



MEET THE TEACHER: SR. MARIA FRANCINE. 4



BIG WEEKEND FOR SWIMMING, DIVING. 7



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK IN PICTURES. 9

THE GAVEL



Mr. and Mrs. Greife: An NDA love story

They met at Notre Dame, dated quietly, and when they decided to marry, they held their wedding reception right across the street. They're still fixtures of NDA life, teaching French and social studies and inspiring students daily. While Valentine's Day may be over, the love story of our own Mary Ann and Ron Greife goes on. **Story, Page 2**

Their love story began, endures at NDA



Some call Paris the city of love, but when French teacher Mary Ann Tenfelde met history teacher Ron Greife at Notre Dame Academy, soon love was in the air in Park Hills. The Greifes have been married 33 years.

teaching French at Notre Dame in the fall of 1973, and Mr. Greife five years later in the fall of '78 as a history teacher.

It was then that they first met.

"At that time, there were a lot of younger, single members of the faculty, and we would do social things together," Mrs. Greife said.

"That would include current faculty members like Mrs. Hahn, Mrs. Johnson and Mr. Schlosser. We would go to restaurants, or go to somebody's house, and eventually, he [Mr. Greife] asked me out."

For their first date, Mr. Greife took the future Mrs. Greife to a movie, which turned out to be sold out. So, instead Mr. Greife moved the date to a nearby cafe, the now closed Twenty Mile House. That night a bluegrass band played, and the couple listened to the music from a Pac-Man game, because that was the only empty table left in the restaurant.

Greifes' 33-year marriage offers valuable lesson

BY LYDIA WATSON

Gavel staff writer

With February came Valentine's Day, when we celebrate our loved ones. It is important to notice those around us who can teach us important lessons about being in a dedicated relationship.

Here at Notre Dame, students are lucky to have such role models within our very staff.

Mr. and Mrs. Greife are two teachers at Notre Dame who have been married for 33 years and even met within the halls of the school.

Madame Greife, then Mary Ann Tenfelde, began

Their relationship went on secretly for a whole year in order to prevent a bombardment of questions from their students. They would only go on dates at places where they knew they would not run into students, though on a couple occasions they did run into parents.

They even kept it secret from most of the faculty, only telling those closest to them.

After a year of keeping their relationship quiet, Mr. Greife finally proposed to Mrs. Greife over dinner.

Asked whether she knew the proposal was coming, she said: "Not then, not that night. I thought we were in a pretty serious relationship but I didn't know that it was happening that night."

The proposal happened over summer, so when the school year resumed in the fall, the couple told the principal, the rest of the staff, and allowed the news to trickle down to the students.

Lynn Watson, a student at the time, said, "I can't recall becoming aware of their engagement, but I do recall when I left school we had a Miss Tenfelde teaching French, and when I came back it was Mrs. Greife.

"Of course, as a bunch of romantic high school girls, we all thought they were so cute and sweet. But in reality they were both ultimate professionals, and you didn't see any difference with them as they walked the halls and saw each other. All in all, they are both great people and everyone was happy for them."

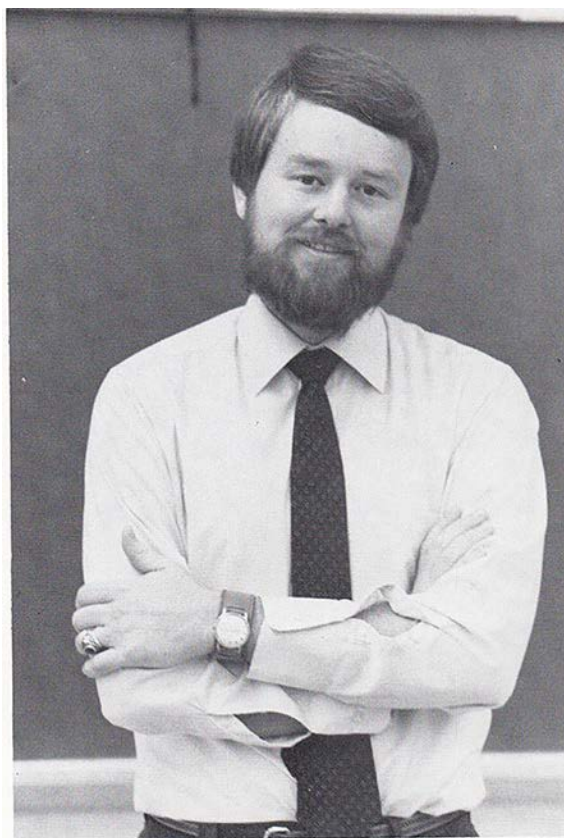
As for the wedding, the entire faculty was invited to the ceremony. However, at that time the Sisters of Notre Dame, who made up the majority of the faculty, were not allowed to attend the reception. So a lay person took a portion of the cake from across the street at Town and Country (now The Gardens of Park Hills) to Notre Dame for them.

As the interview wrapped up, Mr. and Mrs. Greife shared some of their tips to a long-lasting relationship.

"I think the biggest thing is to be respectful and to compromise," Mrs. Greife said.

"It's two individuals who each have their likes and ways of doing things. We have a lot of common interests, so that part is easy, but even now we don't always agree on things. Relationships are always a give and take."

Mr. Greife agreed, adding, "And commitment. You have to decide that this is something that is important. I think too many people give up too easily."



Mr. and Mrs. Greife in their 1983 Notre Dame yearbook photos, the last year she appeared as Miss Mary Ann Tenfelde.

Meet the teacher: Sister Maria Francine

'Sisters so happy' one's back on faculty

BY MACY THELEN

Gavel staff writer

Sister Maria Francine Stacy is teaching Spanish at Notre Dame Academy this year after 14 years serving as assistant director of the Hispanic Ministry for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. She took time recently to answer questions from The Gavel.

QUESTION: What is an interesting fact that not many people know about you?

ANSWER: Many people do not know that I am a twin. My sister (Sister Anita Marie) is in Uganda.

Q: What is it like having a twin sister? Is it hard being so far away from her?

A: Yes, it is hard being so far away. The communication is normally just by email, and it's hard, because you can't share many things. It's not the same as being close and seeing each other. But she does get back every two years, and we make the most of it when she does. She stays for about two months when she visits. When she comes back we visit friends, spend time with family, and do fun things together.

Q: How important was it to you to be able to re-establish that connection of having a sister of Notre Dame as a teacher after a year without any on the faculty?

A: It was so exciting and the sisters were so happy to have a sister back on the faculty. For me, it was important just because it is our school, the Notre Dame school, and I just feel part of it.

Q: What do you do outside of school?

A: I watch movies, read. I work with the Guatemalan communities. I meet with friends and with people I worked with in Dayton.

Q: Why did you go to Spanish speaking countries?

A: I just wanted to work with Hispanic people after my experiences working with them in Dayton,



Spanish teacher Sister Maria Francine is a twin! Sister Anita Marie is in Uganda but recently returned for a visit.

Ohio. In Dayton the Hispanic people had no one that spoke Spanish to welcome them. My purpose was to be a welcoming presence so that people who came would feel like they belonged. It was very hard for them because many had to give up everything but somebody at least knew their language which made them feel better. It also helped them access services. It was a really rich experience. Although I was helping them find a place here, they were helping me.

Q: What is the best thing about your job?

A: Being with the students, there is just a lot of youth and enthusiasm.

I also like being able to share what I have gained over the years with not only the language but the culture. The best part about my job is bringing what I've learned from experience into the classroom.

Q: What are the biggest challenges that someone in this position would face?

A: In general, in the Spanish-speaking countries, we become very academic. But you have to be relaxed and not expect to get every word correct, but embrace the language and the people and not worry so much about correctness because that will come gradually. A lot of people strive for perfection. Be free and less tense. Find it more like a game rather than a challenge.

Q: What has been one of the most valuable experiences in your life?

A: I would say getting to know different people, getting to know students and being sensitive to what they need and want. Getting to know people that speak a different language and getting to see their perspective. In other words, the most valuable experience is when we are able to see things in another person's point of view and appreciate it.

Separating freshman-year fact from fiction

BY MEGAN HENIZE

Gavel staff writer

The Gavel gathered important tips for seniors preparing for college, and FOR juniors preparing for the search process, from our resident expert, Ms. Burgei:

- **Take control.** Be willing to take your own path. You're not going to be in class with friends. Most likely you will have to branch out and do things for yourself.
- **Balance. Balance. Balance.** Your class and your grades are absolutely important to your life after college, but you have to find balance. You need balance for your studies, to take care of yourself (emotionally and physically), and to make time for relationships. Balance is a big part of it. Don't just be involved in school, and don't just be involved in all social activities. Find balance and do both.
- **Choose wisely.** Who you surround yourself with will have a really big influence on you over the next four years. You'll probably meet people freshman year that you'll realize, for whatever reason, are not a good fit, and you have to be willing to let go of friendships that would not be good or wise for you to keep.
- **Don't freak out.** If things don't fall in place right away, it's OK. It's going to take time to transition. Expect to be very uncomfortable for most of your freshman year. That is the reality. A few might find the transition easy, but most students tell me freshman year can be good but hard. Don't be surprised if you struggle with the transition. It takes time.
- **Find support.** Whether it's from the campus counseling services, or an RA in your dorm, or another trusted adult, find support. If



Ms. Burgei counsels NDA seniors on college. Among her tips: find a balance between school and social life, surround yourself with good people, and remember that freshman year can be uncomfortable for everyone. *(Megan Henize photo)*

you're concerned about how you're feeling, don't wait to seek help.

- **Take advantage of the career services office at your college.** There are experts in the field of career counseling at your fingertips, but they will not come to you. Please take advantage of these services to help you with career decisions. You're paying for it; you might as well use it.
- **You are not the only one.**

Cooper goes from Panda player to coach

BY ALECIA RADFORD

Gavel staff writer

Notre Dame's varsity basketball team welcomed a new coach this season, NDA alumna Mia Cooper. She led the basketball team through a tough schedule during the season, which closed with a loss to Holy Cross in the district tournament. Ms. Cooper took the time to reply via email to some questions from The Gavel.

Question: What made you decide to become a basketball coach?

Answer: I decided to become a coach because I love the game of basketball. I also like teaching young people how to play basketball.

Q: Why did you choose to coach at NDA?

A: I wanted to coach at NDA for several reasons. I played at NDA, so I knew of the tradition and sisterhood that NDA sports have. Also, coaching here was my goal since I played here. When I started coaching, I always said that I wanted to coach at NDA.

Q: What's different from when you played basketball here to coaching basketball now?

A: The only thing different between then and now is the uniforms, lol.

Q: You faced a challenging stretch of games during the season. What did you take away from that?

A: I take away that my girls withstood the storm, improved, and got through the most physically and mentally challenging part of the season. We have played one of the toughest schedules in the state. My girls played hard and learned from every loss that we have had. They never hung their heads, doubted



Mia Cooper calls out instructions from the sideline at NDA's gym. The 2000 NDA alumna returned to her old school this year as head basketball coach. "I played at NDA, so I know of the tradition and sisterhood that NDA sports have." (*Lainey Stephenson photo*)

themselves, or me as a coach. I could not have asked for a better group of girls for my first season at a new school.

Q: What's the best part of coaching?

A: The best part of coaching is seeing my girls grow as players as well as individuals.

Q: Tell me one thing you learned as a player that you've brought into being a coach.

A: Heart. If your heart is not in it, then your head is not in it, and it's no fun.

She dives head-first into her sport

Pandas' Sophie Middendorf puts in long hours practicing far from home

BY SALLY BISHOP

Gavel staff writer

Sophie Middendorf, a junior at Notre Dame Academy, spends almost all of her time on the road, in the pool, or in mid-air.

Her diving journey began when she was in the fifth grade at St. Agnes.

Sophie -- her given name is Sophia, after Oscar-winning actress Sophia Loren -- practices diving six days a week, 2 1/2 hours each day. She practices at Miami University and Wright State University, each about an hour away.

If one were to calculate the math, it would total to about 42 hours a week spent on jumping, flipping, and turning.

"It's all worth it," Sophie said. "I haven't counted my medals and ribbons, but I think I have about 50 first place medals."

She has made it to four national diving competitions, placed seventh at the Kentucky High School Athletic Association state meet last year, and improved to sixth at state last weekend in Louisville, helping NDA finish second overall as a team.

"My absolute favorite part about diving is that I am always scared to jump, and nervous to flip, the fear is the best part," she said.

However, one injury almost destroyed her diving career. One night, after two hours of practicing, Sophie decided to stay a little longer and perfect her dive, since there was a big competition the next morning. As she was about to jump from the high board, she



Notre Dame junior Sophie Middendorf finished fifth in a competitive field at the KHSAA regional meet, then sixth at state.

tripped, causing her to scrape her entire foot. "I could barely walk after that, and it later became infected," she recalled. Despite the fact that she limped while walking, Sophie decided to still go to the big competition.

She dove, and she placed.

Sophie is not only a top-notch diver, she also is an honors student.

When asked how she keeps up with all of her homework, she said, "I have to do all of my homework in the car rides to and from practice. I try to get as much done at school as I possibly can."

She sure is diving into an awesome future.

Skinner, Glass help Pandas finish second at state meet

Notre Dame Academy finished second over the weekend at the Kentucky High School Athletic Association swimming and diving championships in Louisville. NDA, which accumulated 265 total points, finished second to Louisville Sacred Heart.

The Pandas were led by Sophie Skinner, who won her third state title in the 100-meter freestyle and took third in the 200 free; Sam Glass, who won the 200 individual medley (backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle) and was sixth in the 100 butterfly; and Middendorf, sixth in diving.

Other key performers included Amanda Smith (second 100 backstroke, fourth 200 free), Allie Piccirillo (sixth 500 free, seventh 100 fly) and Carlee Jones (eighth 200 IM). They helped NDA relay teams place in the 200 IM, 400 free and 200 free (with Ainsley Moore and Addyson Stansel).

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NDA seniors celebrate their sisterhood at St. Anne Convent. (Kayla Keininger photo)

Revised retreat encourages reflection

Notre Dame seniors completed the last two of three retreats to St. Anne Convent in February. The format was different this year, as all schools in the diocese held their retreats over school days instead of over a weekend as in years past. The program was built around more time for individual reflection, said Mrs. Price, NDA campus minister. "I walked into retreat with an open mind, and I had a very good time and really got a lot out of it," senior Nicole LaMarre blogged about her experience. Added senior Carolyn Collins: "I feel so much closer to everyone."

THEATER: On Feb. 3-4, NDA and Covington Catholic stage the first Night of Student-Directed One Acts, a show of student-directed skits. Billed as "a night of comedy," these acts left the audience laughing and wanting more! To to give the show more of a black-box feeling, audience members were seated right onstage along with the

actors. NDA student directors included Georgia Papakirk, Katelyn Noll, Emma Duerstock, Michaela Zang, Hypha Fries, Katherine Horsford, Angie Menkhaus, Haley Planicka, Ashley Simpson, Lauren Meese, and Madi Harmon.

- Ellie O'Hara

BOWLING: For the first time, NDA's bowling team, and senior Alecia Radford, qualified for the state tournament in Lexington on Feb. 9-10. Runner-up at regional, NDA lost in three games to eventual state champion Harrison County. Redford finished 24th overall in the singles competition with a three-game total of 516. Team members were seniors Radford, Angela Huston, Erica Huston and April Schoenfeld, and sophomores Morgan Briede, Sam Wichmann, Mary Kate Sullivan and Ruthie Franzen.

- Alecia Radford

Catholic Schools Week



Photos from a week of celebration of Catholic school education: Above, Andria Burden, Courtney Ziegelmeyer, Jackie Noll, Harper Lamb, Olivia Hollman, Calli Martin, and Olivia Cooney throw it back to grade school recess. Clockwise from below left: Stella Smain, Anna Marksberry, Ellie Kathman, Emma Finn, Sarah Wehrman, Molly Hehman, and Riley Shelton cozy on pajama day; Lauren Lawler, Ava Thaman, Carolyn Collins, Lainey Stephenson and Macaira Mullen dress like boys; Emmy Trepel, Audrey Muck, Jessica Beirl, and Laura Dinn get groovy on decades day; Ellie Vandergriff lights up the talent-show stage; seniors perform the Holes dance; freshmen Chloe Collins, Catherine Nerswick and Nicole Arkenau.

