



MRS. BRICKING AND MRS. ROENKER LOOK BACK FONDLY ON THEIR YEARS AT NDA. 3-5



PANDA SENIORS SHARE WHAT THEY'VE LEARNED. 9

THE GAVEL



Pandas put on their Sunday best for charity

The Notre Dame Pandas took on the St. Ursula Bulldogs in a flag football game to help raise awareness and money (\$8,200!) for leukemia research at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. The game took place on the Pandas' home field on Sunday, April 24. Read more about the day and the Pandas' preparations. **Story, 2**

Orange and White game

Football just part of the experience

Blue 42, blue 42, set ... hike! Run seven steps, make a sharp turn to the left, and get open. Ball is thrown, catch it and run to the end zone. Flag is taken from you, you're down.

Green 25 Green 25, set....Hike! Go long, run as fast as you can while still watching the ball. Get away from your defender. Catch the ball, quick spin move and run to the end zone.

Touchdown! The crowd goes wild.

The Orange and White game is a flag football game that began six years ago, in which St. Ursula played against Cincinnati rival Ursuline to honor a student at St. Ursula who had passed away from leukemia. The game's first five years provided a combined donation to Cincinnati Children's Hospital of more than \$32,000.

Last year, St. Ursula asked Notre Dame Academy if it would like to take part in the game because the two rivals were getting a bit too competitive against each other. The game was held at St. Ursula and was loaded with lots of fun, even though the Pandas lost to the Bulldogs.

This year, Notre Dame Academy was honored to host the flag football game April 29. And even though the Pandas lost, 14-7, they had a lot of fun playing the game, and a lot of fun learning it in the weeks leading up to the game.

The team was open to any seniors who wanted to participate. Practices were mandatory, every Tuesday and Thursday for about an hour after school. The coaches were four members of the

Covington Catholic's varsity football team and taught the Panda players the rules of the game.

"Not many of the girls have ever played football before, so to throw and catch the ball was extremely funny," said Abby Schuh, Notre Dame co-president, organizer of the football team and team mom.

"The fact that I have never played football before

is a huge challenge. I thought watching NFL games every Sunday would help but it's harder than I thought," said Christa Saelinger, the quarterback, who said she crashed into her sister, Megan, while running an option play in practice.

"Practice makes perfect," Schuh said. "We are all having fun while doing it!"

Game day started with a Meat and Greet hosted by St. Xavier in the NDA parking lot at 5 p.m. This consisted of a cookout of hamburgers and hot dogs and a chance to meet people from other schools. The game kicked off at 6 p.m. with a touchdown for the Pandas in the first half.

After halftime, which featured a dance-off between Covington Catholic and Moeller High School boys, St. Ursula scored two touchdowns, one with an interception. The game ended 14-7 with a fun and friendly get-together with music after. The day was filled with excitement and laughter, and the Pandas are still in good terms with the Bulldogs.

- Katie Stratman



Senior Pandas get their game faces on for the Orange and White game against St. Ursula (Leah Darpel photo).

Mrs. Roenker retiring

Time to spend more with her other family

After teaching math at Notre Dame Academy for 33 years, Mrs. Connie Roenker has decided it is time to retire.

Leaving Notre Dame is bittersweet for Mrs. Roenker, she said. The relationships she has created here at Notre Dame mean a lot to her, and she said she will miss her coworkers. "Some of them have become some of my best friends," she said.

She will also miss teaching, which has been a big part of her life.

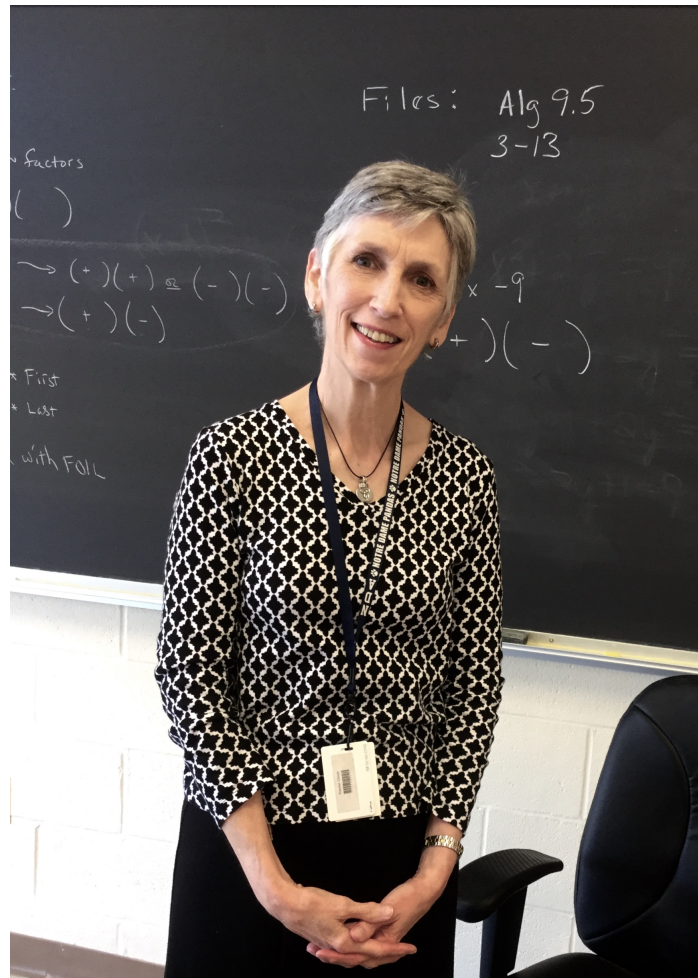
Mrs. Roenker wasn't married before she started teaching. She said after she got married and had children of her own, it taught her to be a better teacher.

After teaching at Notre Dame for 33 years, she says a lot has changed. The building has grown and flourished, we now have a male principal, and every student has her own iPad.

Mrs. Roenker says after she retires the first thing she will do is visit her daughter and grandkids, who live in Virginia -- literally two days after her retirement begins, she will make her way to visit her family.

Family has always been a big part of Mrs. Roenker's life, and she says she feels like she has a family at Notre Dame.

This was most relevant when her mother and father passed away in 1989 due to an accident. She says that her family at Notre Dame really helped through a hard time like



Mrs. Roenker has taught math at Notre Dame for the past 33 years. While she looks forward to spending time with her family, she said she'll miss her NDA family. *(Sarah Bajric photo)*

that, and she knew that there were a lot of people who cared a lot about her.

I am sure everyone who has been taught by Mrs. Roenker would say it was a pleasure having her as a teacher.

- Sarah Bajric

Mrs. Bricking retiring

'I will miss the company of young people'

After 22 years teaching English at Notre Dame Academy, her alma mater, Mrs. Linda Bricking will retire at the end of the year. I had the privilege to interview her. - Leah Darpel

Q: What are your plans after your retirement?

A: I tell everyone that I have been human *doing* for so long that I plan on being a human *being*. I enjoy cooking and I enjoy gardening and I hope to travel. I

haven't really had all opportunities to travel because I teach every year, and it's hard to fit all that in the summer. I have a daughter who lives in Boston, she has three children that I seldom get to see, and I'm hoping to see more of them. And be able to go to one of their games and school performances, things I haven't been able to do.

Q: How has NDA changed over the years in a negative or positive way?

A: I don't see Notre Dame changing in negative ways. When I came here from Covington Catholic in 1994, we didn't have computers. We didn't have iPads. There were computers, they existed. I had a primitive type of desktop model at home. I did a lot of things by longhand or I would go home and type it. It was just much, much more hands on in the sense that students were taking



Mrs. Bricking begins class with E.E. Cummings' poem "i thank you God for most this amazing."

notes in notebooks. I feel that we had a lot more personal communication in some ways other than email. In a sense I think it's more convenient, but there's something lost as well.

I think that Notre Dame, as it grows, is striving to be a collaborative culture, one that uses technology as a tool rather than making it be just about the technology. I think that's the challenge -- to make sure that it isn't. So I guess that's a change I've seen. I think that there is a more, shall I say, positive, and even still developing, relationship with Covington Catholic. I think that's a good thing. I think we appreciate each other more, perhaps, than we used to. We see

our differences and acknowledge them, but appreciate the things we have in common and how we can help each other.

Q: How have you changed as a person and a teacher over the course of your teaching career?

A: That's a good question. I think that I have a better sense of how to teach through experience. What works and what doesn't. I've always believed that it's really important to relate literature to life; otherwise, why read it? How is this going to enlighten me, or what kind of a takeaway do I have from this? Is this going to benefit the course of my actions or my judgment? What do I want to remember from reading this book? I really feel that in my life, literature has been a great inspiration to me and a coping mechanism. I reflect on pieces of literature that are similar to things that have happened to me in my life and think about how people responded or how I would respond. I just see a lot of parallels.

I think that I've changed in that I was more rule-bound when I started, and now I'm not so much that way. Not that I don't believe in rules. I think rules are necessary for order, but I think that I can take the pulse of my classes. I know where the lines are and I think they do, too. As a teacher, I come to the classroom with more experience and therefore I am more relaxed. I know the material. I feel confident in teaching the material and because I'm not reliant on notes or sources, that's an asset, because I can then get better supplementary material now that there is so much online. It makes me a better-equipped teacher in some ways. I know through experience that sometimes it doesn't matter if I finish everything I planned to do, because sometimes, something has happened that's more important to address.

Q: What was a time where you felt the support and love of the NDA community?

A: Well, I really felt supported when my husband was ill a couple of years ago. I felt like my classes were very supportive of the stress that I was having then. They were very compassionate and

concerned. I felt, certainly, personal support. Professionally, I feel supported because I don't have a lot of trouble with people not doing what I ask them to do. I set a standard -- and I think it's a high standard, and I don't apologize for it -- and they meet it. I've always believed people, when given the proper motivation, will meet the standards you've set for them. When I open up Turnitin, and everybody submitted and no one plagiarized, and I read study guides and they're thorough ... You know, I feel like that is the mutual support and respect that teacher and student feel for each other. I try to assign things that I think are meaningful that I think are going to be a learning tool. I always read what my students write and I think they know that and I think that they know that I give critical comments, that it's meant to be constructive. Certainly, there are always those times when someone will complain, or parents will complain, but that's the exception.

Q: What will you miss most about NDA?

A: I will miss the people I work with. I really think we have wonderful faculty. I will miss my classes. I really like teenagers. And some people say "You do?" I've never felt that way. I prefer teenagers. I would much rather be teaching high school than grade school or college. I think I will miss the company of young people. Now, I have grandchildren, so I have kids around me, but I like what goes on in the classroom. I'll miss the world of ideas, in the sense that I enjoy communicating ideas to people. I like the discussion that goes on. I know I'll miss that. It's going to be hard to wean myself away from it because I've done it my whole life. I also feel like there is more to like than just working, and before I can't, I want to be able to travel and do some things that I just have never had the time to do. I think I've earned it. My husband's health isn't great, so while he still can travel, we can do it together. That's one reason why I decided now is a good time.

Once a Panda, always a Panda

State champs at NDA, Molonys back to lead tennis program

Notre Dame Academy's tennis program has welcomed back two distinguished alumnae to coach the Pandas: Lyndsey Molony-Maynard as varsity and JV head coach, and Kara Molony-Hussey as varsity and JV assistant coach. The Molony sisters, who won state tennis titles as Notre Dame students, took over after the retirement of long-time NDA coach Rob Hardin, who retired as head coach but is still with the program as an assistant.

Lyndsey played at NDA 1997-2000. Her freshman year she played doubles with Kara, a senior, and they won state that year. After two seasons of singles, during her senior year Lyndsey played doubles with her other sister, Molly, who was then a freshman; Lyndsey and Molly made it to the semifinals of state in 2000.

"I have some of the best memories and friendships because of my experiences with the NDA tennis program," Lyndsey said. "Because it was such a good experience for me, I hope to pass that on to other Notre Dame girls. I really enjoy being a coach at NDA and have always had a passion to teach and coach tennis."

Lyndsey learned to play tennis at age 4 from her parents, both of whom played college tennis at Northern Kentucky. She played singles and doubles at the University of Cincinnati and had a NCAA ranking of #27 in doubles with Kara.

After college, Lyndsey worked as a trainer and ran various tennis programs. As a tennis professional, she works with some of the top junior players in the area, at Five Seasons and elsewhere. Lyndsey expects every girl to work hard, be a team player and have a good attitude on and off the court.

The Pandas started the season well and extended their winning streak in the regional tournament to 21 years in a row, qualifying for the state team tournament. In addition, Francie Case and Kylie Moellering qualified as a doubles team.

- Annie Cheesman



Top, Lyndsey Maynard-Molony (left) and sister Kara Molony-Hussey. Bottom, Pandas pose at their tournament.

"NDA Tennis would not be the same without Rob Hardin and Kara being involved," Lyndsey Molony (left, with sister Kara) said. "It's fun to teach with my sister. It is great for the tennis program to have such a great assistant coach with such a high level of expertise on the sport! It is also great having Rob still be a part of the program!"

"All of the girls on the team this year are nice girls, they work hard and are coachable!"
- Lyndsey Molony-Maynard

Sports

Panda track team young and in a hurry

The Notre Dame Academy track team is blowing away the competition this year, placing first or second in every meet so far. The shocking part is that more than 75% of the team is freshmen. Hearing this must make you wonder how have they been keeping up with all of the more experienced teams?

Well, meet Elly Piatt. She is a freshman at NDA, but has been running track since she was in sixth grade. Elly moved from a suburb of Chicago to Northern Kentucky over the summer. Most people agree that moving during high school is one of the scariest things that could ever happen to you, but not to Elly.

"It wasn't as hard because everyone was new to the school, not just me," said Elly.

Elly met most friends through soccer during the fall season, but track is where she really stands out. Elly is only 6 seconds away from breaking the 800 meter run record for NDA. The record is held by assistant coach Kirsten Geiger. Coach Geiger set the record back when she was a student in 2004, with a time of 2:21:04.

"My goals right now are to compete in state as a freshman or win freshman regionals. Both would be super cool," she said. The track team was a really easy fit for Elly; her only fear was that she would be the slowest on the team, which is the opposite of what is actually happening.

"I think Elly is a person who adds a lot of humor to our practice, she really pushes the team to try harder," said team member Jenna Cayze.

Besides Piatt rocking the competition. The team placed 2nd at Dioceses, with Grace Lawler, taking 1st in the 100 meter dash. Manon Stovik placed first in the 3,200 meter run at the St. Henry Invitational.

The track team is working hard to compete at regionals, which will be held May 21 at Ryle High School.

- Lauren Lawler



Freshman Elly Piatt is closing in on the NDA record in the 800-meter run. (Kimmy Birrer photo)

SOFTBALL: Notre Dame Academy softball has started the season 11-4, and those wins are because of the teamwork and dedication that these girls have displayed to get to where they are.

After an 8-6 victory over Cincinnati Mount Notre Dame on Thursday, the Pandas have won three straight games, remain unbeaten in their district and have outscored opponents 115-53.

After losing senior pitcher Hayley Smith to graduation, the team did not know how they were going to do. But many team members have stepped up to the plate. The girls' batting averages are going up, the team ERA is phenomenal and the fielding percentages are some of the school's best. It's shaping up to be a great year.

It all started with the Pete Noll Classic in Pennsylvania. Coach Joe Stephenson didn't know how it was going to turn out, but the Pandas made it to the championship game, where they lost 9-4 to undefeated Knoch from Pennsylvania.

- Katelyn Baker

NDA/CCH THEATER PRESENTS:

Seussical the Musical

On the 15th of April, in the Jungle of Nool, In the heat of the day, in the cool of the pool, He was splashing... enjoying the jungle's great joys... When Horton the elephant heard a small noise...

The weekend of April 15-17, all the Whos in Park Hills lined up to learn the story of Horton the Elephant (played by Mason Kinsella), as narrated by NDA junior Sarah Draud as Cat in the Hat. The story follows the "biggest blame fool in the Jungle of Nool" along his journey after he finds a speck of dust on a flower, that is inhabited by Who's who need his help.

To make matters worse, Mayzie La Bird (played by junior Kendall Crawford) dumps her unhatched egg onto Horton to "watch", and ends up pushing the egg on him permanently. Horton faces difficulties, ridicule, and even a trial for claiming there were people on the dust speck.

But don't worry! Horton was not alone. The young Gertrude, who is in love with Horton, follows him on his journey, begging for his attention. But the elephant has other things on his mind... that is, until Gertrude rescues him from Poachers.

As we wind down our theater season for the



With band leader Mr. Cerimele and director Ms. Stine in the foreground, the Seussical cast wraps up "All the Things You Can Think."

year, we also say goodbye to some of our beloved friends: the seniors.

Crew senior Katie Stratman said the relationships made while working on plays is one of the best parts.

"So I've been in every show since freshman year and that includes props, lights, and even acting (believe it or not)," she said.

"Freshman year was probably my favorite year as I was learning from my brother all about lights and how to program everything...One thing that I'll definitely miss is the relationship we have in the tech booth. We always joke around with each other. Even though tech week is always so stressful, I know I always have my tech crew to make me laugh in the hardest of times."

- Savanna Hasenkamp

Sixteen bits of wisdom from the class of '16

Notre Dame Academy's senior publications students -- Jordan Ackerson, Sophie Arnold, Katelyn Baker, Christine Bosch, Annie Cheesman, Leah Darpel, Savanna Hasenkamp, Lexi Miles, Kayla Noble, Hannah Stetter, Katie Stratman, Katie Summe and Sarah Williams -- didn't want to leave without sharing with their sisters what they've learned outside the classroom over their four years.



Jordan Ackerson

- 1. You don't have to be the first one out** of the building. If you don't want to be aggravated in the parking lot after school, wait until 3 p.m. to leave. You'll be a lot less stressed out.
- 2. Make sure you plan** for a full-year study hall senior year so you can get most of your homework done there and have time to take a nap after school. It's best to have a study hall so you can work on your research paper.
- 3. Do not,** under any circumstances, wait until the last minute to do your senior research paper! You will regret it!
- 4. Don't use the wrong door,** or walk like you have nowhere to go. Make those three minutes between classes count by strategizing if you need to go to your locker.
- 5. Always bring a hair tie** and a spare. If not for you, then for someone else.

- 6. After school, use the Heritage Hall** bathrooms because the bathrooms by the vending machines are always packed.
- 7. Don't be afraid to branch out** beyond your grade-school friends.
- 8. Always focus on keeping** your grades and your GPA up, because every year matters.
- 9. Don't write on** the bathroom stalls.
- 10. Befriend an upperclassman,** and she can be your go-to driver.
- 11. But stay out** of the senior lunch line. Not kidding about this.
- 12. Try things you've never even** thought of doing, because they could turn out to be the best things you've ever done.
- 13. Don't get ice cream** every day, because your mom will get mad.
- 14. Charge your iPad.** Every night.
- 15. If you are using a shared computer,** always remember to log out of your Gmail account.
- 16. Be open to everyone and everything.** You'll lose part of yourself if you don't.