emphasis on the present have helped us build great connections with the students who make up the Cotter of 2012. But one can't help wonder what Cotter will be like in the future!

I have no crystal ball with which to get a glimpse of things to come, but if history truly does repeat itself, the Cotter of tomorrow will be awesome. There will be caring teachers and excited students sharing their love of learning. The chalkboards and overhead projectors will be replaced by the next generation (or 2, 3, 4) of iPads and laptops, SMARTBoards will be even smarter, and virtual learning will be a part of our everyday life. Even with all of those "updates" the one thing that I see carrying us forward will be that thirst for knowledge. Our students will be coming to us with technology skills and habits that most of us can't even imagine and teachers will be constantly challenged to "keep up." Collaborative learning among teachers and students will foster the instructional process ensuring that everyone is involved and moving beyond the mundane.

Cotter will be recognized as a global school attested to by our population of students who make up the Cotter family from around the world. Our local students see on a daily basis just how small the world really is. In the future I believe more and more of them will take the opportunity to make their way out into the world to visit the families and countries of their friends at school from places far and wide. Perhaps senior class trips will mean more than a visit to the World Showcase at Epcot. A trip to Beijing, Seoul, or Madrid will be in the realm of possibilities for "it's a small world after all" that keeps getting smaller.

Reading, writing, and thinking will continue to be the benchmarks that allow us to improve and redefine our curriculum in order to be the best that we can be. Math and science will continue to challenge, intrigue, and motivate us to reach higher, work harder, and broaden our perspective. Faith will be the foundation upon which we thrive.

Someone once said that "the future depends on what we do in the present." If this is indeed true than Cotter will make the most of the next 100 years to continue its quest for excellence. Cotter in the 21st century is an interesting concept to ponder. Future Rambler's will proudly wear their royal blue and white and the band will play the school song with enthusiasm. The Cotter spirit will continue to be contagious, to be the tie that binds the past with the future because once a Rambler, always a Rambler!

Cotter High School Principal  
Sandi Blank



Cotter Junior High School just returned from a three day/two night trip to Eagle Bluff Environmental Center in Lanesboro. If you graduated from Cotter within the past twelve years, there's a good chance that you joined us on this trip during your time in 7th or 8th grade. This trip is truly a highlight for us. It is a break from the classroom which allows us to learn in a different environment. Incorporated in to the experience this year was the traditional night hike, group challenges, evening leadership activities led by some of Cotter's juniors, naturalist programs, and winter survival skills just to name a few. A favorite of many was the treetops high ropes course.

I like to look at Cotter in the view of the treetops high ropes course. Students here are given the appropriate tools to maneuver through their years of education here. Our Christian beliefs and values are vital to who we are and what we do. The interaction and instruction students receive from their teachers is an important base. A stu-



dent's support from their family is another component. To have these tools is much like having the helmet, harness, and safety straps that someone would need on the course.

The other component is the students themselves moving forward through their years here at Cotter. There may be challenges, obstacles, choices and opportunities here that students wouldn't experience if they didn't try. With the encouragement of teachers and parents along the way, it is much like going through the high ropes course. There is always someone there to encourage, helping to challenge to do the best possible.

On the ropes course, there were opportunities to make choices. At times, it was the choice to attempt one route instead of another. Some of our students and chaperones even fell along the way, being held safe by the safety straps. Those times were not failures, only opportunities to learn how to get back up on the rope and continue to move forward. The end result was to get to the zip line to finish the event. The fun ride down was the culmination of much determination, work, encouragement, and choice. I see that at Cotter as well.

I've stated these things before. Cotter is a school that fosters excellence through caring, growth and discipline. We are always in the process of looking for ways to improve and get better. We are a school that cares for students while striving to provide rigor and meaning in the classroom. We have an atmosphere of learning that is exciting, meaningful and accomplished with purpose. Families are our partners in the education of a child. With Christ as the center, our Cotter family finds strength. We know that there will be challenges and struggles in life, just as there was on the high ropes course, but we find growth in the path we take, in the tools we are given, and in the encouragement we get along the way. Cotter is an excellent place to be.

Cotter Junior High School Principal  
Dave Forney

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## Cotter Announces Triple "A" Award Winners



Congratulations to this year's Cotter Triple "A" award winners, Bryan Richter and Micaela Trainor.

The purpose of the program is to recognize and honor high school seniors who have excelled in the classroom, on the athletic field, and in the fine arts.

To be eligible for the Academics, Arts, and Athletics award a student must be a high school senior at the time of nomination. Nominations are limited to two qualifying students per school; one male and one female. Each nominee must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher at the date of nomination. The nominee must participate in League-sponsored athletics and fine arts activities. The nominee must comply with the MSHSL's Student Code of Conduct.

Bryan Richter, the son of Jack and Judy Richter, is involved in football, basketball and track, choir, show choir, HVL honors choir, Dorian honors choir, Timeless (a select Cotter male singing group) and National Honor Society.

Micaela Trainor, the daughter of Dan and Shelley Trainor, is involved in volleyball, basketball and softball, choir, show choir, HVL honors choir, Divas (a select Cotter female singing group) Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and Peer Helpers.

## Cotter Junior High Mathletes Win Regional Math Competition!

Seventy students from eight schools competed at the Three Rivers District of Minnesota Junior High Mathematics League competition. The Cotter Junior High Math Team placed first and was awarded the overall season championship trophy and individual mathletes were awarded medals for seasonal achievement. Eighth graders Tyler Suman, Brennan Schaffner, and Alex Walechka placed 1st, 2nd, and 8th respectively, and seventh grader Ryan Ortega placed 5th out of all students in the region. Congratulations to the Cotter Junior High Mathletes for their 2012 championship win!



Pictured from L to R: Jessica Kohner, Emily Wobig, Brennan Schaffner, Alex Walechka, Tyler Suman, Gabe Tullis, Ryan Ortega, and coach Brandon Carlson. Not pictured David French.

## Dorian Choir Festival

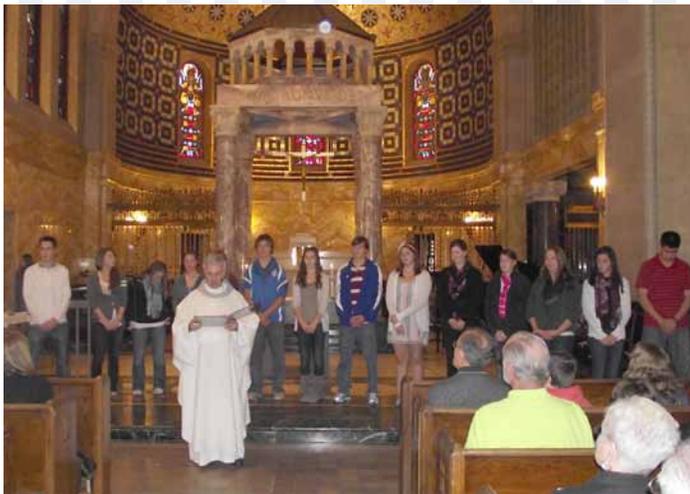
Congratulations to Amanda Blue, Derek Borkowski, Brittany Meurer, Jeff Severson, and Maddy Shumate for participating in this year's Dorian Choir Festival at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa on January 8-9th, 2012. The two day festival is considered the largest mass choir festival of its kind in the country. The students spend two days rehearsing their music with approximately 1400 other high school singers from Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, South Dakota and Illinois. The two day choir



festival culminated with the Grand Concert on Monday, January 9th featuring the Dorian Festival Choir, the Luther College Nordic Choir (Luther College top choir), and five selected outstanding soloists. As part of the Dorian Choir Festival, the participating high school student singers also attended a concert on Sunday evening, January 8th featuring the Luther College "Norsemen" (Luther college freshmen men's chorus) and "Aurora" (Luther college freshmen women's chorus) and a guest high school choir. Cotter alumnus, Rachel Jungwirth (2009) is a member of Luther Cathedral Choir.

## Cotter Students Commissioned as Eucharistic Minister's

Cotter High School's Campus Ministry class, instructed by Mrs. Marisa Corcoran, invited Fr. Michael Cronin to provide training for 15 students who are now prepared to be Eucharistic Ministers for school Masses, and also in their individual parishes.



Congratulations to the following students that were commissioned by Fr. Richard Colletti November 1st at the All Saint's Day Mass held on the Cotter's campus:

Claire Penning, Courtney Brendel, Megan Duellman, Monica Weltzien, Nicole Robertson, Alle Savat, Jake Johnson, Joe Koll, Karen Kersting, Katelyn Vaselaar, Kristin Eichenberg, Mary Rose Costello, Rachel Lozenski, Liam Michener and Erick Rico.

## Cotter's Campus Ministry students organize "Kickin' Cancer" week!



*Pictured is one of Cotter's faculty & staff volleyball entries.*

Campus Ministry students Monica Weltzien, Kateri Petry, Mitchell Kuhlmann, Alle Savat and Erick Rico were very excited to lead the "Kickin' Cancer" events that occurred at Cotter on November 7-11, 2011. "Kickin' Cancer" events were organized to raise awareness about cancer and raise money for local people and organizations that have been touched by cancer. The week is also intended to lift

up in prayer all those who are cancer survivors, for those who are battling cancer and those who are no longer with us, due to Cancer.

### Kickin' Cancer events included:

- "Kickin' Cancer" t-shirts sale
- Jr. High Recess Fundraiser event
- Junior High and High School Dress Down Day Fundraiser
- Pin Dodge ball high school tournament fundraiser
- Volleyball tournament fundraiser
- Daily morning prayer for all those who are or have been affected by cancer.

## Cotter's Percussionfest 2012

Percussion players in Cotter Junior High and Cotter High School, under the direction of John Stampka welcomed guest artist/conductor Joni Sutton on February 13th.



## One Act Plays at Cotter Schools

Cotter High School and Junior High School presented an Evening of One Act Plays on Thursday, January 19th and Friday, January 20th in the St. Cecilia Theater. The *Unloined Letter* by Todd Wallinger was presented by Cotter Junior High. Cotter High School presented *Bottle of Joy* by Charles E. Bright.



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## Cotter/WACS Prayer Buddies Meet at All-School Mass



The All-School Mass, which comes at the end of National Catholic Schools Week, brought prayerful students and family members of all ages together to celebrate at the St. Stanislaus Kostka Basilica in Winona.

The event brought together 2nd grade and 10th grade prayer buddies. They have been praying for each other throughout the

school year, and exchanging cards with words of encouragement as many students in each grade prepare for the sacraments of 1st communion (2nd grade) and Confirmation (10th grade).

## Summer Programming

The summer months at Cotter are full of activities to strengthen the skills of our students and to provide opportunities for the greater Winona area community through camps and academic enrichment programs. Over the past two years, the number of students participating in our programs has grown significantly, and it is projected that more than 290 students in grades K-12 will be on campus participating in our offerings.

For current Cotter students, the summer is designed to help enhance and excel students' experience through arts, academics and athletics. Our focus is to provide a balanced and collaborative flow of activities to our students in order to increase the opportunities available to them. This focused effort optimizes the use of facilities and enables students to dedicate themselves to multiple aspects of their student life at Cotter.

The opportunities are divided into three sections for our Cotter families and scheduled so that students should not have to pick and choose which opportunities they want to be involved in, but rather can benefit from them all. This also provides the opportunity for all programs to succeed and allow for better flow throughout the day for all our families involved.

For the Winona community, kids are able to be learning from some of Cotter's finest in athletics, arts and academics. We offer quality, affordable programming that appeals to all age groups. This past year, some families made a decision to send their child to Cotter Schools because of their experience in one of our programs last summer.

As we continue to focus on the enhancement of our summer programs, we are excited for the warm months ahead! For a complete list of programming opportunities, visit [cotterschools.org](http://cotterschools.org).

## Cotter Students Honored by MN Scholastic Art Awards Program



Kristin Eichenberg



Shelby Theis

Cotter senior Kristin Eichenberg and junior Shelby Theis both received notice this week that their art submissions have received awards from the MSAA. According to their nominating art teacher, Mary Forney, "This is a prestigious award, and it is so wonderful that

these two young ladies, who are cousins, and so close in spirit, have been recognized. They are gifted art students."

Part of the National Scholastic Art Awards program, the Minnesota Scholastic Art Awards recognize Minnesota's most creative teenagers and offer scholarships to graduating high school seniors. The program is open to all Minnesota students in grades 7 through 12. Student entries are typically submitted by their art teachers. The Minneapolis College of Art and Design is proud to host the annual exhibition and award ceremony honoring these young artists. Selected artwork advances to the national competition in New York.

Kristin's 2 drawing submissions each received awards; a Silver Key and a Gold Key. The Gold Key award qualifies her for the national competition.

Shelby's photograph entries earned her two Silver Key awards. This year there were 1376 individual artwork entries and 170 portfolio entries. The jury awarded 133 Gold Keys and 167 Silver Keys for individual entries and 11 Gold Key and 16 Silver Keys for portfolio entries. Additionally, the jury awarded 228 individual entry Merit Awards and 40 Portfolio Merit Awards to students whose work, although not chosen to be in the MSAA Exhibition, was noted by the jurors as deserving of recognition.

*Note: Cotter is a family tradition in the girls' family. Kristin's mom Sally (Schneider) Eichenberg '76 is sister to Shelby's mom; Judy (Schneider) Theis '78 and they are both Cotter grads...not to mention lots of other family members too!*

## Inaugural Vogel Scholarship Recipient

The inaugural award for the Joe Vogel "Pay it Forward" Scholarship was awarded to Cotter senior Monica Weltzien by Team Vogel representatives, Kristin Biesanz '96 and Katie Fream '96 during Catholic Schools Week 2012. Monica was selected as this year's recipient based on her efforts to 'Pay it Forward' and received a \$500 scholarship.

Joe Vogel, Cotter class of 1996, was a devoted alum and community member. He passed away in August of 2010 from colon cancer. The Cotter community had a positive impact on Joe's life – leading him to often share memories or stories from his time at Cotter. Cotter was part of his family. Joe will always be remembered for his smile, sense of humor and his efforts to "Pay it Forward."



“Monica is the kind of young woman who truly embodies the idea of “Pay it Forward.” It is great to be able to honor Joe and his efforts to make a difference in the lives of others in this way. Joe’s Family and all members of Team Vogel are doing amazing work to perpetuate Joe’s legacy. I’m sure he would be proud of Monica,” shared Cotter’s Director of Advancement, Megan Sadowski ‘94.

The Joe Vogel “Pay it Forward” Scholarship Fund was created by Joe’s family, friends, and co-workers at Frito Lay Inc. The scholarship will be awarded annually to a Cotter Student who upholds and lives the spirit of “Pay it Forward.” The award is applied directly to their Cotter tuition.

If you would like to make a gift to the Joe Vogel “Pay it Forward” Scholarship Fund, please call 507-453-5102 or make your gift online at [www.cotterschools.org](http://www.cotterschools.org) by clicking on the ‘Donations’ tab and designating your gift to the Joe Vogel “Pay it Forward” Scholarship Fund.

## Cotter’s application accepted by 3-Rivers Conference

Cotter’s application to the 3-Rivers Conference has been approved by the 3-Rivers Governing Board. Cotter will be admitted as a full member beginning with the 2013-14 school year. That will give Cotter and the 3-Rivers schools time to fulfill their existing contractual commitments and make the transition into a new partnership.

Cotter is very excited for the opportunity to join the Three Rivers Conference. This change will allow students to compete closer to home, allowing for more time in the classroom and less time on a bus. The Activities Department looks forward to the competition and camaraderie this conference will bring.

Cotter has had a long-standing partnership with the Hiawatha Valley League and is proud of its history with this conference; the schools look forward to staying connected through non-conference and post-season play.

## Faculty & Staff Milestones

Cotter is blessed with extremely dedicated faculty & staff and would like to recognize special milestones for the 2011-2012 school year!



**Mr. Peter Horton**  
40 Years



**Mr. Don Nitti**  
40 Years



**Mr. David Gudmestad  
(Mr. G)**  
25 Years



**Mr. Mike Costello '82**  
20 Years



**Mrs. Sally (Sievers)  
Frisby '70**  
20 Years



**Mrs. Nell (Malotke)  
Thill '73**  
10 Years



**Mr. Nick Whaley**  
10 Years



**Mr. Jim Miller '66**  
5 Years



**Mr. Kyle Miller**  
5 Years



**Mrs. Jenny Carpenter**  
5 Years

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## Micaela Trainor

By Kateri Petry '12



Prior to this season of girls basketball, only five players had reached the milestone of 1,000 career points scored until a Dec. 30 game when Micaela Trainor became the sixth.

The game was against Holmen at Winona State University's McGown Gym. However, Trainor was oblivious to the fact that she had reached the 1,000 point mark.

"I found out when a girl from the other team came up and shook my hand," Trainor said.

Trainor, who has been playing basketball since grade school, has been on the varsity team since she was a freshman.

"She is a tremendous all-around player. She is a good shooter, but scores most of her points attacking the basket," Pat Bowlin, head girls basketball coach, said. "Micaela also helps the team in a number of areas, including defense, rebounding and assists."

Bowlin has also coached the other five girls to have scored 1,000 points.

In addition to playing basketball, Trainor also plays volleyball and softball.

With the month or so left in her final season of high school basketball, Trainor still has some goals she hopes to accomplish.

"I want to be part of a team that makes it through the playoffs and to state," Trainor said. "I also want to keep working hard and having fun."

But beyond high school, basketball will become more of a hobby as softball will become her primary focus in college.

"I am choosing to play softball as a competitive sport at St. Thomas in St. Paul," Trainor said. "I hope to someday maybe become a basketball coach and also play as much as possible."

"I love basketball," Trainor said. "The camaraderie and competition that you are faced with everyday is what makes it unpredictable and enjoyable. I love that when you work hard it pays off almost every time."

### Cotter's 1,000 point club:

Micaela Trainor '12  
Whitney Wisecup '09  
Laura Erickson '08  
Jenny Gilbertson '08  
Devin Bowlin '07  
Kelly Kukowski '04

Gus Cochran '12  
Patrick Bowlin '08  
Sam Blank '07  
John Paul O'Brien '00  
Drew Gibson '97

## Gus Cochran

By Kateri Petry '12

Senior Gus Cochran reached the 1,000 point milestone this basketball season.

Cochran didn't even know that he had reached his 1,000 point. "It was awhile back and I found out recently," Cochran said.

It wasn't until he started thinking about it that he figured out he had reached that milestone.

"On the bus to a game, me and a couple guys did the math pretty conservatively and I figured out I was over," Cochran said.

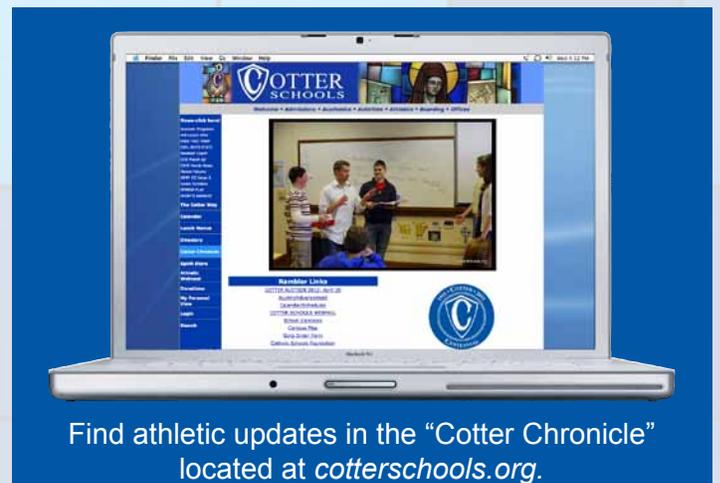
Head boys basketball coach David Jewison sees characteristics in Cochran that it takes for a player to reach 1,000 points.

"Beyond the talent from God and the hard work that good players put into their game, you need consistency, longevity and circumstances to work in your favor [to reach 1,000 points]," Jewison said. "Gus has been consistent. Since his first varsity game in 9th grade, he has averaged between 10-15 points per game every season...and has not had a serious injury during those 4 years."

Jewison said there were favorable circumstances early on for Cochran. "He had some veteran players around him and those teams needed another ball handler and Gus fit that role."



This isn't the end of playing basketball for Cochran, who has been playing since he was three years old. "I'll most likely play at either Loras or Luther College," Cochran said. "It's always been the most appealing sport to me. It's a fast paced game that's fun to play."



Find athletic updates in the "Cotter Chronicle" located at [cotterschools.org](http://cotterschools.org).

KEEP UP WITH COTTER NEWS AT [COTTERSCHOOLS.ORG](http://COTTERSCHOOLS.ORG)

## Cotter Student Gives Back

By Kathleen Bowlin '13

Brittany Stenzel has received many superior rankings in piano competitions throughout the state, but she says her biggest victory is sharing her talents with others.

Stenzel, a junior at Cotter High School, started playing piano when she was in second grade, so she could play at church and overcome her fear of being in front of a lot of people. She also wanted to follow in the footsteps of her mother, Marsha, who has a strong musical background and plays piano and guitar. "I remember my mom playing the piano when I was younger, and I always thought it looked like a lot of fun," Stenzel said. "So when she asked me if I wanted to take lessons, I said yes right away."

Stenzel then began playing at church every Sunday in her hometown of Wabasha. She says she remembers people coming up to her and being so shocked at her natural talent for playing piano.

"I don't know if I was really even that good," Stenzel said. "I think people might have just been impressed because I was so young."

Since then, Stenzel has played in multiple regional recitals and state competitions, ranking "superior" in almost all of them. However, her favorite part about playing piano isn't the success she has at her recitals, rather her ability to share her talents and the gift of music with others.

In one way, she has shared the gift of music and her ability to play piano with her 7-year-old neighbor, Ava. She's been teaching her how to play over the last few months.

"I love helping Ava because she reminds me a lot of myself when I was her age," Stenzel said. "I remember learning to play piano and getting so excited when I got something down, just like she does."

Stenzel is very grateful for all the help and support from her mom and her piano teacher, and she wants to give that same help and support to Ava.

"I'm really lucky to have a mom who supports me so much with piano," Stenzel said. "And I feel really fortunate to have such a great piano teacher who's always there to guide me."

In the future, Stenzel hopes to continue sharing her talent and love for music by becoming either an elementary

music teacher or a music therapist.

"I love music and I love kids," Stenzel said. "So having a job as a teacher would be perfect."

Her other option, music therapy, involves using music to help people improve or maintain their mental health.

"It would be really cool to be able to help so many people just by playing or listening to music with them," Stenzel said. "And music's something I'm really passionate about so it would be a great job for me."

Stenzel says she understands why music therapy can help so many people with their psychological problems.

"The reason I started playing was because I wanted to overcome my stage fright," Stenzel said. "But the reason I'm still playing is because it takes away the stress I feel from school or anything else going on in my life."

Aside from those professions, Stenzel says she also plans to continue teaching piano lessons on the side.

"Taking lessons has done a lot more for me than just help me become a better piano player," Stenzel said. "It's also taught me that hard work pays off and all the hours of practice are worth it."

She believes that anyone can be good at piano if they work at it, and she wants to help.

"I want to help people develop their talents," Stenzel said. "Everyone has the ability to be good but I don't know if everyone believes in themselves that they can be."

For herself, Stenzel says placing well in all the competitions is great, but there's much more to it.

"The best thing about playing piano isn't placing well in the recitals," Stenzel said. "It's more about how much fun I'm having and I know I'm playing because there's nothing else I'd rather be doing."



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# SUPPORTING OUR SCHOOLS

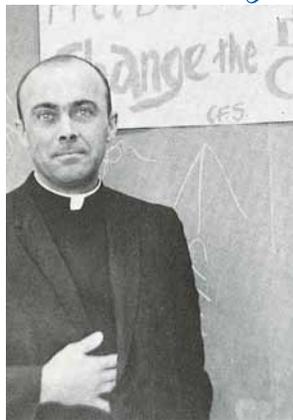
today and tomorrow

## 4th Annual Catholic Schools Foundation Dinner

FRIDAY, JUNE 8, 2012  
 VISIONS EVENT CENTER AT SIGNATURES RESTAURANT  
 SOCIAL HOUR 6-7 PM  
 DINNER 7-9 PM  
 \$40/PERSON OR \$80/COUPLE

FOR TABLE REGISTRATIONS CONTACT:  
 PHONE (507) 453-5100 OR EMAIL [DEVELOPMENT@COTTERSCHOOLS.ORG](mailto:DEVELOPMENT@COTTERSCHOOLS.ORG)

*Honoring*



2012 CSF FOUNDERS AWARD  
 HONOREE  
 FR. PAUL NELSON



The Catholic Schools Foundation of Winona, MN, founded in 1986, is a charitable organization supporting the Catholic schools in Winona, MN.

Through the hard work of many dedicated individuals and the generosity of numerous supporters of Catholic education, CSF now has an asset level of over \$5,000,000 and over \$2.8 million has been distributed to Cotter and Winona Area Catholic Schools.

By supporting CSF, you are giving a gift that lives forever. For everyone who cares deeply about the value of Catholic education, there may be no greater gift. To give a gift to the Foundation or to discover the ways to support Catholic education in Winona through the Foundation call 507-453-5102 or visit [csfwinona.org](http://csfwinona.org).

### Rambler Events Calendar

April 28, 2012	33rd Annual Cotter Auction . . . . .	John Nett Recreation Center on Cotter Campus, 5:00 pm
May 5, 2012	CHS Prom	
May 10, 2012	St. Joseph Award Presentation at Pops Concert . . .	John Nett Recreation Center on Cotter Campus
May 13, 2012	Happy Mother's Day	
May 23, 2012	CJHS 8th Grade Graduation . . . . .	Chapel of Saint Mary of the Angels
May 27, 2012	CHS Baccalaureate Mass & Graduation . . . . .	John Nett Recreation Center on Cotter Campus
June 8, 2012	4th Annual CSF Recognition Dinner/Alumni Achievement Award . . . . .	Visions Event Center
June 17, 2012	Happy Father's Day	
June 18, 2012	25th Annual Cotter Classic Golf Tournament . . . . .	Cedar Valley Golf Course

### Rambler Arts Calendar

April 12-13, 2012	Cotter Junior High School Musical . . . . .	St. Cecelia Theatre, 7:00 pm
April 23, 2012	Jazzfest . . . . .	St. Cecelia Theatre, 7:00 pm
May 1, 2012	Show Choir Concert . . . . .	St. Cecilia Theatre, 7:30 pm
May 10, 2012	CHS Pops Concert & St. Joseph Award Presentation . . . . .	John Nett Recreation Center, 7:30 pm
May 17, 2012	CJHS Pops Concert . . . . .	St. Cecilia Theatre, 7:00 pm

# Cotter 2012 Reunions...

*Let's get together!*

Class of 1947  
(Cotter & Cathedral)  
**65th Reunion**  
Alumni Office is looking for information!



Class of 1952  
(Cotter & Cathedral)  
**60th Reunion**  
Alumni Office is looking for information!

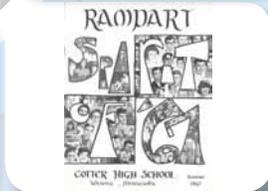


Class of 1957  
**55th Reunion**  
Tentative  
September 28 & 29, 2012  
Contact: Bob Kierlin  
Email: bkierlin@fastenal.com



Class of 1962  
**50th Reunion**  
September 22 & 23, 2012  
Westfield Golf Club  
Contact: Nancy (Kratch) Piper  
Email: nakpiper@charter.net  
Find Cotter 1962 Alumni on Facebook!

Class of 1967  
**45th Reunion**  
October 5 & 6, 2012  
Contact:  
Mary (Paskiewicz) Thoen  
Email: guesthus@hotmail.com



Class of 1972  
**40th Reunion**  
September 29, 2012 • 6 p.m.  
Wellington's  
Contact: Dan Kohner  
Email: dkohner@fastenal.com



Class of 1977  
**35th Reunion**  
Alumni Office is looking for information!



Class of 1982  
**30th Reunion**  
Alumni Office is looking for information!

Class of 1987  
**25th Reunion**  
June 16 (Steamboat Days)  
Contact: Jane (Freund) Tessmann  
Email: jtessmann@yahoo.com



Class of 1992  
**20th Reunion**  
June 23, 2012 • 6 p.m.  
Betty Jo's (Wenonah Room)  
\$10/person for appetizers  
R.S.V.P. to Aaron!  
Contact: Aaron Repinski  
Email: rippera@yahoo.com  
Phone: (507)458-7485



Class of 1997  
**15th Reunion**  
September 29, 2012 • 7 p.m.  
Bub's Brewing Co.  
\$15/person  
Contact: Sarah Speltz  
Email: sarahspeltz@gmail.com  
Phone: (507)279-3039



Class of 2002  
**10th Reunion**  
Finalizing plans!  
Contact: D. Bowie Hall  
Email: b.daniel.hall@gmail.com  
Phone: (212)920-1717

Class of 2007  
**5th Reunion**  
Alumni Office is looking for information!



Please contact Mandi Householder in the Cotter Advancement Office with any class reunion information. Email: mhouseholder@cotterschools.org  
Phone: (507)453-5113

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# Meet Cotter's Board of Directors

Cotter Schools is in the midst of celebrating its Centennial, and Cotter's Board of Directors is in their 23rd year of existence. Our Centennial Celebration has been made more joyous by the news that our Board of Directors was recently notified that they received the National Catholic Education "Outstanding Board" Award for 2012. This award will be presented at the National Convention in Boston this coming April. This esteemed award acknowledges the outstanding work and best practices to encourage excellence in board operation. Our Board of Directors membership is diverse and represents current parents, community members and diocesan participation. Our Chair of the Board of Directors, Dr. Rita Miller, has been actively involved in the Catholic school system for several years and her children attend the Winona Area Catholic Schools (WACS). Dave Vaselaar, the Vice-Chair, and Beth Hoven, the Secretary/Treasurer have children in Cotter Schools and WACS system. Three of our board members are alumni; Dan Arnold, '80, Tom Williams, '80 and Dan Kohner, '72. They also have and continue to experience the Cotter and WACS systems. New board members; Richard Blahnik and Annmarie DeMarais, have children graduated and attending Cotter as well the WACS system. Fr. Rick Colletti and Marsha Stenzel are diocesan appointed board members. Fr. Rick Colletti is the Vicar General for the Diocese of Winona and taught at Cotter during his early years as a priest. Marsha is the Director of Catholic Education for the Diocese of Winona and has two daughters attending Cotter. Cotter's president, Jennifer Elfering, has been instrumental in the Board's success as well.



During its Centennial, Cotter Schools effectively launched a capital campaign which began with a need for an additional gym. However, the Board of Directors also recognized a growing need to address enrollment. Therefore, they expanded their efforts to combine their Centennial Campaign with the local parochial elementary school. This formed a joint campaign with almost 1/3 of the proceeds being dedicated to enrollment initiatives. A new local

admissions counselor was added to compliment our enrollment initiative. Currently, plans for a Centennial Hall, to be located in the John Nett Center, are underway. This Hall will be complimented by a student commons that will provide an atmosphere for fellowship and a study area available between game practices. Cotter's history resonates through the interior design. Renovations are taking place in our Roger Bacon Hall and will accommodate upgraded science labs. The infrastructure for technology has been upgraded to prepare for the expansion of our technology instructional environment. Much is happening at Cotter.



During this historical celebration of our Centennial, the Board of Directors with President Elfering also took on the task to revisit the mission and vision of the school. The new mission and vision were approved by the Board of Directors as we entered into our Centennial Academic year. Coinciding with this event, they moved to undertake the next step of strategic planning involving parents, students, community members, faculty & staff. These long range initiatives will be presented this spring and reveal our direction as we begin our next 100 years.



**The Cotter Board of Directors** – Front Row (L-R): Beth Hoven, Dr. Rita Miller, Marsha Stenzel, Annmarie DeMarais, Tom Williams '80, Fr. Rick Colletti. Back Row (L-R): Dan Kohner '72, Dan Arnold '80, Rich Blahnik, Dave Vaselaar.

The Cotter Schools Board of Directors is a highly committed team

who truly are "Cotter Blue" through and through. It is incredible to witness all that they have been able to achieve in such a short period of time. They have a heart for the school and a desire to preserve Catholic Education in the city of Winona. They recognize the vital role of our parochial feeder school and the need for collaboration. Despite our separate governing boards they have come together to work for all of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Winona. Congratulations Cotter Schools Board of Directors on this outstanding award! And, thank you for your dedication and commitment to our school.

**Cotter Alumni Career Day** was held at Cotter High School on Thursday, February 2nd, in conjunction with National Catholic Schools Week and was a great success. Cotter welcomed three returning alumni; Justin Barrientos '94, Robert Knuesel '01, and Emily Ulrich '03. Besides talking to students about their chosen career paths and what guided them to that chosen profession, they also spoke about the value of the great education, friendships and experiences they received at Cotter.

## *Justin Barrientos '94*

**College Attended:** Winona State University ('98)

**Current Occupation/Place of Employment:** HBC TV-25 Operations Coordinator, Play-By-Play Announcer, Newscast Director

**Description of Occupation:** I currently am a Play-By-Play announcer for High School & College sporting events covered by HBC. I have covered Football, Basketball, Hockey, Baseball, Parades, Dance Competitions, and one MMA fight! I also am the director of our Monday-Friday noon newscast, backup news & sports anchor, and do occasional field reporting.

**What is your favorite Cotter memory?** It would have to be our Senior Class trip to Florida. The bus ride down and back was something I don't think any of us will ever forget, and we just had a great time in Florida!

**Imagine yourself as a Senior at Cotter again, what was a typical Friday night like?** For me, I was usually doing something sports related.

**What subject did you find most interesting when attending Cotter? What subject was the most beneficial?** It was interesting to have a drama class the last 2 years I was at Cotter. I think that helped me get "out of my shell" a little, and gave me the confidence that I needed to go after a career in broadcasting! I think all of the classes were beneficial. Cotter really prepared me, not only for college classes, but for my life after school as well. And, I can't forget Economics class either, because we had to develop a business, and shoot a TV Commercial, which gave me my first taste of that!



## *Robert Knuesel '01*

**Colleges Attended:** University of Notre Dame (BS '05), University of Minnesota (MS '08, Ph.D. '11)

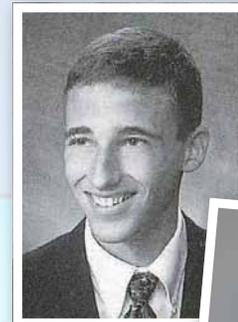
**Current Occupation/Place of Employment:** Electrical Engineering/ Koronis Biomedical Technologies

**Description of Occupation:** While a Ph.D. candidate, I made contributions to the state of the art in engineered self-assembly, the process used to direct complex, 3D, Nano scale systems to assemble themselves, ultimately leading to a well-publicized, novel flexible solar cell. Now as a Staff Scientist at Koronis Biomedical Technologies, I participate in the government funded research and development of biomedical electronic devices covering a wide range of disciplines including wireless communication, embedded electronics, telemedicine, radiology, navigation, and learning enhancement.

**What is your favorite Cotter memory?** My solo performance in the Fiddler on the Roof marching band street show.

**Imagine yourself as a Senior at Cotter again, what was a typical Friday night like?** Friday nights as a Cotter student included cross-country practice, basketball pep band, and providing excellent guest service at Target.

**What subject did you find most interesting when attending Cotter? What subject was the most beneficial?** I have always been interested in the sciences. One of my favorite classes at Cotter was TEPS (Technically Enhanced Physical Science) and I have great memories and stories from biology. That having been said, I believe it was the courses I took in the English department that provided me the most substantial edge over my undergraduate peers.



## *Emily Ulrich '03*

**College Attended:** University of Minnesota-Twin Cities

**Current Occupation/Place of Employment:** Senior Staffing Specialist – Target Corporation

**Description of Occupation:** Administer and coordinate the internal and external staffing process including posting positions, scheduling interviews and travel, and administering assessments team members, Serve as the primary contact for candidates & clients regarding open positions and interviews, welcoming candidates to Target, some recruiting.

**What is your favorite Cotter memory?** Band was a big part of my time at Cotter, so our trip to Calgary, Canada for the Stampede was one of my favorite memories. The Canadians were so nice to us!

**Imagine yourself as a Senior at Cotter again, what was a typical Friday night like?** A typical Friday night varied for me, but it usually involved meeting up with friends, then going to a basketball game to play for pep band, watching the game, then going to a friend's house where we would eat and watch movies.

**What subject did you find most interesting when attending Cotter?** I went to a public school up until I started at Cotter, so I had never taken any religion classes. When I came to Cotter and was able to openly pray and talk about God was refreshing and gave me a deeper sense of faith. I really appreciated the fact our religion teachers were so strong about their faith.

**What subject was the most beneficial?** I really loved being a part of the Cotter band. It was such a great way to be with my classmates and people of all ages. I learned a lot about time management and balancing that with schoolwork. I enjoyed taking the trips and Mr. G. gave us so many great opportunities to be a peer leader. I believe it set me up for success in college and I was able to use that skill set and apply it to other areas of academia.



*Love what you do? If you are interested in participating in Alumni Career Day during Catholic Schools Week, please contact Mandi Householder, Alumni Relations and Event Coordinator at [mhouseholder@cotterschools.org](mailto:mhouseholder@cotterschools.org).*

KEEP UP WITH COTTER NEWS AT [COTTERSCHOOLS.ORG](http://COTTERSCHOOLS.ORG)

## 100 years...+ 25 more for good measure...

By Paul Bowden

As we reflect back on Cotter's first 100 years, the memories have come flooding back to a great many people. Academics and athletics were at the forefront of many of the stories I have heard, but as I really listened, it was the people that made Cotter a special place to so many.

As a new staff member in this Cotter's Centennial school year, I don't have these precious Cotter memories to reflect on. As such, I have been asked to look forward; to predict what Cotter might look like in another quarter century (I suppose that people are assuming that I will not be around for the bicentennial).

After a survey of staff, one thing was clear—Cotter will still be going strong. Though I had expected many wild predictions and outlandish fantasies about what the future was to hold for Cotter, the responses clearly demonstrated that what made Cotter great in its first 100 years would continue to guide it through the next quarter 25. Academics and athletics will still be front and center, but the people will remain the driving force.

Technology will continue to be at the head of the educational curve. Teachers seem certain that it isn't going anywhere. They just have to make sure that they are able to control it, rather than allowing it to control them. Some strongly believe that the advances are going to be a great help to the classroom (projectors with bulbs that don't burn out in the middle of class, automatic grading machines, and some device to allow a certain chemistry teacher to read students' minds – and I suspect that she is not the only one who'd be looking to order such a device), while others are concerned that students will be finding new ways to try and sneak their cell phones into class. Surgical implantation, anyone?

The days of backbreaking school bags and textbooks will be long behind us. Students will have all of their class materials on electronic devices that are light as a feather and lightning fast. Unfortunately, in some cases this likely means less studying as they will have shorter wait times as the games that they have somehow managed to put onto these machines load.

We believe that the availability of technology will allow for great advances in the way that material is presented to students. The hope is that overhead projectors and PowerPoint will be long gone and replaced with much more project-based teaching and learning. There is also great hope that the texting and social media that fill our students lives now will also have gone the way of the dodo (Dream on, Mr. O'Brien!). Technology will allow us to have many of these projects include students in other classes – some across the street, others across the world.

Speaking of students from across the world, Will Gibson ('96; HOF 2011) will no longer be Directory of Admissions and Residence Life, but rather he will be responsible for International and Interplanetary Exchange as Cotter will open its first satellite campus (literally!) in 2034. Let's hope that Mrs. Frisby's astronomy class has inspired someone to return to teach at the campus.

Cotter graduates will continue to represent us around the country and across the globe as 125th Anniversary events will reach beyond the borders of the United States and will be hosted in Seoul and Shanghai in 2037. The alumni office will be looking for alumni hosts and will be contacting you all very soon about this opportunity I am sure.

While the days of not being able to walk around these halls without running into a Mike (Meurer, Donlin, O'Brien, Coz – I hope you're all enjoying happy, healthy retirements) or a Dave (Forney and Gudmastad – same to you; sorry Jewison, we're keeping you around) may be behind us in 25 years, the spirit that these people have infused into these halls will not soon dissipate.

You may not come across Sandi Blank, Linda Gudmastad, or Gini Wilzbacher as you wander the buildings. However, I assure you, the people who follow in their giant footsteps will surely reflect the Cotter spirit that they personify. Who knows? You may even find some of their names on the front of the buildings. The Sandi Blank Science Wing has a nice ring to it, no?

I believe that I can say with certainty that Cotter will be alive and thriving in 25 years. The faces will change, but the Cotter spirit will remain the same. Go Ramblers!

*Paul Bowden is a Biology teacher at Cotter Schools.*



# 25th Annual Cotter Classic

**Monday, June 18, 2012  
Cedar Valley Golf Course**

Join us at the beautiful Cedar Valley Golf Course in Winona, MN on June 18th for fun and fellowship while supporting Cotter's outstanding academic, spiritual, and co-curricular activities.

Learn more and register at  
[cotterschools.org/cotterclassic](http://cotterschools.org/cotterclassic)

## COTTER'S BIRTHDAY DASH

5k Run/Walk

Happy  
101st  
Birthday

Register online!  
[cotterschools.org/5K](http://cotterschools.org/5K)



Join us to celebrate! Open to ALL community members!

**Saturday, Sept. 29, 2012**

8 a.m. | Lake Lodge | Winona, MN

## COTTER HALL OF FAME

# JOIN US

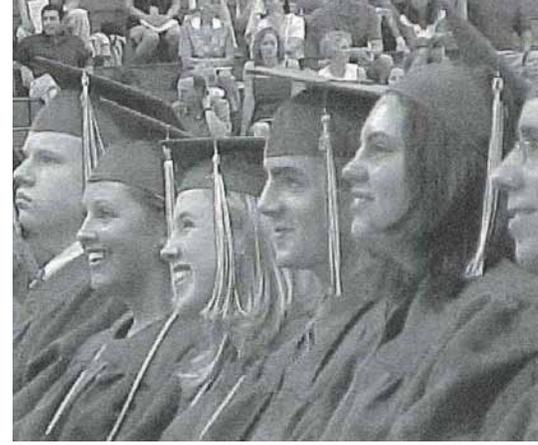
on September 29 to celebrate athletic accomplishments of our 2012 Hall of Fame Inductees!

**Mike Costello '82**  
**1982 Basketball Team**  
**Jeff Prodzinski '92**  
**Mary (Baisley) Sparrow '94**

The 2012 Hall of Fame Ceremony will be held during Cotter's Homecoming week in the John Nett Recreation Gymnasium on the Cotter Campus. Learn more about the Cotter Hall of Fame at [cotterschools.org/halloffame](http://cotterschools.org/halloffame)

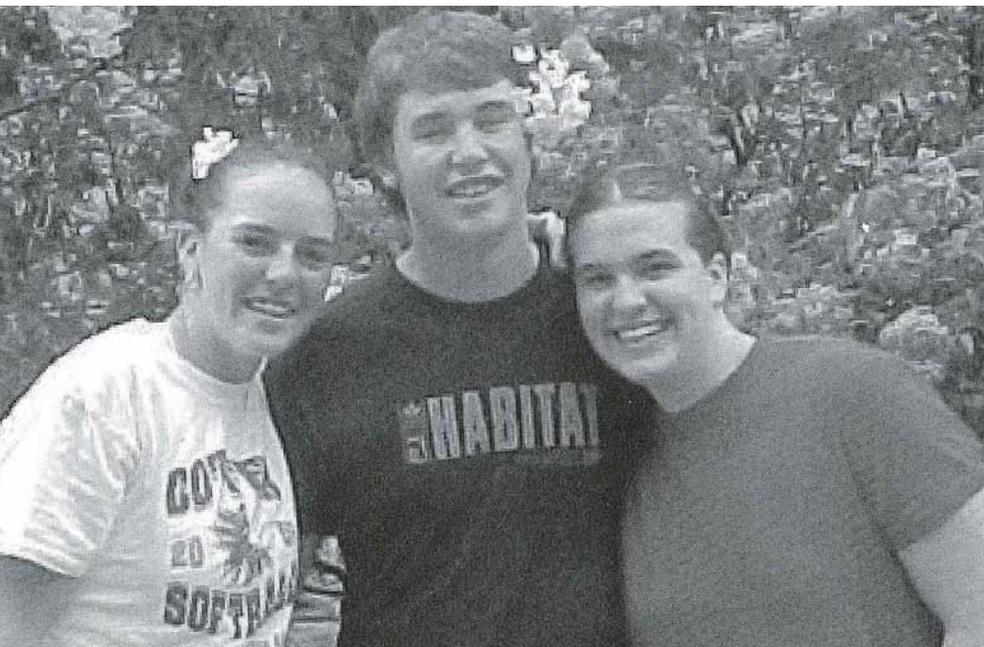
# Cotter class of 2002

Benchmark Survey



**3** graduates are currently working on further degrees.

**91%**  
of 2002  
graduates  
surveyed said  
Cotter was  
important or  
very important  
to their  
education  
advancement.



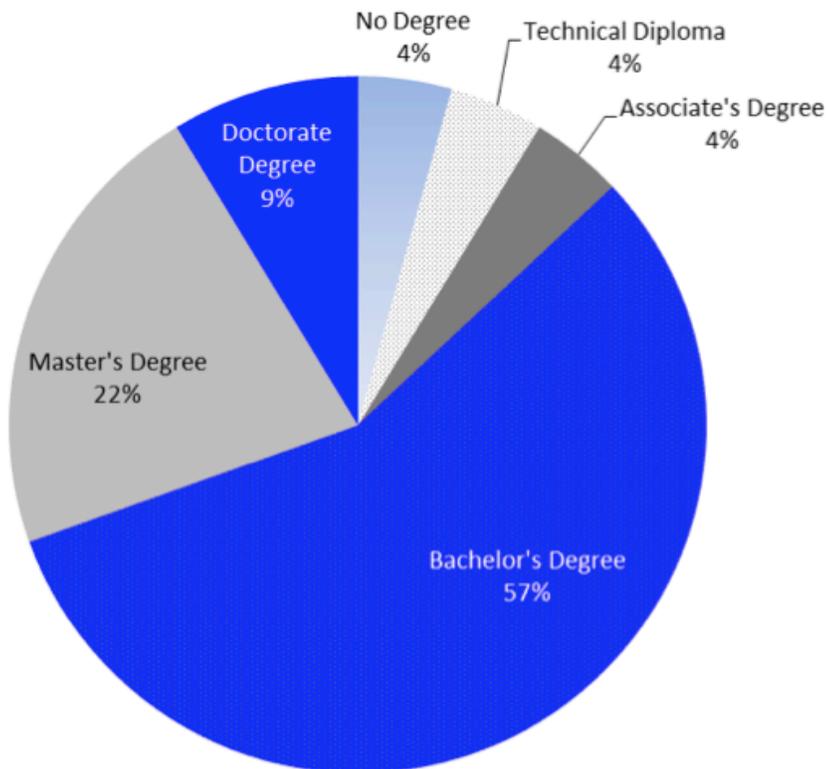
**87%** would  
DEFINITELY  
recommend Cotter to  
families and students  
in the Winona area.

## 2002 graduates reflect on their time at Cotter...

Ever wonder what how Alumni feel about their Cotter education once they've been through college? Here is your chance! Enjoy these comments from several 2002 graduates about how their Cotter experience contributed to life after high school.

- Cotter's education was an excellent preparatory school for college. Classes were structured similar to college classes.
- The values, beliefs and hard work that were instilled at Cotter helped me in the beginning of my career.
- Ten years later, I look back on my time at Cotter with great affection for the tremendous teachers I had, the opportunity to be a part of the TRUE MN Math & Science Academy, and the level of investment from faculty and staff. I have since sought out similar learning environments, and I look forward to my Ph.D. pursuit to entail similar characteristics. I'm very grateful, especially in hindsight, for the soundness of my high school education.
- I was prepared for college courses and confident in my ability to succeed!
- Well rounded, diverse education; great opportunities for extracurricular activities; as well as, cultural and volunteer opportunities.
- The technology used at Cotter was really the most beneficial part as I advanced with schooling. Most students in college did not yet have the experience using Microsoft programs such as Word, Excel, and PowerPoint as I did from attending Cotter.
- Helped build fundamental goals - faith.
- Taught me about care and compassion and this reflects on my work ethic of helping others.
- My education at Cotter influenced my life as a person more than my future education. The things that stuck with me most are life lessons such as faith, life balance, etc.
- Cotter prepared me academically and spiritually for life after high school. I came away with great studying skills, time management and leadership skills. I stayed connected with God through my ups and downs.
- Cotter was the foundation of my work ethic and moral integrity.
- Cotter got me ready for the rigors of academia in such a way that began my career as a student of higher education with a better understanding of what is required of a student and lifelong learner than the majority of my peers.

### Highest Level Degree/Diploma Attained



**61%** of graduates surveyed said their Cotter education was important in beginning their career.



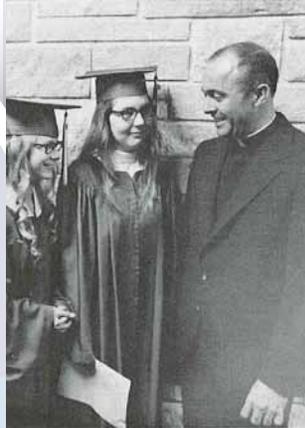
**Attention 2003 Cotter graduates:  
Please look for a benchmark survey  
coming to you this fall.**

*23 of 82 graduates responded  
to the 2002 survey.*

KEEP UP WITH COTTER NEWS AT COTTERSCHOOLS.ORG

# Father Paul Nelson Writes a Book

By Mandi Householder

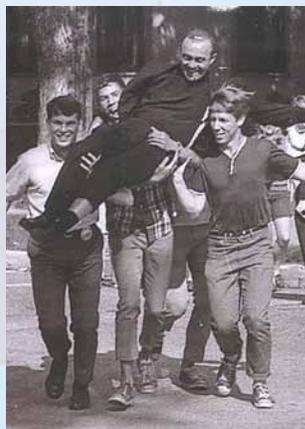
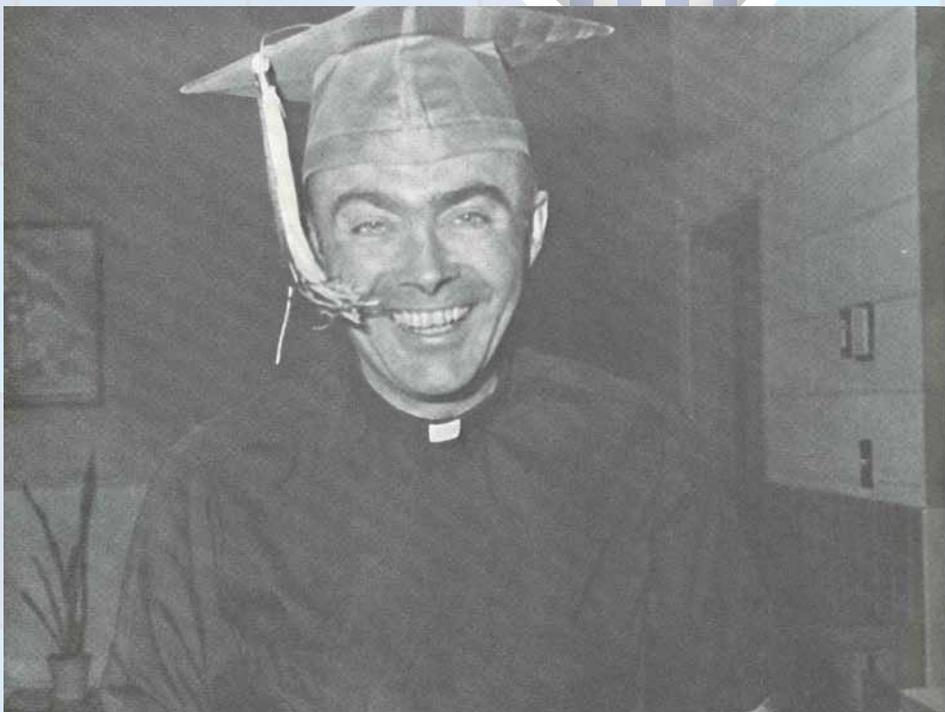
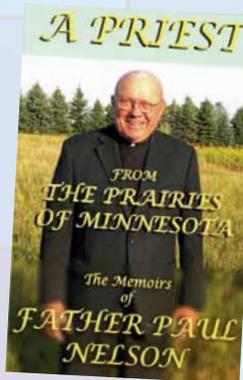


I met Fr. Nelson for the first time with Mike O'Brien '70 on January 31st. I heard nothing but good things about Fr. Nelson and can honestly say I endorse those kind words after just one meeting. He welcomed us into his beautiful home with a bright smile, wearing a leather jacket. Fr. Nelson lives in the home he built in 1999 on top of a hill in Rochester, Minnesota and he most likely has the best spot in the whole neighborhood with a grandiose view of the city. An old photo of four people struck me on a half wall in the entrance of his home. It was 2 brothers who married 2 sisters, one of which couple was Fr. Nelson's parents. His house was full of mementoes and memories of his life, along with just a few books.

We sat down to talk with Fr. Nelson about his book; *A Priest from the Prairies of Minnesota*, and his time at Cotter. His stories are mesmerizing; his voice deep and powerful. He is very honest and genuine and isn't afraid to talk about serious and controversial subjects. I am honored to share features of our time with Fr. Nelson in this Ramblin's article.

## The Book *A Priest from the Prairies of Minnesota*

A man who has lived in a century of intense social and technological changes, well-known to Cotter, writes a book about his life. Fr. Paul Nelson lives a very busy life so it left us wondering why and how he found time to write a book. During our interview, Fr. Nelson explained that a friend insisted he write a book for a couple years now. In honor of his 50th year as a priest in 2011, Fr. Nelson finally came around to the idea and thought it would be a good way to reflect on his life and priesthood. He started with an outline and then wrote about a page a day from March to August. The book was released in December and as of the end of January, he had sold 2,200 copies! He's now working on a second book of published homilies.



The title of the book was a simple choice for Fr. Nelson after having his book cover photo taken behind his editor's house and in a prairie. As Fr. Nelson shares, "I've been in the southeastern corner of Minnesota for 76 years and it is a prairie for the most part."

In it, he shares stories of his childhood and family, priesthood, and moments that defined his life.

### Early Life

"We lived with outhouses rather than bathrooms, using candles and lanterns for light.

We carried fresh water into the house and used water out of the house. We carried wood in for the stove, and carried ashes out every day (Nelson, 2011, p. 28)."

Fr. Nelson grew up on a dairy farm near Rochester as the oldest of four boys and simply known as Paul. His parents were Claude and Lenora (O'Connell) Nelson. He had both academic and work obligations while growing up and he calls his childhood life, "happy, secure, and exciting." Though a teacher once told him he would never make it in college, he won the All-Around Student Award and graduated from Rochester Lourdes in 1953. Fr. Nelson was active in drama, speech, band, music, and glee club and earned B's and C's in academics.

"When I was sixteen years old, my maternal grandmother began keeping house for Fr. Farrell. During one of our visits [to Grandma's house], when I was a junior in high school, Fr. Farrell called me into his office for a chat. Eventually he got around to the point. He said, "Paul, have you ever thought of becoming a priest?" I happened to be sweet on a girl in my class at Lourdes at the time, and the issue of celibacy immediately came to mind. I politely informed Fr. Farrell that I did not think I wanted to become a priest. He countered by saying something like, "Well Paul, you have the qualities that are needed to be an effective priest. I want you to pray about it." After that encounter, I never had a comfortable moment as an adolescent boy. I somehow knew that I could serve people as a priest (Nelson, 2011, p. 49)."

Fr. Nelson made the decision to try seminary school after high school and he was accepted to the Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary, a subdivision of St. Mary's College in Winona, Minnesota. He started in 1953 and had a very difficult first three months. Once through his homesickness, he had four happy years at Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary and graduated in 1957 with a B.A. in Philosophy and a minor in Classical Languages and Education. He went on to Saint Paul Seminary in Saint Paul, Minnesota to study subjects pertaining to the life of the Catholic Church. In 1961 in a Dominican monastery located in the hills of Winona, Paul Nelson was

ordained by Bishop Edward A. Fitzgerald in the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart. He returned home frightened to death and questioning his ability to do this job but he then began his professional journey as a priest that lasted fifty years.

### The Cotter Years

Fr. Nelson's first assignment as an ordained Priest was at St. Augustine in Austin, Minnesota teaching at Pacelli High School from 1961-1964. He was then re-assigned to Winona to work as a teacher of religion at Cotter High School, Assistant Pastor for St. John's Parish in Winona, and as Assistant Director of Religious Education for the diocese. Fr. Nelson was appointed Principal at Cotter at the young age of 30 the fall of 1965 after finishing his Master's degree in Educational Administration at St. Mary's University.

"I went on to spend ten very happy and successful years at Cotter as the principal. Cotter taught me more than I gave to Cotter, but that period of my priesthood was in many ways the happiest time of my life. I have never had a bad assignment and have always been happy in my work, but the Cotter years were the frosting on the cake. That assignment and experience defined my entire priesthood (Nelson, 2011, p. 274)."

*Author's Note; Father Paul Nelson is being awarded the Catholic Schools Foundation Founders Award during the Catholic Schools Foundation dinner on June 8, 2012.*

He managed a school of 600 students and 50 full and part-time staff with discipline and charisma. He served as Principal at Cotter from 1964-1975 or ten school years, which is the second longest Principal tenure at Cotter besides current Cotter High School principal, Sandi Blank, with eleven years.

When asked why his time at Cotter was so life-defining, Fr. Nelson attributes it to two things; the tremendous staff and interaction with students. He felt kids were respectful but still had fun. "They knew what line not to cross. The biggest disciplinary action I had was catching students smoking in the toilets," he shared while making a pounding action and laughing. Fr. Nelson noted that he learned how to deal with kids while still being in charge. Mike O'Brien '70 echoes those words by saying; "you never wanted to disappoint Fr. Nelson."

Fr. Nelson also shared stories about how the staff played together, creating a real bond amongst the personnel. "Even the nuns would come out and drink beers with us until late into the night!" he said with a big smile. The faculty were not paid well but they all valued Catholic education and together they sacrificed for the betterment of the school.

Fr. Nelson is full of lively stories from his days at Cotter; from practical jokes

and disciplinary actions to more serious subjects such as financial hardships. In the end, Fr. Nelson feels that the kids taught him more than he taught them.

### The Importance of Catholic Education

"I am convinced that the great success of the Catholic schools in this country, from the earliest days of the immigrants coming to America, was due to the fact that the people in the classroom had a mission. The mission was to inform, to inspire, and to empower the students they taught, in order to set them on a course of personal progress...those teachers were not afraid to challenge each student, to push the student to the brink, even if the child might report that challenge to his or her parents (Nelson, 2011, p. 114)."

Fr. Nelson believes the role of Catholic Education is to give students a spiritual foundation that will empower them to go deeper than cognition and intellectual capacity. He had met with a friend who recently moved to the Catholic Schools system from the public school. She noted the 'gift of discipline' in Catholic Schools compared to the public counterpart. Even the use of language was astonishingly different in the two schools. "Going to a Catholic School is a privilege and it comes with a responsibility. The dynamic and culture of discipline is a good thing; a dignified spirit," notes Fr. Nelson. He hopes that Catholic Education continues to be accessible to all and not just those with affluence.

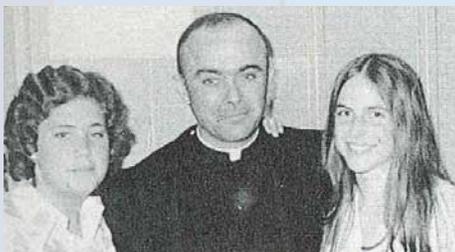
### Final Words

Father Paul Nelson is well-known and one of many beloved people in Cotter's rich 100-year history. He defines a period when Catholic Schools were transitioning and comprised of half religious teachers and half lay teachers.

Today Fr. Paul Nelson is retired but still leads a very busy life; conducting Mass on Sunday at a prison, and 8-10 weddings and 15-20 funerals each year. As Cotter enters into our next 100 years, Fr. Nelson has this message to impart to the school;

*"Trust your success. Staff: God bless you for your generosity and dedication.*

*Kids: appreciate the values you are learning on a day-to-day basis that will empower you the rest of your life."*



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## 1920's



Evelyn (Duff) Grover is Cotter's oldest (known) living Alumnae who graduated from Cathedral in 1929! She celebrated her 100th birthday in November 2011 – sharing Cotter Schools 100th birthday year! Evelyn lives in Galesville, Wisconsin.

## 1950's

Mary Jo Czaplewski '54 has semi-retired, but is still working part-time as a church secretary. This past summer, Mary Jo sponsored a student from Japan for one month. Mary Jo lives in Fridley, Minnesota.

## 1960's

Rose Mary (Shaw)'62 Eich is looking forward to her 50th reunion in September 2012! Rose Mary lives in Iowa.

William Goodrich '62 is also looking forward to his 50th reunion in September 2012! William lives in Bolivia.

## Something to Celebrate

Cotter Schools shared a special milestone with Evelyn (Duff) Grover from the Cathedral Class of 1929 in 2011. . . . the celebration of our 100th birthday!

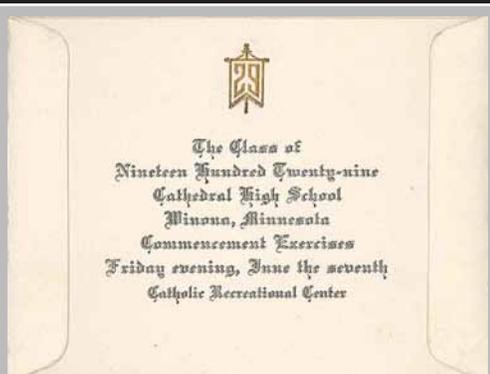
Evelyn Kathryn Duff was born in 1911 and grew up on her grandfather's farm in Piepers Valley near the Trempealeau and Buffalo county border in Wisconsin. Her family attended St. Thomas Pro-Cathedral in Winona and St. Bartholomew's in Trempealeau. Evelyn and her sister, Linda, enrolled at Cathedral High School in Winona in 1924 when tuition was \$2 a month and they often hitched a ride to get to school. Evelyn graduated from Cathedral in 1929 as the youngest in her class and as salutatorian.

Evelyn Duff married [the late] Henry Grover in 1937, raised five children at her home of 74 years near Centerville, and had a career in teaching before she retired in 1977. Evelyn is very active in the church; even leading fundraising efforts to build St. Mary's church in Trempealeau when it became its own parish in 1949. When talking about their mother's faith Evelyn's children agreed that, "her Catholic faith is her life and sets the foundation of who she is and how she lives."

Along with her five children, Evelyn has 15 grandchildren and step-grandchildren, and 16 great-grandchildren and step-great-grandchildren. Evelyn hand-wrote a 238-page book in 2000 where she shared memories of her early life. At the end of Evelyn's hand-written book, she wrote what she believes is a fundamental truth of life – faith in the Lord; "May God Bless You. . . The father whose love holds the world together. . . The Son who chose to walk among us. . . And the Spirit who makes us a unique being."

*Author's Note: Cathedral High School for Girls merged with Cotter High School for Boys in 1953 and became one Catholic school system under the name Cotter High School (now known as Cotter Schools). Cathedral High School is part of the rich 100-year history of Cotter Schools.*

*A special thanks to Barbara Kleinschmidt (Evelyn's daughter) and Rob Grover (Evelyn's grandson) for contributing to this article.*



## A brief history of Cathedral High School

Saint Thomas Church, also known as the pro-Cathedral, began school operations 1864 under the direction of the Brigittine Sisters and reopened in 1874 under the direction of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Reopening the school was one of the first actions of Fr. Joseph Cotter, who later was named the first Bishop of Winona in 1889. In 1912 a High School curriculum was established and the all-girls Cathedral High School was born. In 1931, the Sisters of Saint Francis began teaching in Cathedral.

Robert Allaire '66 is enjoying his retirement from public service. Robert loves being the Assistant Baseball Coach at California State University, Stanislaus. He and his wife, Susan, reside in California.

Dr. Thomas A. Beeman '66 is the Director of Nursing Systems Management for Master's Degree Major at the University of Texas El Paso.

### 1970's

Mike '70 & Sue (Hittner) '70 O'Brien became first-time grandparents on November 10, 2011 when Alessandra O'Brien was born! (shown at right)

Debra Norton '74 is the proud mom of recent Cotter graduate, Daniel Norton '11. Debra has been employed as an RN, CCRN at Winona Health ICCU for 34 years.



### 1980's

Jay Carroll's '80 son Collin finished his football career at Virginia Tech at the Sugar Bowl in January 2012. Collin has four brothers and two sisters.

Peggy (Papenfuss) Johnson '83 was honored on February 16th as one of eleven Dakota County 2012 Exceptional Businesswomen. Peggy is the community relations director at Dakota Electric Association, Farmington. She currently resides in Rosemount, MN.

Jeff Glowacki '85 is doing well and spreading the Cotter love in Los Angeles with his wife, Mary, and two sons; Jax & Gryff.

### 1990's

Alyssa (Gostomski) '94 Carter opened her own business in June 2011 called Body Blast Fitness and Dance in Crystal, Minnesota. Alyssa teaches cardio and dance classes.

Becca (Walsh) Meagher '94 and her husband, Grady, are the proud parents of Sylvia Kay Walsh born on October 7, 2011. Sylvia's grandpa is Peter Walsh '61.



Several Cotter friends living in NYC gathered for brunch at a Manhattan diner. From left to right: Charles Lo '01 and his girlfriend; Anthony Piscitiello '96, and his wife Susana; Soo Hee Oh, and her fiancé.



Since the photo was taken, Charles Lo is now an airline Pilot in China. Anthony and his wife, together, just finished Graduate school from Saint Mary's University of Minnesota in Philanthropy and Development. Soo Hee is now married and working as a news anchor for a Korean TV station in NYC. Anthony is still working as the Alumni Director of La Salle Academy, an All-boys Catholic high school run by the De La Salle Christian Brothers in NYC, and his wife Susana works at the Bowery Mission which helps the homeless, hungry, those with addictions and inner-city kids.

Maria Kujawa '98 graduated with her Master's of Leadership Degree from Grand Canyon University in June 2011.

Dan O'Brien '99 and his wife, Nina, welcomed their baby girl to the world on November 10, 2011. See photo under grandparents Mike and Sue O'Brien.

### 2000's



Amy (Heaser) Olson '00 graduated from Marquette with a BA in Criminology and Legal Studies in 2004, and St. Mary's with a MAI in Elementary Education in 2006. She is currently working as a child life specialist for the Mayo Clinic (following Ronald McDonald patients) in Rochester, Minnesota. Amy married Joel Olson in 2008 and together they have two beautiful daughters; Raya (2.5 years) and Hadley (7 months). The happy family lives in Kasson, MN.

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Kimberlee Ann Bastian '03 recently released her first book called *The Orphan, The Soul Catcher, and the Black Bilizzard!*

**Genre:** Contemporary Fantasy (American Fantasy), Young Adult, Historic Chicago, Depression Era

**Description:** Most of his life, Charlie Reese has been surrounded by a loving family and all the comforts of home. But when a house fire claims them, he and his cousin, Jimmy are sent to an orphanage in the heart of 'Depression Era' Chicago. A year later, Charlie's life is shaken by yet another tragedy and with it comes the mysterious introduction of a secretive runaway, named Bartholomew. As Charlie begins to discover more about his new companion, he unknowingly becomes a participant in a two-hundred year old secret. Come the morning of the Black Blizzard, Charlie finds he must make a choice - flee the destiny laden at his feet or take on his responsibility and follow a path full of supernatural wonders.

**Purchase Info:** Lulu.com, Barnes & Noble.com, Amazon.com (may be available in select stores)

**ebook:** Kindle Store, iStore, Barnes & Noble, Lulu.com

Matt DeMarais '03 and his wife, Kelsey, welcomed their second son in October 2011! Joseph David joins big brother, Christopher Martin. The happy family resides in North Prairie, Wisconsin.

### 2010's

Daniel Norton '11 obtained the rank of Eagle Scout through Boy Scouts of America.



### Faculty & Staff Updates

Fr. Paul Nelson, Cotter Principal from 1965-1976, recently released a new book titled *A Priest from the Prairies of Minnesota*. The book is for sale online at Amazon or through [www.createspace.com/3663328](http://www.createspace.com/3663328).

*If you are a current or past faculty or staff from Cotter Schools, please send us your updates! Alumni and friends love to hear about what you are doing!*

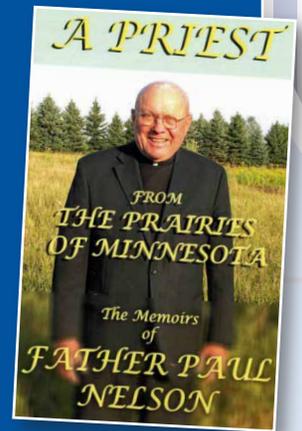
## Cotter Alumni & Friends Respond to Fr. Nelson's Book

*"What a wonderful memoir of such a dynamic man!" – Jan (Thompson) Carpenter '68*

*"It brought back a lot of good memories." – Diane (McCormick) Wilber '70*

*"It's quite evident that many of the experiences [Fr. Nelson] had as a youth and working on his family's farm contributed to the development of his character. Despite being a female, I have long been interested in how one is "called" to the priesthood. His recounting of his life experiences are providing wonderful insight into that process and his ensuing devotion as one of God's servants." – Laura Lambrecht '88*

*"I've known Father Nelson for about 45 years, but reading about his childhood, his love for the farm, for the land, for the faith of his ancestors gave me new insights into how he has become the pastoral and compassionate person that he is. It's obvious that in his more than fifty years of priesthood he has been with thousands of people at the deepest levels and most important events of their lives; his happiness in sharing those moments is the best advertisement I know for drawing others to the life of the Gospel." – Rita Haugh, Retired Cotter faculty*



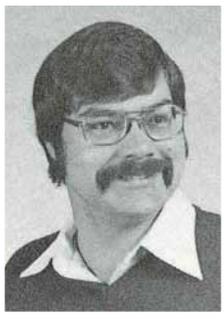
### Help keep Cotter's records updated!

Send your updated contact information to [development@cotterschools.org](mailto:development@cotterschools.org). Also, find an online form at [cotterschools.org/alumni](http://cotterschools.org/alumni). A current address, phone number, and email are key to getting you information from Cotter.

KEEP UP WITH COTTER NEWS AT [COTTERSCHOOLS.ORG](http://COTTERSCHOOLS.ORG)

### Where Are They Now?

In this feature, we will track down a past Cotter Schools faculty/staff and get up update on their life after Cotter.



**Name:** Marty Kirchof  
**Years You Taught At Cotter:** 1980 - 1985  
**What Subject You Taught at Cotter:**  
Biology, Anatomy/Physiology, and Physical Science  
**Family:** Wife – Carol and twin daughters 19 yrs old – Lorelee and Kristina  
**Where you currently live:** Rural De Soto, Wisconsin  
**Your current occupation:** Middle/High School Principal

#### What is your favorite memory of your time at Cotter?

There are too many to really list. I recall my first class and how hungry they were to learn. (I was hired after Christmas 1980 to replace the previous teacher) I was amazed at how hard the students worked and how much they learned in only half a year. All of my Anatomy classes hold memories. The enthusiasm that all the students showed for this class has always been excellent. Outside of the classes – I remember the time that a number of the male faculty put on an assembly. We dressed, played, and sang songs from the 50's. I was not very good but it was fun.

#### What path did you pursue after Cotter? What are you doing now?

When I left Cotter I was hired by De Soto High School to teach Biology, Biology II, and Physical Science. I immediately changed the Biology II into an Anatomy class which became very successful. I also added a Medical Terminology class as well. From 1986-1990 I obtained a degree in Education Administration. In the 3rd quarter of the 89 – 90 school year the principal at the time had some difficulty and the superintendent “demoted” me to principal for a short time as a replacement – which turned out to be a long time. I have been principal ever since – 22 years. I have now been in education for 33 years. Long time for someone who actually went

to college for a career in Environmental or Biological research. Goes to show that life may have other plans than the ones you made for yourself.

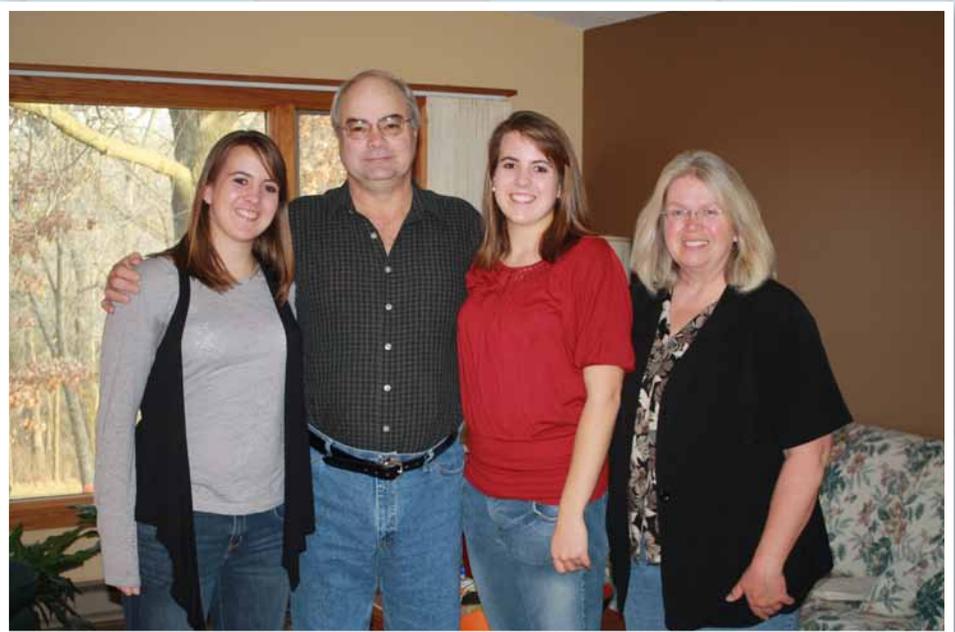
#### Interesting fact since leaving Cotter:

- Twin Daughters who are now 19 yrs old.
- Have worked in a school that was once considered as having one of the poorest curriculums in the state that has now been developed to being one of the schools with one of the most advanced curriculum in the state for our size.
- Currently putting our curriculum completely online for our students and possibly for out-of-district students. To be completed in the next two years.
- Have developed a Medical Terminology course that is transcribed with Viterbo and WTC for 3 undergraduate credits that is available for high school students.

#### Anything else you'd like to add?

I currently own and operate a farm of about 120 acres. With about 25-30 head of sheep, 20 head of beef, 4 llamas, and 3 miniature donkeys. With retirement less than a year away I plan to farm and continue working with the local school on curriculum development.

*Marty Kirchof was mentioned by Doug Dieterman '88 in a Fall 2011 Ramblin's Generations at Cotter article.*



Do you ever wonder what past Cotter faculty/staff are up to and what life was like after Cotter? Please submit your request to Mandi Householder at Cotter Schools and they may be highlighted in the next edition of the Ramblin's! Email: [development@cotterschools.org](mailto:development@cotterschools.org).

# generations at Cotter

By: Mandi Householder

With a skirt down to her ankles and saddle shoes, Donna (Brown) Peplinski '54 couldn't wait for Friday night to come when she was in high school; "we had Friday night dances at the Catholic Rec. We would go to the "Steak Shop" for Coke and french-fries and we waited to see how many guys would come in." Of course only one boy caught Donna's attention. She later dated and married the late David Peplinski '53 in 1957 and together they had two children; Tom '78 and Lori '79.

While chasing boys was a pastime, at Cotter Donna was involved in school plays and cheer leading. She was a Homecoming Queen Attendant her senior year and rode in a convertible during the Homecoming parade. She notes that she attended Cathedral School for Girls her freshmen and sophomore year before they merged with Cotter in 1952/1953 and this was a very special time at the school.

All of her high school memories are very dear to Donna and she was honored to be able to go to Cotter as she shares; "Catholic Schools provided the foundation we needed to be good people all our life and help prepare us for the future with God in our life always. Our values were strengthened because of the faith-based education. Cotter builds excellent character in their students and



Kneeling, Left to Right: Tom Slaggle, and Merlin Duellman. Standing, Left to Right: Kay Joswick, Pegg Vaughan, Nancy Ciszak, Peg Ramsden, Mary Roemer, Catherine Small, and Donna Brown.

many of the values they receive stay with them throughout their life."

Donna is currently retired but worked at St. Anne Hospice for 17 years as a receptionist and 16 years as the Volunteer Coordinator. While working as a Volunteer Coordinator, she recruited students from Cotter High School and Winona Senior High School to volunteer for various volunteer jobs. This was very rewarding for Donna, the St. Anne residents, and the students.

Donna was happy she could send her two children to Cotter because of the small class sizes and individualized attention by the teachers. And her son, Tom, echoes those words by saying; "we chose WACS and Cotter for our children because of their faith-based education."

Tom Peplinski '78 enjoyed Cotter for the wonderful teachers such as John Nett '38, Randy Lisowski '69, Tom Bork, and Fr. Paul Nelson. He remembers the high-quality learning environment as well as extracurricular activities he was involved with such as football and hockey. He also participated in classes offered at the Winona Senior High including Drafting and Miscellaneous Metals. Above all, it is the friendships with his classmates that make Cotter special to Tom.

Tom shares a memorable moment about his friends and his football career at Cotter; "My senior year in football, with six seconds left on the clock, I looked at Dave Luebbe '78 (our quarterback) and he called the "hook-and-ladder" play. This was a pass to Jay Carrol '80, who flipped it to Mark Ayotte '78, who ran 50 yards for the winning score. This was the last play of my football career."



After Cotter, Tom graduated from Red Wing Technical College in carpentry and is currently the CEO/ President of Wapasha Construction Company, Inc. He lives in Winona with his wife, Colleen, and two girls; Michaela and Paige. Paige is in 6th grade at St. Stanislaus School and serves as the President of her Student Council. She plays basketball and soccer, and enjoys playing the flute and piano.

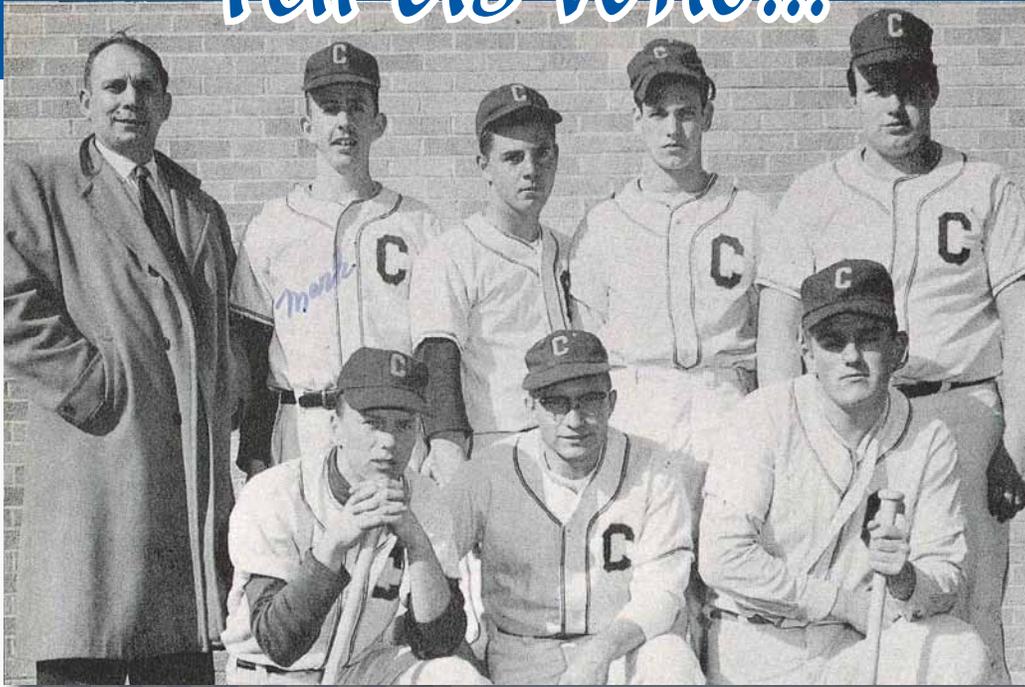
Michaela is a sophomore at Cotter High School and stays busy with volleyball, CCMP, and marching band. She will graduate in 2014 and says she likes being able to have a religion class. "Cotter is great because it's a Catholic school. It's a very lively school with many international students. I enjoy having small class sizes, and I learn about faith in a safe school environment," shares Michaela.

Donna enjoys attending many of her grandchildren's activities and she is happy to impart; "knowing [my grandchildren] are going to Cotter makes me very proud and happy. Cotter sets their standards high and expects excellence in their students."

#### Fun Facts about the Brown/Peplinski Family

- Donna won the award for "Most School Spirit" her senior year
- Donna's daughter, Lori (Peplinski) Ryan '79 was a cheerleader in high school. Lori's two children graduated from Holy Family Catholic School in Peoria, Illinois and Lori's son, Chris, teaches art and coaches at St. Ambrose in Davenport, Illinois.
- Tom's wife, Colleen, attended the College of St. Teresa where the Cotter Campus is located today.
- Tom and Colleen are active volunteers in the school; volunteering for the Cotter Auction, Centennial, Band Boosters, Athletic Boosters, CCMP, and many other activities.

# Tell Us Who...



Here is this issue of **Ramblin's "Tell Us Who..."** contest. If you can identify six of the eight people in this photo from the Rambler archives, your name will be placed in a drawing for a great Cotter prize! We will identify the photo and announce the winner in our next issue of Ramblin's. Good luck! Send your answers to: [development@cotterschools.org](mailto:development@cotterschools.org) or mail to:

Ramblin's "Tell Us Who..." Contest  
 Attn: Alumni Office  
 1115 West Broadway  
 Winona, MN 55987 USA

# Tell Us Who... Revealed



We had lots of people respond to this Tell Us Who... contest. Congratulations to Rob Foreman '79 who was the winner of a Cotter prize!

Found in the 1976 yearbook – it's a photo of the Student Council.  
 Front Row: Jeff Kramer, Gerry Krage, Kathy Taylor, John Woodward

Second Row: Peter Caldwell, John Speck, Dean Korder, Lee Ann Hartert, Jeanne Weiland, Ann Voelker, Bob Conrad, Kevin Flemming, Sandra Bryson, Teri Januscka, Mike Leaf, Randy Racitti, Mike Kinowski.



Special Edition: Faculty Tell Us Who... Revealed  
 Congratulations to Christina Nitti '94 for winning this special edition of Tell Us Who... .

1. Mr. Dave Gudmastad
2. Mr. Don Nitti
3. Mrs. Mary Hansel-Parlin
4. Mr. Mike O'Brien
5. Mrs. Sandi Blank



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