wrestling program at Lourdes Academy has spanned 50 years as students, coaches and advocates. Don and Val coached wrestling at Lourdes from 1978 to 1998 during which the wrestling program had 83 state place finishers, 23 state champions and seven student athletes with more than 100 career wins. They were voted Conference Coach of the Year five times and WISAA State Coach of the Year four times and were inducted into the Wisconsin Wrestling Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2009. With every success Don and Val accomplished, Chris and Lois have been at their sides supporting them. Chris coached the wrestling cheerleaders at Lourdes and started one of the first school stores. They organized fund raisers to raise money for the program. The Zemkes also championed the Oshkosh On the Water wrestling tournament, which has become the largest tournament in the state.

Athletic Hall of Fame – Todd Neubauer ('86)

Todd Neubauer was a member of both the football and track team at Lourdes Academy. He lettered in football for three years and was named 2nd Team All FVCC Running Back, 1st Team All FVCC Linebacker and All District Private and Parochial School Linebacker and team MVP. In track, Todd took 3rd place in the WISAA 100 Meter Dash and the 400 Meter Relay team helping his team qualify for the WISAA State Meet in 1985. He was voted team MVP in 1986 and helped his team earn the WISAA State Track & Field Championship placing 2nd in the 100 Meter Dash, 2nd in the 200 Meter Dash and 3rd in the 400 Meter Relay.

Lourdes also bid farewell to several retiring teachers and staff who collectively dedicated more than 150 years of service to Lourdes. Congratulations and best wishes to Mary Ann Wyman ('69) and Sue Gerarden – elementary school; Judy Mayo – middle school; John Cleaver ('69), Pat Dwyer-Hallquist, Joe Wiedenmeier, Mary Mueller, John Netzer and Paul Trader - high school.

Lourdes honors alumni, volunteers, staff

Outstanding Alumni – Julie Seckar Anderson ('75)

Julie Seckar Anderson opened Julie’s Touch of Silver Dance Studio in 1982 teaching baton twirling, dance, gymnastics and modeling. Since that time, Julie’s students have won local, state, regional, national and world titles including a silver medal at the National Baton Twirling Association (NBTA) World Championships in Holland ('06), and gold medals in Belgium ('09) and Switzerland ('12). In 2012, the Senior Parade Corps won the Grand National Parade Corps title for the 16th straight year, and in 2015 Julie’s corps won two gold medals in Italy—the first time an American group won two gold medals in the world competition. Julie was named Corps Director of the Year during the NBTA National Championships in 1999 and was inducted into the NBTA Twirling Hall of Fame in 2003.

Distinguished Stewardship – Val ('71) & Lois Zemke and Don ('68) & Chris Zemke

Val, Lois, Don and Chris Zemke's involvement in the
Lady Knights inspire the “impossible”

Cerebral Palsy confined Ed Kastern to a wheelchair most of his life until a little over a year ago when he decided to change the course of his future. With the help of his home health agency and inspired by the Lady Knights Volleyball team, Kastern is leaving his wheels behind. Watch the heartwarming story at http://www.nbc26.com/news/nbc26-cares/oshkosh-man-with-cp-walks-for-first-time.

Students win Shark Tank competition

High school students from throughout Oshkosh competed in a Shark Tank competition to launch their latest and greatest business ideas. One team from Lourdes Academy advanced to the final round where they pitched their Click-a-Cane, a cane holder for home or travel use, to Shark Tank’s Daymond John and business leaders from Oshkosh. The team was presented with the “Most Likely to Succeed” award. Congratulations to our Shark Tank winners.

It’s a great day to be a Knight!

Follow Lourdes Academy on Facebook for Knight Sightings, alumni updates and other fun happenings. You’re sure to recognize a face or two.

Hats off to the Class of 2016!

Lourdes Academy Softball claims first Conference Championship in History

Lady Knights Jordyn Giese (’16) and Erica Sommerfeld (’17) with Kastern.

Girls 4x800M relay wins state

Congratulations to the athletes who competed at the State Track Meet in LaCrosse, especially to the first-place finishing Girls 4x800M relay team of Angela Moore (’16), Emily Foley (’17), Katie Van Scyoc (’17) and Carly Vandenhouten (’18).

Swanson elected to lead the State Bar

Lourdes alumnus Paul Swanson (’72) was elected to lead the State Bar of Wisconsin. Swanson is the first Oshkosh attorney to lead the bar since Edward Dempsey in 1928.
Inspirations in Sports & Recreation

From the dojo to the basketball court and the long fairways in between, our Knights have set a course for greatness in the field of sports and recreation. Thank you to these alumni who shared their fascinating stories of success.

Phil Van Treese: Black Belt Extraordinaire

For his fifth birthday, Phil Van Treese’s (‘64) father enrolled him in Judo lessons. At age seven, he began studying Aikido, a form of martial arts that was developed by Morihei Ueshiba. Little did he know that his background in martial arts and propensity for learning foreign languages would shape a fascinating career.

Van Treese and his family were living in Japan when he began studying a competitive form of Aikido called Tomiki Aikido, with sensei Kenji Tomiki, a direct student of Ueshiba. Despite several moves, Van Treese continued to study Aikido when his family moved to Oshkosh at age 11.

Shortly after high school, Van Treese enlisted in the Army. He was stationed in Vietnam and began teaching martial arts to fellow soldiers.

“That came in handy,” Van Treese said. “That’s why I’m still here and some people aren’t. I felt a satisfaction that people learned to defend themselves and I had something to do with that.”

Van Treese also received one of the highest scores possible on the Army’s Defense Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB), a test used to measure aptitude to learn a foreign language. He spoke four languages already by the time he enlisted. Van Treese grew up speaking his parents’ native languages of Dutch and German, learned English for school and studied Spanish at Lourdes High School.

He was assigned to a snatch and grab 1st Battalion in Vietnam and later joined the South Korean Tiger Division, which required a black belt in a martial art.

“They dropped us in a hot landing zone behind enemy lines,” Van Treese recalled. “We were not allowed to engage the enemy unless it was a matter of life or death.”

From 1981 to 1985, Van Treese was assigned to the US Embassy in Bonn, Germany, where the ambassador made it mandatory that all staff and military guards study Aikido, which Van Treese taught. The Army then gave Van Treese orders to learn Danish and assigned him to the US Embassy in Copenhagen.

There Van Treese reunited with friends from around the world and spoke to all of them in different languages. Military personnel picked up on this and reassigned Van Treese to the US Embassy in Bonn, Germany, where he would work as a personal interpreter for the ambassador. He was required to take social classes including ballroom dance. At first, he resisted until he learned that the classes benefited his study of Aikido.

“The footwork in Aikido is based on ballroom dancing, the way you move your hips, hands and feet,” he explained.

Van Treese encountered prominent people throughout his career including Margaret Thatcher, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and King Franco of Spain. “It was an extremely fun time. It was the best time I ever had in my life.”

Van Treese is an 8th dan (black belt) in Tomiki Aikido, 6th dan in Judo and well versed in Tai Chi (Yang style). He continues to teach Aikido and Judo at Lugo’s Martial Arts in Tampa, Florida, and travels around the world training individuals in the art of Aikido. He also recently passed the exam for Mensa, a society whose members’ IQs are in the top two percent of the population.

Todd Meier: From Knight to Hoosier

It was 1982 and the Number 2 seeded Lourdes Knights were going up against the Number 1 seeded Roncalli Jets. Todd Meier (‘83) stuffed five dunks and scored a career high 32 points. Before the game, classmates had covered the skylights in the Castle Gym with tarps and filled them with confetti. When the buzzer rang after the last dunk of the game, confetti spilled out over the crowd. That was Meier’s most memorable game at Lourdes, and he had the NBA in his sights.

Meier always dreamed of playing professional basketball. Before the days of AAU (Amateur Athletic Union) Basketball, he attended exposure camps with college coaches and was recognized as a prospect by major universities including UCLA, Hawaii and eight of the Big 10
Dr. Brian Schneider: Carving the Greens

Brian Schneider ('92) was finishing up school at the University of Wisconsin Madison with degrees in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and plans to pursue a career in sports medicine or orthopedic surgery when he had a

Lourdes celebrates the tradition of Catholic education with the third generation O’Connor/Buzzell family.
change of heart. After five years at Madison, he decided to take his career in a different direction.

“T__played golf as a kid. I always loved the game and was fascinated by golf courses,” Schneider said. “I knew I couldn’t go to a university and get a degree [in course design]. I had to find a way into the business.”

So, Schneider took the advice of a golf course design professional to travel around, visit courses and study what makes the great ones great.

“I got jobs working at courses around the country and visited as many as I could,” he said. “I played a lot of golf, studied courses and educated myself on golf course architecture.”

Before he finished at Madison in 1997, Schneider landed his first job at Kohler’s Whistling Straits, host of the 2020 Ryder Cup. He spent the summer working with the course superintendents and learned course construction first hand. Over the next four years, Schneider would find similar work at a number of prestigious clubs, including The Old Course at St. Andrews, Riviera, Merion, Augusta National and Pine Valley, widely considered the finest course in the world. His ultimate goal was to work for Tom Doak of Renaissance Golf Design, one of the world’s leading golf course architects and author. It was Doak’s book, _The Confidential Guide to Golf Courses_, that guided Schneider’s travels early on. Throughout his travels, Schneider would call Doak’s office and send him letters.

“I basically pestered and nagged him,” Schneider laughed. “I was obnoxiously persistent. I wanted to work for him and wouldn’t take no for an answer.”

In 2002, Schneider was living in Philadelphia when Doak was building a second course for Stonewall Golf Club in Elverson, Pennsylvania. He convinced Doak he could be of service and was added to the construction crew, shaping many of the greens and bunkers. At the end of the project, Doak hired Schneider full-time as a design associate on his Renaissance Golf Design team.

From there, Doak sent Schneider to New Zealand and Australia for two years to assist with projects including Cape Kidnappers Golf Club on New Zealand’s Hawke’s Bay. In 2002, at the end of the Cape Kidnappers project, Doak hired Schneider full time to his Renaissance Golf Design team.

Doak then sent Schneider to the rugged coast of Australia’s island state, Tasmania, to work on Barnbougle Dunes, considered one of the most ideal golf courses in the world. Unlike golf course architecture of the past where landscapes were completely transformed, Doak’s philosophy is to leave things alone as much as possible.

“At Whistling Straits, two million yards of dirt were moved so that it no longer resembles its original state,” Schneider explained. “Tom finds sites that are naturally well suited to golf and does as little as possible to them. It’s a matter of massaging the landforms and topography. Every site is unique.”

Golf course architecture is a far cry from his original studies at Madison but Schneider credits Mr. Bill Behring for following his passion saying he inspired him not to be a scientist but to find a career he really enjoyed.

“I love to travel. It’s hard being away from family, but I can travel with them a bit and spend time in wonderful places,” Schneider said of his wife, Vanessa, and four children. “I love being outside, being creative, technical, artistic, sculptural. Most days I spend in a bull dozer and excavator. It’s like being a big kid in a sandbox. It’s cool to think that what we’re doing could last for hundreds of years.”

Schneider has traveled the world designing unique courses including exclusive places for millionaires, but he has a passion for creating places where kids can learn the game. He grew up playing golf at Lakeshore in Oshkosh when he could play all day for three dollars.

“Everyone I work with at Renaissance, Tom included, grew up playing affordable public golf. Along with finding opportunities to create truly special courses on spectacular sites, it’s also a priority of ours to seek out projects that might not make a Top 100 list but are great assets to a community.”

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The Music Man comes to Oshkosh

Oshkosh’s historic Grand Opera House was transformed into the small town of River City, Iowa, during Lourdes Academy’s performance of _The Music Man_.

Nearly 100 students joined forces to bring _The Music Man_ to life with vivid scenery, toe-tapping music, and breathtaking choreography and costumes. Stay tuned for Lourdes Academy’s 2017 Spring Musical!
UPCOMING LOURDES REUNIONS

Class of 1969 “Medicare Party”
Sat., July 9 • 5-10 p.m.
Robbins Supper Club, 1810 Omro Rd.
Jim Smith – smithdad81@gmail.com

Class of 1981 & 1982 Combined Reunion
Friday, August 12 • 5:30 p.m.
On the patio at Fox River Brewing Company (formerly Fratello’s), 1501 Arboretum Dr.
Sat., Aug. 13 • 5:30 p.m.
Casual gathering at the Ground Round (inside the Best Western Premier Waterfront Hotel), 1 N. Main St.
Please visit our Facebook page at Academy8182 or our website at www.Academy8182.com

Class of 1986 – 30 Year Reunion
Sat., Aug. 13 • Time TBD
Elks Club Oshkosh, 175 W. Fernau Ave.
Vickie Kempinger - 920-410-5155 or at thisismyemail@new.rr.com

Class of 1966 50th Reunion/Sock Hop
Sat., Sept. 10 • Time TBD
Lourdes Academy Commons, 110 N. Sawyer St.
Joan Schneider - Muggs48@yahoo.com

Class of 2006 – 10 Year
Michael Frohrib - mfrohrib@badgerliquor.com

Planning a reunion? Contact Shannon Gibson at 920-426-3626, ext. 541 or sgibson@lourdesacademyoshkosh.org for assistance. Lourdes Academy offers free mailing lists and facilities usage for Lourdes class reunions.