

# Know Your Knights

Knights of Columbus

Frances Cabrini Council 8879

## **EDITOR'S NOTE**

Several years ago we ran a series of biographies in the council newsletter called "KNOW YOUR KNIGHTS". A few of our Knights asked me to consolidate them into a booklet form and make them available to all members, especially our new members who may not have read the series when it was published. It is also hoped that it will encourage our members who have not submitted a biography to do so.

Most biographies were submitted between 2002 and 2004, so keep that in mind if you think they are rather "dated" when you read them. In the case of "Fallen Knights", I have done some editing for obvious reasons. The dates that appear on the CONTENTS page are the month they appeared in our newsletter.

If you would like to add your life's "story" to our collection, just send it to me via email or snail mail, and I'll make sure it is in the next edition.

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\* *Deceased*

\*\* *Charter Member*

## HAROLD ROLL

**Feb 4, 1923 – Oct 1, 2005**

Hal Roll was not only a long time member of our Council, he was a life-long resident of San Diego County. He was born in Imperial Beach in 1923, and grew up in National City and Point Loma. He graduated from Point Loma High School in 1941 and did a short stint with the California Department of Forestry (CDF) as a fire fighter. He loved fighting fires and after joining the Army, he quickly became part of the crash crews that responded to aircraft crashes. Hal felt a great sense of worth in rescuing aircraft crewmen from burning planes. While serving as a fire chief in the Army Air Corps, he was awarded the Soldier's Medal of Valor for saving a crewman from a burning B-24. During WWII, he earned two Soldier's Medals of Valor and three campaign ribbons - for North Africa, Sicily and Italy.

After returning to civilian life in December 1945, Hal enrolled in San Diego State College, studying Biology, Botany and Orthopedics, since he intended to help his father in the family business - the Point Loma Shoe Shop. He later opened his own shoe repair shop in Fletcher Hills, behind what is now Baskin-Robbins. It was there in 1960 that Hal arranged for Santa to arrive by helicopter, one of the first times this was done anywhere. Thousands of kids and their parents were on hand to see Santa descend into a lot near today's Fletcher Parkway and Garfield Avenue. He repeated the arrival the next year to an even larger crowd. For all his civic accomplishments, Hal was named the Citizen of the Year twice; once in El Cajon and again in Fletcher Hills. It was during this post war period that Hal, as a member of the El Cajon JCs, became one of the founders of the East County Fair that ran yearly at the speedway site at Gillespie Field for about 30 years.

After six years in the shoe repair business, Hal sold the shop and worked for Sears for ten years. He then decided to try his hand in management and joined the Pioneer Chicken chain and remained there in the sales and management field until his retirement.

Hal was married to the former Donna Schowalter since 1959. They met when she was a newcomer to the San Diego area, and they were both members of the old Cosmopolitan Club in San Diego. Hal was a smoker then and on his first visit to Donna's apartment, he burned a hole on her couch. Believe it or not, Donna still has that couch in her living room!

Hal was a very active Knight in our council. He was our Treasurer until his health kept him from attending the monthly meetings. He was always there to help no matter what project the council was involved with – the Lenten Fish Fries, the MDA Breakfasts, the Tootsie Roll Drives and many, many more. Hal particularly enjoyed being an Extraordinary Minister and serving the people of our parish.

Hal loved his home and he loved being home. Donna had a hard time convincing him to go anywhere. But she finally convinced him to take her on a cruise. He loved it and they were to go on many more. He also liked going to Barona Casino – particularly the drive to and from, and the good food. But most of all, Hal loved gardening. He adored his Siamese cat, Callie, who followed him everywhere Hal went in the house. Unfortunately, Callie had to be put to sleep a couple of years ago at the ripe old age of 19.

Star Trek was Hal's favorite TV show. He would watch it from his favorite recliner every afternoon and usually fall asleep during the show. That was okay, he said, because it gave him a reason to watch it the next time they ran the same episode!

Donna said that Hal always encouraged her to be active in the community, and

best of all, he let her win most of the arguments they had. To her, Hal was just a nice man – her best friend.

## **JOHN SIEMIENCZUK**

John Siemienczuk was born on December 18, 1928 in Ansonia, CT, the youngest of 6 children born to Polish immigrants. He attended St. Joseph grammar school where he was also an altar boy. Since there was no Catholic high school in the area, he attended Ansonia High, studying business courses and elements of aeronautics. He worked 6 hours a day after school in a war factory, building and assembling parts for incendiary bombs and 500 pound bombs. John took up flight training on weekends and got his pilot's license at the age of 16! He flew with the Civil Air Patrol over Long Island Sound, reporting any submarines sightings. He had to be able to distinguish between US and German subs. John also served as an Air Raid Warden in his neighborhood.

After graduating high school in June of 1946, John immediately joined the Navy. Although Japan and Germany had surrendered by that time, the war was not officially over till late 1946, so John was awarded the World War II Victory Medal.

Having learned the Morse code during aeronautics studies, he was assigned as a Navy Radioman, a profession he kept all during his 24 years of active Naval service. John retired in 1970 with the rank of Master Chief Petty Officer, having served on 12 ships—troop landing ships, troop transports, repair ships, destroyers and cruisers.

When the Korean War broke out, John's ship participated in the Inchon Invasion. Because of his critical qualifications as high speed radio operator and cryptographer, he remained in the Korean area for the next 3 ½ years. During that time, he met his future wife, Takeko Takajo (Judy). She grew up in Nagasaki and witnessed the explosion of the atomic bomb. However, the US did not allow servicemen to marry the "enemy", so it was only after 3 years of frustration and perseverance that they were allowed to be "legally" married. The ceremony took place at the US Consulate in 1956. They were later married at St. Edward's Church (now named St. Columba) here in San Diego. Their first two children were baptized at the same ceremony!

In 1953-54, John was assigned to a humanitarian operation in Indo-China during which they evacuated thousands of North Vietnamese fleeing from the Communists forces. While operating in and out of Haiphong, he was part of a group that rescued the remaining 200 French Foreign Legionnaires and the last 12 French Army nurses from Dien Bien Phu. The Legionnaires were being captured and killed at the rate of a thousand a day; hundreds of nurses were being raped and executed.

John returned to Viet Nam for two more tours in the late 1960's, performing both communication and photographic assignments.

In addition to the WWII Victory Medal, he was awarded 14 other medals and commendation ribbons as follows:

China Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal w/2 bronze stars, Korean Service Medal w/2 bronze stars, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal w/2 bronze stars, Viet Nam Service Medal with silver star (five awards), United Nations Medal (Korea),

Republic of Viet Nam Meritorious Unit Citation and the Gallantry Cross Medal, Republic of Viet Nam Campaign Medal, Navy Unit Commendation, Meritorious Unit Commendation, Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation, Republic of Korea Unit Citation and, last but not least, the Navy Good Conduct Medal w/silver star (5 awards).

After his Navy service, John attended Grossmont College and earned two degrees - business administration and law enforcement. He worked for the La Mesa Police Department and then the County of San Diego where he was a Correction Officer, Narcotics Officer and Deputy Probation Officer. Much of that time he was assigned to Fire Camps where he trained inmates from the County Jail in fire fighting techniques.

John still lives in the first home that he and Judy bought in 1968. They had 4 children and 4 grandchildren, all of whom live in San Diego County. Judy passed away in January of 2008.

John is a charter member of our Council and active in three service organizations - AMVETS, Fleet Reserve Assoc. and the VFW.

## **DAN BINER**

Dan was born in Santa Ana, California on October; 2, 1932, the youngest of 12 children - 7 girls and 5 boys. His father worked in a malt processing plant, where his company supplied beer breaks instead of coffee breaks, according to Dan. He grew up just two blocks from the Los Angeles Coliseum and Exposition Park.

Dan entered the Christian Brothers' Junior Novitiate in 1947 and spent seven years with the Christian Brothers. He left as a Student Brother after two years at St. Mary's College. He then joined the U. S. Coast Guard. It was during electronic technician training at the Coast Guard Training Station at Groton, Connecticut, that he met his future wife, Angie Longo, while on liberty in New York City. They were later married at St. Ann's in the Big Apple. Dan remained in the Coast Guard for four years, rising to the rate of First Class Petty Officer.

He graduated from San Diego State University and later earned a Masters degree in Computer Sciences. Dan worked for IBM for 7 years before moving over to Computer Science Corporation in Huntsville, Alabama for another 10 years. Federal Service followed.

Dan and Angie have 9 children and used wedding photography to supplement his income to keep them all in parochial school through high school. When he retired from the Federal Service, as a Computer Scientist, in 1991, Dan became a full time professional photographer.

Angie was head of the Hot Lunch program at OLG for 8 years which helped finance several nuns' trips back to Ireland.

All nine of their children graduated from OLG School. Their boys graduated from St Augustine HS and the girls graduated from Our Lady of Peace Academy. The Biners hold the SDSU record for the most graduates from one immediate family - seven! Rounding out their wonderful family are 17 grandchildren!

Dan is a charter member of our Council. He was also the Warden on the First Degree Team for many years. Dan has been a Knight for over 40 years, having transferred into Frances Cabrini Council, at its conception, from St. Therese.

Dan and Angie have been involved with the "Evening for Engaged" program for over 18 years. This is a 6 week program where five couples from throughout the diocese meet at their home for 3 hours a week. This has been an enriching and enjoyable program, and Dan and Angie would like to recruit other married couples that might be interested in this ministry. If you are willing to share your married life, and more importantly, if your wife is interested, contact Dan and Angie for further information.

### **FRANK SPOSATO**

Frank was born in New York City in February of 1932 and graduated from the New York State Maritime College in 1954. He married his wife, Marion, in September of 1955. They are the parents of eight children, including two sets of twins. Frank and his family relocated to San Diego in 1973 when the federal government closed the Brooklyn Navy Yard. He worked on Point Loma at the Naval Ocean Systems Center, later the Naval Research and Development Center, until he retired in 1994. Much of Frank's professional career was spent doing classified research dealing with the detection and classification of Soviet submarines.

In 1980, Frank retired from the United States Naval Reserve with the rank of Commander.

Frank joined the Knights of Columbus in 1962 and is an Honorary Life Member. In the Frances Cabrini Council, he has served as Chancellor, Trustee and Grand Knight on two separate occasions. Frank is especially proud of the fact that the two grottos on our church grounds were his idea and built during his tenure as Grand Knight. One is located next to Moloney Center and is in honor of the Blessed Mother. The second is in the courtyard of the Ministry Center and is dedicated to Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini -- the first American Saint

In his spare time, Frank likes to play golf, bowl and watch sports on television.

### **JOE ACCARDO**

Joseph J. Accardo was born on June 15, 1932 in Flint, Michigan. His father worked for the city of Flint as a road foreman. Joe's mother worked for and retired from AC Delco. He attended All Saints Catholic School for 12 years. In 1951, Joe enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and rose to the rank of Sergeant. His primary field was artillery. He fought in the Korean War where he earned the Korean Service Medal, the United Service Medal, the National Defense Medal, the Navy Occupational Service Medal, the Korean Presidential Unit Citation and the Good Conduct Medal.

Joe left the Marine Corps in 1954 and returned to Flint where he worked for General Motors until moving to San Diego in 1958. He worked as a bartender downtown

from 1958 until 1964. He then hired on with the Ben F. Smith Company of San Diego as a carpenter, and worked for them for 23 years.

Joe was involved in Little League for six years as a coach, manager and umpire. During this time he was involved in building the Hickman Field complex for all levels of the Little League program in Clairemont. He also coached in Pop Warner football.

Joe's wife, Barbara, graduated from Northern High School in Flint and worked as a secretary at General Motors before they were married in 1957. They have three boys; Phillip who lives in Santee, Douglas who lives in Mesa, Arizona, and Joey who lives in San Diego. They have seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren

Now, in retirement, Joe enjoys golfing, traveling and keeping up the garden.

## WILL FELLOWS

**Apr 14,1924 – Apr 20, 2009**

Will was born in Rensselaer, New York, across the Hudson River from Albany.

The rest he summed up for us as follows:

Education: Completed High School and 1<sup>st</sup> year college GED's while on active duty. Received AA Degree from San Diego Junior College. Received BA Degree (Summa Cum Laud) from National University in 1980.

Military: Enlisted in 1942 as Apprentice Seamen. Retired as Master Chief Personnel man after 34 years of active duty. Earned 24 decorations: Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal, Presidential Unit Commendation, Secretary of the Navy Commendation with Gold Star, Navy Commendation Medal with Gold Star, Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry, Vietnamese Honor Medal 2<sup>nd</sup> Class, 9 Good Conduct Medals, and 8 Gold Hash Marks. Served on Aircraft Carriers, Heavy Cruiser, Guided Missile Frigate, Submarine Tender, LST, etc. Shot down 1 Japanese Dive Bomber. Crashed 1 dive-bomber on an aborted landing in the Pacific. Pulled my pilot out of the cockpit after he sustained injuries. Picked up by a Destroyer and spent 3 days on board before returning to my ship the USS LEXINGTON, CV- 16. Flew with the USS ENTERPRISE Air Group on the 1<sup>st</sup> Battle of the Philippine Sea from which I received my DFC (Distinguished Flying Cross - ed). Spent the last 20 years of my service as a Personnelman at various duty stations, retiring from the USS SPERRY, AS-16 where I received an Honorary Chaplain's appointment by Chief of Chaplains, John J. O'Connor, now Cardinal O'Connor. Designated an Honorary Submariner by the USS TROUT.

I was the 1<sup>st</sup> Chief Petty Officer to receive the designation of YN- 2525 (Chaplain's Clerk) at Ream Field, California.

Served 3 years in Vietnam, 18 months as language instructor to Vietnamese sailors. Also served as a language instructor for the Vietnamese-American Association and regularly visited Vietnamese Orphanages.

Volunteer activities: I have been an active volunteer for more than 60 years, starting as a Boy Scout in 1938. I earned the rank of Eagle Scout in 1942 and worked at the Boy Scout summer camp before I enlisted in the U.S. Navy. I was inducted into the

Order of the Arrow (Honorary Camping Society) in 1942 and was the 1<sup>st</sup> Vigil Honor member in the San Diego Council in 1953. I have been Assistant Scoutmaster, Scoutmaster, Cubmaster, Committeeman, Asst. and District Commissioner in various councils in the United States and abroad. Served as District Commissioner in Guam, Japan, and Vietnam. Served as Waterfront Director and Assistant Camp Director in Japan. Served on the staff at several camps both in New York, Virginia and New Jersey. Served as Leader for the 1<sup>st</sup> expedition to Philmont Scout Ranch in 1953. Scoutmaster for the 1952 Jamboree at Irvine Ranch. Graduate of the Schiff Scout Reservation as an Aquatics Instructor. Earned the Scoutmaster's Key, Scouter's Training Award, and numerous other awards and citations. Received the coveted Silver Beaver Award in 1964. Served as Advisor to the Order of the Arrow in Japan. Presented an Honorary Membership in the 1<sup>st</sup> Boy Scout Troop in Japan chartered by Lord Baden Powell. Recipient of the James E. West Fellowship Award, Boy Scouts of America. Life member of the Fleet Reserve Association, Life member of the Disabled American Veterans, Life member of the National Order of Trench Rats, Commodore in the Navy League, Life member of the Forty & Eight, Life member of the American Legion, Life member of the AMVETS. Currently serving as Chaplain for the Disabled American Veterans, Past Chapter Commander, and served in all the chair offices. I have been hosting Bingo at the VA hospital for the last 22 years. I am a member of the Veterans Administration Volunteer Service for the VA and have served more than 5,000 hours in that capacity. Served as a volunteer pharmacy tech at the Out Patient Clinic, Mission Valley for 22 years. Past Chairman and 15 year member of the Veterans Memorial Day Committee who host the Memorial Day Service at Fort Rosecrans. I served as General Chairman for 6 years. For this service I received the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge Honor Medal. Recipient of the Judge John B. McClellan Medal. Recipient of the Ronald Reagan Medal of Merit. Served as Chairman and member of the East County Meals-On-Wheels Committee for many years and received a special Citation of Appreciation. Formerly a driver for Grossmont Hospital for their patient transportation program. Formerly an American Red Cross First Aid and Water Safety Instructor. I am an active member of the San Diego Blood Bank and donate on a regular basis. Currently have donated 29 gallons of blood since my 1<sup>st</sup> donation in 1942. Currently serving as Extraordinary Minister for Our Lady of Grace and trainer for the Altar Servers. I also arrange program for our annual tribute to the 'Servers.' Became a member of the Knights of Columbus in 1959. Served actively until my Navy duties took me out of active service. Upon retirement from active military duty I joined San Miguel Council and was active until Cabrini Council was chartered. I was the charter Chancellor of the council and during my year the council received the coveted R.S.V.P. Plaque. During my 3<sup>rd</sup> year I was elected Grand Knight. During my year as Grand Knight the council chambers were finished as well as the Knights Lounge. Many Parish organizations share our chambers, especially the RC.I.A. Upon the illness of our Charter Grand Knight, Jim Pugh I was appointed District Deputy to fill his unexpired term and was reappointed for another 2 year term as District Deputy. Four years ago I was asked to transfer back to San Miguel Council to be Grand Knight. I did so and was elected Grand Knight. During this time I was also appointed District Deputy because of the illness of the appointed District Deputy. I was reappointed District Deputy for another 2 year term. When my year as Grand Knight was over I became a Council Trustee and filled the office for 3 years. During my years in both councils I was recognized as Knight of the Year and received numerous awards for my service. I am an active member of the International Order of Alhambra, an organization of Catholic men devoted to assisting the Developmentally

Disabled. I have held the office of Grand Commander and numerous other offices. Was editor of the Caravan Newsletter for ten years. Currently I am serving as Deputy Regional Director for Southern California Council of Caravans. Lastly, I am a Knight Commander in the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, a Papal Honor.

Will met Irene Soto at a dance at North Island Naval Air Station and they were married in St. Joseph Cathedral in 1958, having spent over 50 years together before Will died.

## **TOM PHILLIPP**

Tom was born in Cleveland, Ohio but was raised in Fort Wayne, Indiana where the family moved at his age seven, following his father's early death. (His maternal grandfather was a contractor who built numerous Gothic-style Catholic churches, and his paternal grandfather and father owned Phillip's Church Goods stores in the Midwest to furnish them). He later graduated with honors from Campion Jesuit High School in Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin.

After graduating from St. Joseph's College, Rensselaer, IN (BA-Math Physics '57) and Purdue University (BSEE '58), he went to work for Douglas Aircraft at Cape Canaveral on the Thor Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missile, working in Missile Hanger Checkout. A year later he "went across the street" to General Dynamics on the Atlas ICBM on one of their four launch teams, as Autopilot/Guidance System Engineer. For the next eight years Tom saw and was part of a lot of history, working on the lunar and planetary probe missions, and the Mercury and Gemini-Target manned missions, ending up as Assistant Site Manager - Electrical/Electronic Systems on one of their six launch sites. He has the dubious distinction of having been in the blockhouse for the launch attempt of what to this day has been the biggest explosion at ground level in the history of the Cape (Sept. '59). In spite of the fact that much activity at that time was classified, Tom was subsequently able to accumulate an extensive and valuable photo collection of launch activities and mission operations as memorabilia.

Tom continued his 33 years with General Dynamics at their home plant in San Diego, eventually managing the Quality Engineering Department of some 45 engineers and technicians on all their production programs: DC-10/MD-11 and Space Shuttle fuselages; F-111 and F-16 component structures; Atlas & Centaur production & Launch Operations; Tomahawk Cruise Missile; and nuclear fusion reactor and superconducting magnet components. Scope of the tasks was engineering requirements compliance verification, inspection requirements and methods definition, and all non-destructive testing techniques and procedures (radiographic, ultrasonic, etc.), which got into robotics methods for testing composite structures. He retired early at age 57 when the cold war ended and General Dynamics shut down their four San Diego divisions, transferring or surplusing 16,500 people in two years, and leveling their facilities.

Tom married Elizabeth Just in Indianapolis in September 1958, whom he met on a blind date while at St. Joe's. They have five wonderful children—four in the San Diego area—and 14 grandchildren.

In the meantime, Betty embarked on a career as a floral designer (mostly interior—weddings, events, etc.). She parlayed this into teaching an Arts & Crafts Class on-board Princess Cruise Line ships, which had them sailing together one or two times a year for the last 15 years, covering much of the globe. They no longer are active with that, but have a couple time-share weeks which they have frequently exchanged in the past, for weeks in other locales internationally. (Since their son works for the airlines, their perks facilitate all this travel).

Since retiring in '92, Tom did part-time work moving motor homes for a local R/V Dealer for eight years, among his nine stores in California and Arizona. This included flying about the country to pick up high-dollar recent-model, used coaches which they purchased by phone for resale.

Tom and Betty feel that staying on the move extensively contributes to a healthy, satisfying retirement. The loving children and 14 grandchildren contribute to that too.

## **MIKE RETZ**

Mike was born and grew up in Clifton, New Jersey. He attended Holy Trinity Elementary School and then Pope Pius XII High School. From an early age, he spent part of the summers on his grandparents' chicken farm in rural Sussex County in northwestern New Jersey. It was there that he fell in love with farming, especially dairy farming. As a result, he attended Rutgers University and earned a BS in Dairy Husbandry. Facing the draft just before graduation in 1957, and not wanting to dig foxholes, Mike applied for the Navy's flight program.

While attending Rutgers, Mike met and fell in love with a hometown girl, Rachael Latrella. They had their engagement party on the night he left for flight training, and were married in Passaic, New Jersey during the Navy's Christmas stand down in 1957.

Mike received his "Wings of Gold" in November 1958 and began a 20 year Navy career flying the H-34 (then called the HSS-1) helicopters at an Anti-submarine Squadron (HS-3) in Norfolk, Virginia. His squadron served aboard many WWII era Essex Class carriers, namely Tarawa, Valley Forge, Wasp and Intrepid.

After a shore duty tour at NAS Oceana in Virginia Beach, where he first joined the Knights of Columbus, Mike went back to sea duty at HC-6 in Norfolk. He transitioned to the H-46 helicopter and deployed twice to the Mediterranean as Officer-in-Charge of a "Vertical Replenishment" detachment. Its mission was to replenish the Sixth Fleet ships with everything (but fuel oil) by helicopter.

From what Mike calls his most enjoyable flying tours in the Mediterranean, he went to a helicopter attack squadron in Vietnam, flying as Fire Team Leader in the Huey gunship. Their mission was to fly cover for the Navy PBR gunboats and fire support for the Navy SEALs. At times, however, they came to the aid of other friendly forces. It was during a Christmas 1966 offensive that Mike earned his highest award, the Distinguished Flying Cross, for saving a US Army outpost that was being overrun by VC and NVA forces.

After Vietnam, Mike spent a few years back in Pensacola as a helicopter flight instructor and maintenance officer. Expecting to return to Norfolk for sea duty, the Navy surprised him by assigning him to a ship in San Diego. He says that was the best thing

they ever did for him. Once Mike, Rachael and their children moved out here, they were sure they didn't want to live anywhere else.

Mike spent a year on the USS Iwo Jima (LPH-2) as the HDC (Helicopter Direction Center) Officer, including another trip to the Mediterranean. He then was assigned to North Island (COMFAIRSANDIEGO) and then to the Naval Amphibious Base at Coronado (TACRON ONE). It was during a Westpac deployment with this squadron that Mike had one of his most interesting and challenging assignments—the evacuation of Saigon. As Air Officer of the staff that was in charge of the evacuation, he had to oversee all air operations, especially the helicopters of the Marines, Navy and Air Force.

Mike's last tour in the Navy was at the Naval Safety Center in Norfolk. But he and his family couldn't wait to return to their home in San Diego. So, when he had his 20 years in, they packed up and headed west.

During his Navy career, Mike earned the following awards: Distinguished Flying Cross, sixteen Air Medals, Navy Commendation Medal, National Defense Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Vietnam Service Medal (with 3 stars), Vietnam Cross of Gallantry, Combat Action Ribbon, Presidential Unit Citation, Navy Unit Citation, and four awards by the South Vietnam government.

After retiring from the Navy and returning to San Diego, Mike earned an AS degree from Mesa College and started a landscape business. After a few years of working from dawn to dusk, he got a job as gardener with the San Diego School District. He worked first at Green Elementary School, then at Hearst School in Del Cerro and Gage School, a few blocks from his home in San Carlos. He retired from that job in 1998.

Mike has been a member of the San Diego Railroad Museum since 1977. He was a docent and Trainman for many years and, until recently, the Crew Caller that assigned engineers, conductors, brakemen and trainmen to the tourist trains at Campo. He was the membership chairman for the Mountain Empire Historical Society based in the old Stone Store in Campo and the editor of its magazine, the Mountain Heritage. Mike has been a volunteer with Meals on Wheels for over 20 years. He was an usher at the 6 PM and then the 7 AM Mass for many years and the editor of the KofC newsletter for 10 years. He has also been an adorer in the chapel since its inception.

Mike and Rachael have been married over 50 years: They have six children. Kathleen lives in Seatac, Washington; Christi, her husband and 3 boys live in San Diego; Julia, her husband and 2 girls live in Oceanside; Steve, his wife and 4 children live in Julian; Teresa, her husband and 2 children live in Spring Valley. The youngest, Patricia, her husband and 3 children live in Swartz Creek, Michigan.

## **JOHN SWANKE**

Dr. John W. Swanke, a charter member of Frances Cabrini council of the Knights of Columbus, was born and reared in Cheyenne, Wyoming. He is the second of six children. During World War II, Dr. Swanke defended his country by driving an electric fork lift for the Fifth Army Ordinance on docks, at railroad terminals and ordinance depots, dealing with artillery and aircraft ordinance (bombs and shells).

A licensed hypnotherapist who had an active practice in El Cajon for more than twenty years, Swanke taught philosophy for forty-five years. Most of his teaching career was spent at the University of San Diego. He earned his doctorate in philosophy at the University of Ottawa, in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. He also studied at St. Thomas Aquinas University in Chicago and at the University of Chicago.

In terms of service to the parish and Council, John was the charter Deputy Grand Knight, the second Grand Knight of the council, produced the council's bulletin for six years, worked with the grocery certificate program for six years, edited the Parishioner for two years and served as a lector and Eucharistic minister in the parish.

The former philosophy professor has also served his community by volunteering to teach in the seminary of the Missionaries of Charity (Mother Theresa's order) for six years, served with the Amateur Radio community's ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service) program which provides emergency communications during disasters such as forest fires, etc.

John is not only a licensed amateur radio operator (N6JUA is his call); he also plays the double base in the University of San Diego's symphony orchestra. Before that, he played in the San Diego County Symphony for seven years, Grossmont College orchestra, the Christian Community Theatrical group's productions as well as the Covenant Ark's theatrical productions for several years.

John is married to his wife, Kathleen, and together they had six children who in turn provided the senior Swankes with 20 grandchildren. The couple traveled extensively in their motor home and have visited and seen the capital buildings of the forty-eight contiguous states, as well as Alaska's.

## **BOB COSGROVE**

Bob was born in Worcester, Massachusetts in October 1938. He attended St. Paul School and went on to the Academy of Sacred Heart High School. He joined the Navy and was sent to boot camp in Bainbridge, Maryland in January of 1957. From there it was on to Airman Preparatory School in Norman, Oklahoma and finally to AT "A" School in Memphis, Tennessee. Upon graduation in late 1957, he was assigned to VF-152 aboard the USS Hornet (CV A-12) and met the ship in the western Pacific. His first San Diego assignment was VF-121 at North Island and later at Miramar. In 1961, Bob was assigned as aircrew, in the P-5M's assigned to VP-40 in the Philippines. In 1963 he was transferred to VF-213 aboard the USS Hancock (CVA-19). His next assignment, VQ-1,

required many schools before flying over to Atsugi, Japan. In this squadron Bob was an air crewman in the EA-3B and the EC-121 (Super Connie). Some of you may remember the explosion and fire aboard the USS Forrestal in 1968. Bob had just taken off from its deck in an EA-3B a few minutes before the explosion. It was in this squadron that Bob earned many of his awards for action over Viet Nam, including 6 Air Medals, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, 4 Vietnam Service Medals, the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry, and the Navy Unit Citation. Other medals earned during his career were 4 Good Conduct Awards, Navy Aircrew Wings and National Defense Medal.

In 1967, Bob came back to the States and was assigned to VP-48 at Moffitt Field. In 1968 he was assigned to the Pacific Missile Range in Hawaii and aircrewed in the S-2D and the H-34 helicopter.

From 1970 to 1972 Bob was assigned to the ADCOP program (Associate Degree Completion Program). With all this knowledge gained, he was sent to the tiny island of Midway where he again flew as aircrew and made Chief Petty Officer. In 1973 Bob took over as the Communications and Navigation Chief for AIMD (Aviation Intermediate Maintenance Department) aboard the USS Kitty Hawk (CVA-63). His last tour in the Navy was VC-3 at North Island, which flew C-130's and drones.

It was during this tour (1975 to 1978) that he met and fell in love with Rosemary Fraser. Rosemary hailed from Chicago, spent 4 years on active duty as a Navy Nurse and another 18 years in the Naval Reserve. She and Bob met at an "over 35 Catholic Singles Club". They were married at OLG in 1976.

In 1978, Bob was hired by General Dynamics as a Quality Engineer. Six months later he was promoted to Product Quality Supervisor. From 1982 until 1995, he was a technical trainer. He was laid off in 1995 when General Dynamics closed.

From 1995 until his retirement in 1998, Bob held several jobs in the contract manufacturing field in the San Diego area. Since retiring, he has volunteered mornings at the OLG Saint Vincent de Paul food pantry. He also subs as a solder instructor at the ECC and at the Skill Center (SD Junior College).

While in the Navy, Bob not only got his BS at Southern Illinois University, but also a MBA in business and a MS in Instructional Technology.

Bob and Rosemary have two children, Michael who lives in Oregon and Mary who lives in Dallas, Texas.

Bob originally joined the Knights in 1960. He was reactivated at St. John of the Cross in 1977 and transferred to our council in 1986.

## GEORGE SHEA

George was born on December 14, 1923 in Joliet, Illinois. His father repaired trucks and sold Diamond T trucks, which were manufactured in nearby Chicago. George attended Sacred Heart Elementary School and then Joliet Catholic High School. After attending junior college, he started work at the La Grange factory of the Electro Motive Division (EMD) of General Motors.

In 1943, George enlisted in the US Navy, and after boot camp, was sent to diesel school in Chicago. His first ship was the USS Doneff, a destroyer escort. After a year and a half of patrolling near Aleutian Islands off Alaska, the ship was sent to San Francisco for an overhaul before going on to the South Pacific.

George volunteered for submarine duty and was enroute to New London, Connecticut when the war in Europe ended. He completed sub school about the same time that the Japanese surrendered and continued his underway training at sea. He chose to return to civilian life and his old job at EMD in late 1945 and soon had worked his way up to locomotive test engineer.

In 1948, George decided that he'd rather work in the field and took a position with Fairbanks-Morse as field engineer and troubleshooter. A few years later he was sent up to Canada to help dieselize a branch of the Canadian National Railroad from Camelton, New Brunswick to Gaspé, Quebec.

George married Mary Fran Offerman in Joliet in 1951. They later had two daughters, Donna Marie who is a teacher in Springfield, Illinois and Louann Marie who is a nurse in Chicago. Mary Fran died in January of 2000.

In 1952, George was asked to take a permanent assignment as field service supervisor in Montreal, Canada. In 1960, Fairbanks-Morse went out of the locomotive building business and George found himself without a job. For the next decade, he worked for several companies in the diesel electric field. In 1970, he went to work for Solar in Chicago, which was a division of International Harvester, and was transferred to San Diego five years later. In 1978, he made three 6-week trips to Iran as a field service representative. His job was to oversee the turbine engines and pumps that kept the oil flowing from the wells to the seaports. It was here in Iran that George discovered Neil Diamond's music.

George retired from Solar in 1985 and soon was in training for deacon. He was ordained as a deacon in 1988 and has been in service to our parish and the community ever since. For many years he has been ministering to the women at the Los Colinas detention center in Santee.

Sailing is George's passion and he belongs to a sailing club at Harbor Island. He also enjoys snow skiing, hiking and biking. He is a frequent flier, traveling back to Illinois to visit family members often.

## MIKE MAGEE

Mike was born on February 22, 1963 at Naval Air Station (NAS) Lemoore, California, where his Father spent most of his Navy career as an A-4 Skyhawk pilot. Mike attended Hanford High School in Hanford, California, graduated in 1981, and then attended San Diego State University, graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Aerospace Engineering in 1987 and a Master of Science in 1992. During college in 1984, he learned the sport of windsurfing at the Mission Bay Aquatic Center, and became an absolute fanatic of the sport. He is an active member and former newsletter editor of the San Diego Windsurfing Association.

Mike joined the federal civil service work force in 1987, working six years for the North Island Naval Aviation Depot as a Propulsion Systems and Structural Engineer on the F/A-18 Hornet aircraft. Highlights of this position included a mishap investigation located at 11,000' elevation on a Sierra Nevada mountainside, and a safety investigation aboard the USS Midway while in port at Fremantle, Australia.

In 1989, Monsignor Gallagher married Mike to his college sweetheart, Lisa Korte, at OLG Church. Lisa hails from Michigan and came to California in 1981 to work as a firefighter for the California Department of Forestry. Lisa and Mike later had three beautiful daughters. Mike enjoys coaching soccer, and currently coaches the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Girls Pee-Wee Soccer Team at OLG.

Also in 1989, Mike received a Naval Reserve Commission as an Aerospace Engineering Duty Officer. In 1993, he was assigned to the VF-302 "Stallions," a F-14 Tomcat squadron at NAS Miramar. Mike later became a qualified Aviation Maintenance Manager, and he currently serves as Training Officer for a Reserve Squadron supporting the VX-31 "Dust Devils," a Weapons Test & Evaluation squadron at NAWS China Lake, California.

Mike changed civilian career paths in 1993 with a new position as an Environmental Engineer. Mike was assigned to manage the "Navy Environmental Leadership Program" at NAS North Island and was project leader on over 90 innovative technology demonstrations. Several of those projects involved electric vehicles and energy conservation - leading to another career change eight years later.

Sister Carmel asked for Mike's help as a RCIA sponsor in 1996. Mike responded and was quite fortunate to sponsor Brother Knight Joseph Cossairt into the Catholic Faith. In 1997, at the behest of his Father-in-Law, Fred Korte, Mike then joined our Knights of Columbus Council at OLG. He later held council positions of Recorder, Warden, and Deputy Grand Knight, and is currently web master for the Council web site.

In 2001, Mike left Navy federal civil service for a new career opportunity with the San Diego Regional Energy Office, an independent, non-profit organization. Mike is currently Director of Programs, responsible for a variety of energy efficiency and power generation programs, which provide energy-related services to business and industry. In his free time, he enjoys attending his daughters' sports games, or if it's breezy, you will find him windsurfing on his Formula sailboard at Mission Bay!

## TIL GALLAGHER

First the name. I was named after my father, who was named for his uncle; Samuel Tilden Gallagher. My great-uncle was named after Samuel J. TILDEN, the New York lawyer who beat "Boss" Tweed and his corrupt and anti-Catholic politicians known as Tammany Hall to become a popular governor of New York. Governor TILDEN also won the presidential popular vote in 1876 but lost to Rutherford B Hayes by one contested vote in the newly formed Congressional Electoral College.

Anyway, Governor TILDEN was apparently a hero to at least one of the Irish Catholic GALLAGHER's of northern Kentucky because the year he lost the election they named one of their sons for him. I have traveled the States, Europe, and Asia and I have never found anyone else named Tilden.

Born and raised in Detroit, we lived a few blocks from Hudson Motors, Continental Motors, Chrysler and Briggs Bodies. One of our favorite pastimes was collecting parts that fell off the assembly line cars that used our neighborhood for test drives. I was fortunate to attend grade school at our parish and went to a Catholic high school operated by the Christian Brothers. They were of the wine/brandy line and "Hit the books, Sonny, before the books hit you." I worked my senior year at a Mercury dealer and worked graduation summer on an iron ore freighter on the Great Lakes. Hoped to combine both mechanic and ship interests by joining the Navy. Got the ships but not the engines. The Navy decided I would be a Fire Control Technician. No - we didn't put fires out; we put ordinance on target (control fire). Spent the first year in the Navy at a technical school at Great Lakes, Illinois and met a nice girl named Olga at the U.S.O. That led to marriage, (53+ years to date AND she's still a nice girl). Six children and fourteen grandchildren to date.

We were stationed on the Atlantic coast for the first 12 years in Florida, Virginia, and Massachusetts. A few impressions of those years include raising children on a sailor's pay, the splendor of Washington, D.C. monuments, Southern hospitality and manners, tours of the great museums and cathedrals of Europe, advancement to Chief Petty Officer and earning a commission. Upon completion of a shore tour at Great Lakes in 1969 we were transferred to San Diego. We have been members of OLG since then. Some of our children attended school at OLG; others attended Gage, Patrick Henry, and St. Augustine HS.

I spent some time on a Destroyer Tender in Long Beach; ran a tech school there, and was assigned to Nuclear Weapons Training Group at North Island for a lengthy tour. I retired in 1983 as a Commander after almost 30 years. I enjoyed the travel throughout Asia and appreciated the difference in customs, history and scenery compared to Europe and the Scandinavian countries. My avocation has always been cars. My other hobbies include a little wood working and, you may have noticed, cooking.

I joined the Knights at San Miguel Council and am proud to be a charter member of Frances Cabrini Council and its first and longest-term lecturer.

## **ERNIE BONANNO, JR.**

I was born in Brooklyn before we moved to the Bronx. When I was in the fourth grade, my Mom and Dad, who met and married in New York, decided to return to Pennsylvania with my younger brother and me, and raise their family in the country instead of the city. My Dad was from Weedville, a coal mining town in central Pennsylvania; my Mom from a coal mining town in the western part of the state. Along came my brother John and my sister Shirlee.

The summer that I graduated from high school, I helped my Dad finish building our home and then joined the Navy. I was seventeen. I did my boot camp in Great Lakes, doing clothes stops in the dead of winter! Wish someone had told me there was a boot camp in San Diego!

When I graduated from electronics school, I was sent to Key West where I rode out a few hurricanes and the Bay of Pigs invasion. Next, I was given special duty with NATO and sent to Naples, Italy for two years. I dressed in civilian clothes and had my own car to drive around in ..... real tough duty! Since I was due for a tour on a "Tin Can" in the North Atlantic, I decided to go into electronics on the civilian side.

I returned to Washington, Pennsylvania and went to work for the RCA Corporation. The following outlines my nineteen years with RCA and my involvement in the community.

The greatest thing was meeting and marrying Carol. We have two children – Paul (a San Diego County Sheriff's Deputy) and Stacy (a San Diego school teacher). We now have five grandchildren.

At RCA, I started in the union, started college night school (took ten years to get a business degree), and went into management which led to production manager with more than 1,000 employees reporting to me.

I also joined the Jaycees and served various offices until as President we went to being number two in the state. I then went into state Jaycee politics and served as state chairman for Outstanding Young Men in America. Our candidate was Rocky Blier who went onto national honors. I was the first state chairman for POW-MIA, when no one knew what it was all about. I once attended a sit-down dinner dressed in maroon and gray striped pajamas. We ate with our fingers and got all kinds of recognition but it wasn't until the Super Bowl flyover that the nation woke up to the POW-MIA situation. I served one year as Pennsylvania State Secretary and was awarded JCI senator.

I also served two years as president of Youth Baseball and one year as president of the RCA Management Club.

In 1984, faced with union problems in western Pennsylvania, I was asked to go to San Diego, locate a site, hire the people and move the cellular communications operations there. I spent six months doing what was required, and then management asked if I wanted to relocate and take over the operation. After two years, the operation was sold to Midland Radio in Kansas City. I refused to relocate and become a Chief's fan, so I started my own business, which was not successful. I was asked by Jerry Heying (a brother Knight at OLG) to come and work with him in his new business, San Diego Church Supply in Escondido. It's been a great ride the last eleven years.

As a charter member of our Knights' council, I've held many offices including Grand Knight, Star Council. I've served every Grand Knight since we've chartered. I came up with the ideas for the annual Super Bowl Party and the annual Champagne Breakfast on the Patio for MDA.

In 1987, I helped chair the first Parish Photo Directory. I'm very lucky to be part of Our Lady of Grace parish and have always been supported by Msgr. Gallagher and the office staff.

My Dad, Ernie, Sr., is 91 years old and always says, "Your actions speak louder than your words." His nickname back in Pennsylvania is "Lucky." They call me "Lucky, Jr." I am lucky and blessed!

## **RON NORYS**

Life for me began in the Northwest side of Chicago, Illinois in a two flat building; our home. On the ground floor lived my two unmarried aunts, my grandmother and grandfather. I lived in the upper level with my mother and father. We were a large family and we were spread throughout the Chicago area. We all had one thing in common, a love of Poker. To this day I believe the game of Poker had a big influence on my choice of a career, accounting.

I attended grammar school at St. Hedwigs and high school at Weber. In those days if you didn't make the grade, you left, and went to the public schools. During high school I met my wife to be, Kathy. She lived a short two blocks from me. I next attended Walton College and Northwestern

University. During this time Kathy and I married and had three children. I worked at numerous companies - Kraft Foods, Honeywell, Welch Scientific, Ampex, Teledyne, etc.; always advancing to Senior Accountant, Accounting Supervisor, Plant Controller, and then Controller. In 1978 I was asked to accept a position in Los Angeles, as Division Comptroller. After working there for a few years, I accepted a position with another company in San Diego as the Vice President of Finance. Although I left that company, I still hold this title today.

Finding myself burned out, I decided it would be much easier (how naive I was) to own my own business and bought a small store and gas station in Ramona. After five years of really hard manual labor, I sold the store and returned to my past career in accounting. I am presently CFO (Chief Financial Officer) and COO (Chief Operations Officer) at Qubit Automation in Santee.

Kathy and I have been married 41 years. Our son Ron and his wife Katie reside in Omaha, Nebraska and have two children, Meghan and Nicholas. A third is on the way, due in December. Our daughter Leanne and her husband Darrell live in Santee with grandchildren Christopher and Emily. Our daughter Susan lives with us and after having 30 years of seizures has had brain surgery and is now seizure free for the past 3 years. We have been truly blessed.

## KEVIN KANE

I grew up in Marion, Iowa. One of my earliest memories is when I was three and my dad took me and my older brother and sister to the Marion town square. He put me on his shoulders to see over the masses of people gathered as there was a politician speaking in the town square. That politician was John F. Kennedy and it was a warm summer day in 1960. My years growing up in Iowa were happy years for me. I did not know we were not rich and when my parents had some money we took vacations by car and I remember seeing 47 states before I left home.

I can trace my family tree back to the 1600's when a great...great...grandfather of mine indentured himself to Sir Walter Raleigh. In exchange for seven years of service in Sir Walter Raleigh's sugar cane plantation in the Bahamas, he received free passage to the new world that eventually included a free plot land in Virginia. His grandson fought in the Revolutionary War. My great grandfather fought in the Union Navy during the Civil War, my grandfather was in WWI and fought in the trenches in France and my father was in WWII and served aboard a destroyer in the Pacific. So my roots run deep in this country.

Though my military service was during peace time, I did serve in the U.S. Navy in an air squadron "VS 29" which was stationed at North Island. We deployed aboard the USS Enterprise (CVN 65) and I was able to see the Philippines, Hong Kong, Australia and Kenya. My military service brought discipline into my life and with my GI Bill benefits I attended Grossmont College and San Diego State University where I earned a Business Degree in Finance.

During college I worked for San Diego Trust & Savings Bank where I was part of the team that installed the first ATM's for a Bank in California. You may remember the 7/24 ATM machines? We also created one of the first shared ATM networks by signing up most of the credit unions in San Diego County so their members could make withdrawals and deposits at our 7/24 ATM's. Eventually, I was recruited by a Bank in Las Vegas and became their youngest Vice President running their ATM Department. We pioneered deploying ATM's in the casinos there and charged a fraction of a percent to the casinos for dispensing cash inside the casino. By 1988 a competing Bank could not keep up with us so they started to offer free ATM's and you cannot compete against free and make a living. That summer Patti and I took our new baby and went on vacation up to Yellowstone Park. Since I was in the ATM business I decided to pay for everything with cash that I would obtain along the way from ATM machines. When we decided to extend our stay in Yellowstone I needed some cash and to my amazement the nearest ATM was 100 miles away back in civilization. That started me thinking "how much would I have been willing to pay for cash from an ATM"?

Back home in Las Vegas the next week I wrote a two paragraph memo that recommended we charge the cardholder a fee and if we shared the revenue with the casino, which ATM would the casino want, "the free ATM from the competitor" or "our ATM that paid them money"? The rest is history and surcharging was born. As an employee of the Bank, all inventions became the property of the Bank - unfortunately. Anyway, today there are three times as many ATM's in the U.S.A.—some 200,000, employing people who make them and service them. Jobs that did not even exist prior to the 1980's. For that I am grateful.

When I graduated from SDSU I thought it would be great to become a financial planner. Well my life took a lot of turns since then and finally today I am on a path to accomplish that goal. After a five month selection process I am now in training to become a State Farm Agent. At some point after I have my office up and running I would like to take the classes, gain the three years field experience and then sit for the 10 hour exam that will earn me the Certified Financial Planner “CFP” designation.

My wife Patricia “Patti” was born here in San Diego and she graduated from San Diego State University. In addition to raising our four daughters, Ashley 15, Chelsea 12, Melanie 8 and Emily 5, she is working in the parish office to supplement our income while I start my State Farm Agency. Both Patti and I volunteer our time to both the school and Knights of Columbus at OLG. We have grown a network of friends that we have come to rely on. When I was unemployed many of those friends helped me with their good wishes, prayers and job leads. Those prayers and good wishes are now helping me as I train and meet with people for my State Farm Agency. It is humbling to have many of you tell me you would like to meet with me when I am open for business.

Now to have been honored by the Knights of Columbus with Knight of the Year - Wow. Out of 182 members it was an honor beyond imagination as I did not expect it. I am only one of many who give of ourselves for the betterment of our Counsel and Parish. So many others make the omelets, hand out the wreaths, work the Christmas party, the Super Bowl party, fry the fish and plan the picnic. My goal now is to help some of our new members who want to rise up and lead us into the future. Just when you think you don’t have time to give back to your community, simply count the hours you watch TV as I did and you will find all the time you need. When you wonder just how much could your efforts really be helping others, hang around the Grotto (built by volunteers) just one day and see how many people stop to pray and find comfort in their lives. Patti and I have given untold numbers of hours of our time in just the last year alone and I can assure you we have received much, much more than we have given. We thank you our friends for that.

## **DOMINIC LaRUSSA**

Dominic LaRussa was born on July 31, 1932 in Detroit, Michigan. When Dominic was born, at home, his mother was in a bad way, so he was set aside while the doctor attended to her. Being a true Leo, he survived!

He attended public school in Michigan until his family moved to San Diego in November 1945. Dominic’s father started LaRussa and Sons Lath & Plastering, and at age fifteen Dominic’s life’s career began. He graduated from Hoover High School and attended Apprentice school for four years, learning all the right tricks of the trade.

He is still a Master Unfortunately, in 1987 LaRussa & Sons had to close its doors. Undaunted, Dominic applied for his own license. In 1988 he founded LaRussa Plastering. “No job too small.” After 15 years, he is almost officially retired!

Dominic met his wife Nell at a St. Anthony Celebration. They have three sons and two daughters. They also have thirteen adored grandchildren with number fourteen due the end of November.

Dominic loves going on cruises with his ENTIRE family and making donations at the local casinos.

The Our Lady of Grace and Life Grotto was a very important part of his life last year and a true labor of love. After the completion, his two youngest granddaughters were watching some children play near the statue. One said, "You can't touch her," and the other said, "Yeah, and my Papa made her." It is a visible legacy for Dominic's family and his fellow Knights.

"What we do for ourselves dies when we die, but what we do for others becomes our living legacy."

## **TOM KOZAK**

My parents settled in California after WWII in the Los Angeles suburbs. My father was involved with the initial design and development of cruise missiles and my mother was a home-maker.

Looking for a better quality of life, they re-located to San Diego in 1960. With no prior involvement or experience, Dad opened up what was at the time the 1<sup>st</sup> Denny's Restaurant outside of the LA area.

With immediate success he soon looked East and opened up Kozak's Restaurant in El Cajon. The year was 1964. Due in part to being in a vibrant and growing community, not to mention a lot of hard work, the business prospered from the start. The family moved into Fletcher Hills in 1967 and joined the Our Lady of Grace community, where we attended church and school.

The restaurant provided my 3 sisters and myself our first jobs. We all worked together in one-way or the other, and more so during summer vacation. It was truly a "family" business and to this day my mother still insists that it keeps the family together.

I soon realized that my future belonged in the "family business." I had no other interests or desires. After attending the University of San Diego High School, and majoring in Business Administration at San Diego State University, I settled in full time at the restaurant. Shortly before leaving school, I befriended the daughter of my next-door neighbors, (who coincidentally were friends of my parents). Becky was involved with someone else and working overseas, so the friendship appeared to be a brief one.

Three years later, on a visit to a local travel agency, I saw Becky sitting behind the desk at Steven's Travel, where she was employed. After having not seeing her for all this time, we starting dating. After a whirlwind romance, we were married a year later in 1984. Like my parents before me, we settled into Fletcher Hills. Kevin was born in 1986 and Andy in 1990.

The restaurant continued to prosper while Downtown El Cajon was decaying. The growth of the area was towards the outlying areas, and things started to get bad. The City of El Cajon had great plans but lacked the foresight/ability to improve things. I soon became involved in the formation of Downtown El Cajon, Inc., the first local business improvement district. Where the City fathers were unable to breathe new life into this

depressed area, DECI was succeeding. But there was an awful lot of work to do in rebuilding this area.

Having witnessed the Mother Goose Parade as a child, I turned my attention towards this once proud organization. After less than 3 years as a Board of Director, I was named President in 1998. One of my proudest achievements was reversing a 5-year decline in profitability and parade quality. My term ended with surplus revenue.

Becky and I joined other local business people and formed the Optimist Club of East County. The group met weekly at Kozak's and provided additional opportunities for us to assist with fund-raising in the community. It was very exciting to have shared in this endeavor and provided many memories that we still share.

As I continued to battle an ever so slowly developing neighborhood, the fight started to leave me. The joys of this business slowly became dread and my time away from my family grew longer. The family and I decided that after 37 years, it was time to move on. We sold the restaurant in December 2000 and it is now called Goody's.

Being un-employed for the first time, we took a Christmas vacation to New Zealand. Looking up old friends of Becky's from her earlier travel days provided us a tremendous opportunity to explore both the North and South Island. It was very unusual to experience Christmas away from our extended families for the first time while enjoying a balmy Southern Hemisphere holiday. To this day I can't wait to go back or move there some day.

Once back with no job, I didn't know what to do. A chance discussion with the Dining Editor of the East County Californian Newspaper landed me a job in Advertising Sales. I sold restaurants advertising in a dining section I designed. Here I was back in restaurants every day. It wasn't until the newspaper was sold in 2002 that I gave thought to moving on. My restaurant and business experience lent to success in this field and I was hired at the PennySaver in early 2003. I am currently working in Downtown, Ocean Beach and Point Loma.

Becky is a home-maker. Kevin is a junior at Saint Augustine High and Andy is completing 8<sup>th</sup> grade at OLG. Our family enjoys each other, our family and friends, and traveling together. Sports and music keep us very busy.

We are all very thankful for our family, our friends, and the parish community we belong. The Lord has blessed us with health and happiness and for that we are very fortunate.

## JIM ZAWADZKI

In 1930, Jim Zawadzki was born in Holyoke, MA, a city of many nationalities. He grew up in the nearby town of South Hadley, the home of Mount Holyoke College, a school for girls. Jim attended Mater Dolorosa Parochial School and later South Hadley High School.

These were the post-depression years and times were tough for Jim's parents and his five sisters. At 17, Jim thought a good place to learn a trade would be in the Service, since there was no extra money for college tuition. He enlisted in the then brand-new branch of Service - the Air Force in 1947 and was sworn in at a radio station, an idea sponsored by the American Legion. While home on leave after basic training, Jim was initiated in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree of the Knights of Columbus. After this furlough, Jim attended a 9 month course in RADAR fundamentals and its systems applications. Cold War tensions caused Jim to be , transferred to the Erding Air Depot in Germany in support of the Berlin Air Lift in February 1949. For this young lad, barely out of his teens, the military occupation of Europe was both mysterious and exciting. Jim settled into his duties as an airborne RADAR mechanic and began to learn a lot from the skilled and talented people around him, even learning a little German!

One of Jim's buddies was about to re-enlist and wanted to have a party. He asked another buddy, whose wife was a Czech national, to find some blind dates suitable for the rest of us who were invited to the party. The blind date that was selected for Jim, Marianne Riederer, was a local Munich born girl. This was a defining moment for Jim and Marianne. The evening began with them all attending the performance of "Rigoletto" at the Munich Opera. These two blind-daters would never be the same. It was June 24, 1950. The next day, the Korean War broke out. A short time later, President Truman extended the enlistments of all military personnel due to the Korean crisis. The young couple's friendship grew into love which resulted in their wedding on January 5, 1952. This began the life-long union which lives on today.

The newlyweds began their new life in Tucson, AZ when Jim was transferred in June 1952 to his first Strategic Air Command base. What followed was a repetitive number of re-assignments which include another transfer to Mountain Home AFB, Idaho (a SAC Air Refueling Wing), a discharge to civilian life for 84 days, and a re-enlistment at Westover AFB, MA (his hometown) with the Military Air Transport Service in June 1954. The long arm of SAC reached out and cut short the hometown stay when Jim was transferred to Dow AFB in Bangor, Maine, for a newly formed Air Refueling Wing. SAC called Jim again to Bermuda in March 1959, where the 303<sup>rd</sup> Air Refueling Wing was located. All along these changes in location their children were being born, with Marianne adapting well to Service life. The couple arrived in Bermuda with three sons and departed the island with two additional children. In June 1962, they were transferred to Pease AFB in Portsmouth, NH, another SAC base, which was to be their longest stay in one place. Two additional children were born across the river in Kittery, Maine. The family roster now stabilized at 5 boys and 2 girls. The family vehicle of choice became the 9 passenger station wagon. Marianne, the heart of the family, was completely devoted to her role as mother and caregiver. Jim continued to progress rapidly through the ranks. His responsibilities broadened greatly including management of a wide variety of electronic communication and navigation systems.

1967 again found Jim alerted for assignment overseas. This time to the 460<sup>th</sup> Tactical Reconnaissance Wing at Tan Son Nhut Air Base in Saigon, Vietnam. This was a time of anxiety for many servicemen like Jim who were eligible for retirement. One could refuse the assignment and retire. Jim had already attained the highest enlisted grade but felt obliged to accept this assignment. Marianne bravely agreed. It was his most challenging year but he returned safely in December 1968, with a Bronze Star decoration!

The final Air Force career assignment brought the family to Cannon AFB in Clovis, NM where Jim served with the 27<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing. This was a very beneficial tour of duty since Jim was able to prepare himself for life AFTER the military. Throughout their previous assignments, the family always attended Sunday Mass, either on or off the base. They were routinely involved in base and civilian activities with their children attending parochial schools, where available. Here in Clovis, the involvement deepened as the couple bought their first house. Jim retired from the Air Force on August 31, 1970 and immediately enrolled at Eastern New Mexico University, majoring in Data Processing and Accounting. He earned his BS in three years and his MBA the following year. The father and three sons all attended the same university. With everyone going to school, Marianne held down her first job outside of the home to help out with family finances. Family involvement with the Sacred Heart School Bingo and the K of C Bingo was steady. Jim served back to back terms as Grand Knight of Council 4205.

In May 1974, recruiters from General Dynamics Corporation, visiting ENMU, offered Jim employment at the Western Data Center in San Diego. The family eagerly accepted the offer but two sons stayed behind to finish their studies at the university. A year later the couple bought their second home.

One could say “the family arrived in San Diego, and the rest is history,” but that would be a gross understatement. Jim’s work as a senior programmer/data systems analyst was daunting because at age 44 he found himself competing in ‘this new field against 25-30 year old whiz kids. Nevertheless, he found his niche, performing for 13 years before he took early retirement in 1987. It was during this period that the couple matured in their faith—as people, as parents and as man and wife. San Diego introduced them to a wonderful faith community and stimulating adult programs like Community Building, Genesis II, Renew, Marriage Encounter, Evenings for the Engaged, Cursillo and other special ministries.

Early retirement enabled the couple to retrace the early memories of their story which began in Europe. They made at least 10 trips to Germany, 5 visits to Rome and numerous other countries along the way. Jim’s father (long deceased) was born in eastern Poland. They took Jim’s 85 year old mom there to visit her husband’s birthplace. The couple has since made four trips there to visit Jim’s first cousins. Three of their visits to Germany were for long periods of time, totaling more than four years. This allowed them to be immersed in the local cultures.

The couple has made lasting friendships at home and abroad. Those who know them are aware that Christ is the center of their lives. Marianne and Jim feel very blessed by their life’s experiences. Perhaps the summit of their joy was felt at the celebration of their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, arranged by their children in 2002. The couple had their share of struggles and heartaches, but God in His mercy was always nearby to carry the heavier burdens.

## DAN DETLOFF

I am the fourth of six children. We were all born in the same house in Onaway, Michigan. It was common to have the births at home then. My older sisters and brother stayed in Michigan with their families while my folks joined my grandmother and uncle here in San Diego in 1943. My younger brother and sister came out with my folks. I had enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1942 and was real disappointed to have the folks move to San Diego. But of course this turned to joy later. I had enlisted in Detroit. Basic training was at Keesler Field in Biloxi, Mississippi, followed by a school at Buckley and Lowery Field in Denver. I then spent two years in aerial gunner's school at Laredo Air Field in Laredo, Texas. In 1945, I was shipped overseas and spent time at Samar and Palawan in the Philippines.

Returning to the States and discharged in 1946, I spent two weeks in San Diego before returning to my hometown—Selma, Michigan and enrolled in Alma College. I spent the summers with my folks in San Diego, and during the second summer I met Mary, my future wife. We both had graduated high school in 1941 – Mary in Chicago, me in Alma.

In September of 1948, Mary and I were married at Saint John of the Cross Church in Lemon Grove. Mary worked at a local bank and I joined the Post Office as a carrier. Our first home was an apartment on Florida Street, since we both worked in North Park.

After our first daughter, Debbie, was born in 1950, we began to look for a house. Shortly after our second daughter, Olivia was born in 1951, we bought our house on Jackson Drive in La Mesa. It was out in the country then. Dan, born in 1953, made it three children until Andrea came along thirteen years later. We all spoiled Andrea, but somehow she came out okay. All of our children were born at Mercy Hospital.

Today, Debbie is single and has her own apartment in Hillcrest. Olivia and her husband live in Santee. They have two grown children. Dan and his wife Debbie also have two grown children. Andrea and her husband Dale live in Havasu City in Arizona. They have three “kidlets,” Hailee who is six, Abbey four and Joy one. We all visit them as often as we can. And I am retired, having worked as a postal carrier from 1948 until 1982.

We were fortunate to be charter members of Our Lady of Grace parish. We had lots of fun while the parish grew and grew. Mass in the “hangar” was an experience. My dear wife Mary succumbed to leukemia on Christmas Day in 1999. It has left us missing a dear wife, mother and grandmother. I will never forget what a wonderful person she was. It brings to mind how important some of the little things are and how unimportant are the things we thought were important.

## LARRY PLASTER

To recap one's life in a page or two proved to be a difficult task for me. There are so many experiences, family members, friends and circumstances that make us who we ultimately become, events that bring us to this point in our lives, things that are important to me but of little interest to anyone else. So here is the two minute recap of my life:

My name is Larry Plaster. I am the youngest of five children, a native Californian born in Whittier, California, Richard Nixon's hometown. I was brought up in that thriving metropolis, that sparkling jewel in the middle of the desert, Barstow, California. For all of you driving to Las Vegas, you had the rare opportunity of experiencing part of my life.

Being an adventurously spirited teenager, I hired on with the AT&SF Railway as a Fireman on a switch engine in Barstow at the tender age of 16. Soon after, my true age was discovered and I experienced my first and last termination. At the know-it-all age of 17, I was given the opportunity, at the urging of my mother and a Juvenile Court Judge, of joining the U.S. Navy, (a good choice) which I did in 1961. I became an Airborne Sonar operator and flight crewmember in helicopters. I spent my service time alternating between Ream Field in Imperial Beach and the USS Yorktown, my home at sea.

Just prior to my leaving the service, I married Diane, whom I met in Barstow at a Sadie Hawkins dance while on weekend liberty. After a short courtship, we were married and will be celebrating our fortieth anniversary this April. We have a beautiful, talented daughter, Anna Marie who will be receiving her BA in Psychology this year. Diane and Anna Marie are both employed at Father Joe's Villages. Diane is the Human Resources Director for the organization and Anna Marie is a Program Manager in charge of case management at Martha's Village in Indio, one of Fr. Joe's many projects.

After my discharge from the Navy, I worked for Pargas, a propane company in Idyllwild, hired originally as a truck driver and then promoted and transferred to San Diego as the service manager of their Lemon Grove branch. After 5 years, I went to work at ARA Services, Magazine and Book Division, as an entry level warehouseman, and left 16 years later as their operations manager. During my last three and one half years with ARA, I took up photography and was a photographer and dark room technician at the Diocesan newspaper, "The Southern Cross". Having become disillusioned with organized labor, I decided to start my own photography business and was self employed for five years doing weddings, public relations photography and newspaper ads for a local auto agency. Thank heavens my wife Diane was able to help support us during this period.

About 1975, Father Joe Carroll got his hooks into me and my life was changed forever. I can only say that the last 29 years of having being involved with him and his organization has been a real life changing experience! After starting the Thrift store on Fletcher Parkway with Ann Patton, a long time OLG parishioner, I became the Director of Operations at Saint Vincent de Paul Village, and seven years later became the Vice President of Operations. After two years, I resigned that position and became the Site Manager for PromiseLand Ranch in Campo, another of Father Joe's ventures, this being a ranch complex that was designed to house and educate 240 Foster children. My job was basically community liaison and jack of all trades for the project. I was in Campo for three and one half years before deciding to leave this adventure. While there, I had the privilege of working with and becoming acquainted with many of the residents of the

Mountain Empire. It was extremely fulfilling to experience the small town camaraderie, support and loyalty while working on various community projects.

While in Campo, I had the opportunity, along with the urging and help of a friend, Mike Mikesell, to start a Knights of Columbus Council in the Mountain Empire, Council 13036. A challenging task as there were less than 100 registered families in the two Missions (Campo and Jacumba), which by the way are administered by Our Lady of Grace Church. With only our District Deputy, Abe Doliente, to guide us, we embarked on an incredibly difficult, challenging but fulfilling venture, to form a Council. Once the Council was formed, I was honored by the group by being elected the founding Grand Knight. It was truly an emotional moment when we were presented with our Charter by Joseph P. Shultz.

My spiritual life certainly changed while working at St. Vincent's. After experiencing the many daily miracles that occurred while working with the Homeless, I embraced the Catholic religion. Three years ago, Fr Joe baptized me as I was being wheeled into emergency surgery and last year, Sr. Carmel made sure that I was confirmed and welcomed into the church as a complete member. Diane and I are now Eucharistic Ministers and take Communion to three homebound families each Sunday. What an incredible experience, to see the faith and love in Christ of these homebound folks as they receive communion. Being part of this ministry is something that all my fraternal brothers should experience, as it will certainly increase one's personal faith while at the same time opening our hearts to the blessings of Christ as we do his ministry.

When folks ask me what I do now, I claim that I am retired, but then my wife steps in and states that I must be mistaken, that I am presently in-between jobs! Are wives ever wrong? I have certainly been blessed in my life, first with a loving, understanding and tolerant wife, a beautiful and talented daughter and finally with an incredible conversion to my chosen religion, Catholicism. I believe that by continuing to work at increasing my faith, following my heart, and putting my trust in God, I will ultimately be directed to where Christ fully intends me to be.

## **LARRY GEERDES**

I was born in San Diego on November 30<sup>th</sup>, 1941 to parents Lloyd and Lorraine Geerdes. I have one younger brother who also lives in the area. I grew up in La Mesa graduating from Helix High School in 1959 and majored in Business Administration at California Western University.

After college, I went to work for Bank of America in 1964 and in 1965 met my wife Jane also with the Bank. In 1968 Jane and I were married and will celebrate our 36<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary this month. Job transfers took us to Santa Barbara for three years in 1969, back to San Diego for one year in 1971 and then thirteen years in Mission Viejo (Orange Co.) from 1972 through 1984. We returned to San Diego in 1984 and joined OLG.

Jane and I enjoy two children, Christopher is 28 and Julie is 24. We have a very large family of 90 in East County, mostly on Jane's side. Jane enjoys volunteer work at OLG and at Grossmont Hospital (15 years).

My banking career started in personnel operations management, transferring to commercial lending in Orange Co., branch manager and then regional loan supervision. From 1978 thru 1984 I had the loan responsibility for the 265 branches in Southwest Los Angeles/Orange Co. In 1984 we transferred back to San Diego where I was District Manager for the forty branches in North and East San Diego Co. and four branches in Imperial Valley with supervision responsibilities for 800 employees. In 1987 I joined the San Diego Regional Office as Sr. Financial Officer and in 1992 assumed consumer loan responsibilities for the Commercial Bank statewide, the Private Bank statewide and the consumer branches in Southern California. My job responsibilities took me out of state and internationally. After 34 years I took early retirement in 1997.

Jane and I now enjoy retirement in Fletcher Hills and at our Colorado River water front home near Lake Havasu, Arizona. Our time is spent enjoying our children, family, friends and church.

### **DONALD E. LONG**

Donald E. Long was born in Thomson, Georgia. He was the second of four children born to Edward and Corinne Long. His home parish in Thomson was Our Lady Queen of Angels. He completed his lower school education and matriculated to Morehouse College in Atlanta where he pursued his BA degree. In Atlanta, he became associated with Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church and was one of the charter members of the Atlanta University Center's Newman Center. After receiving his degree, he was immediately employed by the Whirlpool Corporation in Marion, Ohio where he became a member of St. Mary's Catholic Church and was invited to become a member of the Knights of Columbus (Council #671). He also became a member of the Fourth Degree while there. After two years in Marion, he joined the Navy and was sent to Officer Candidate School in Newport, Rhode Island.

Upon completion of OCS, he was assigned to the carrier USS Forrestal (CV 59) home ported in Norfolk, Virginia. His religious activities during the period in Norfolk were primarily related to the ship because as an Ensign he resided on the vessel. His Naval career sent him to other ships – destroyers, amphibious ships and other aircraft carriers. One of his assignments was as the Engineer Officer on the USS Passumpsic (AO-107) home ported in Long Beach, California. While there, he resided in Inglewood and was a member of St. John Chrysostom where he taught CCD.

Educationally, Don was assigned to the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California and also completed foreign language training in Vietnamese prior to an “in-country” tour in South Vietnam. Another one of his educational tours of duty was as an instructor with the Navy ROTC Unit at University of Southern California in Los Angeles. During this period he again taught CCD at St. John's Church as well as completing his postgraduate education. He was promoted to Lieutenant Commander while there and reassigned to the aircraft carrier USS Ranger (CV-61) home ported in San Diego. On board this ship he was a Eucharistic Minister. During part of this tour, the Ranger was in Bremerton, Washington and Don became a member of St. Mary's Star of the Sea Catholic Church. He was active in the Knights of Columbus in Bremerton and was instrumental in bringing two of his shipmates into the Knights of Columbus. One is now

a retired Navy Captain and has been a member of Our Lady of Grace; the other is an attorney in the Seattle area.

Don was also the Commanding Officer of the Navy ROTC Unit at Southern University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. While there, Don was a member of St. Pius X Catholic Church, serving as a member of the Parish Council as well as a Eucharistic Minister.

On Don's return to San Diego he re-affiliated with Our Lady of Grace Church and was a charter member of the St. Francis Cabrini Council (#8879), Knights of Columbus. He also taught CCD and has been a Eucharistic Minister for several years. In 1992 Don retired from the Navy as a Commander with an exquisite ceremony at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot's Bay View Club. It should be noted that the Knights of Columbus, Our Lady of Grace, and City of La Mesa were well represented at the ceremony.

Don decided to continue educational pursuits. Thus, he enrolled in the doctoral program at United States International University in the field of Business Administration.

After pursuing this additional education, Don became a college administrator in the San Diego Community College District as a Dean on the ECC Campus.

Don has always kept quite busy with his work and civic pursuits. Professionally, he has served as the dean of all college and vocational instruction on the Educational Cultural Complex Campus and is now assigned to City College, coordinating and directing the Independent Study

Centers on that campus. As a civic leader, Don has served as a Commissioner for Community Services (nine years) and currently serves as a Commissioner for Human Relations for the City of La Mesa.

Don is the Vice President of the Morehouse College Alumni Association for the Western Region as well as Vice President of his fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha. His fraternity is the primary facilitator and sponsor of the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Parade in San Diego and is engaged in several mentorship programs for high school students. He holds two Western Regional positions with Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity.

Don is the Chairman of the African American Catholic Commission for the Diocese of San Diego. His leadership and coordination are key components to the success of the annual revival each February in the San Diego Catholic Community. He is also a member of the Knights of Peter Claver (Christ the King Council #371). At Our Lady of Grace, Don is a Eucharistic Minister. He has been selected as "Man of the Year" for both his college and his fraternity. He serves on the Board of Directors of Neighborhood House Association that is the primary grantee for the Head Start Program and Food Bank Program in San Diego County. He is also the Chair of the Board of Advisors of the Encanto Boys and Girls Club. His mottos are: "if not I, then who; if not now, then when and by whom" and "What counts in this life and world is what we give to others and the communities, such that life can be better for many."

Don spends much, in fact most, of his time at work or involved in various civic activities. His concern for "community betterment" is paramount.

## **RICK FERRANTELO**

Ricardo (Rick) Ferrantello was born on December 21, 1959 in Marva del Vallo on the west coast of Sicily. A city of 50,000 and the number one fishing port in Italy – mainly tuna and swordfish. In May of 1966, when he was six years old, Rick, his mother and father, and his two sisters – Kathy and Maria, moved across the world to San Diego, California. This was possible because his grandfather, Vito Gartinco and his daughter Catherine sponsored his family. Vito Gartinco was a fisherman during the era that saw many Italian and Portuguese men put to sea from San Diego.

Rick's family settled into a small cottage near the intersection of India Street and Hawthorne, right in the heart of Little Italy. He started kindergarten at Washington Elementary School, knowing no English but at that early age, he learned quickly.

In 1972, his mother, father, two sister and Rick became citizens of the United States. The following year his family moved to Mission Hills and Rick attended Roosevelt Junior High School. During the summers, he worked with his uncle, Nick Rossa, who was a mason.

Rick completed junior high and moved on down Park Boulevard to San Diego High where he played a little football before graduating in 1978. He then joined his father as a sheetrock installer with Wyland Enterprises of Escondido. He completed his four year apprenticeship and moved on to journeyman doing piece work. (He was paid by the sheet, not by the hour.)

In 1979, Rick was able to spend 45 days in Sicily, visiting many members of his large extended family. When he returned to San Diego, he started working part time for LaRussa & Sons while he was completing his apprenticeship at Wyland Enterprises. And it was in 1979 that he started dating the love of his life – Marie Jeanette LaRussa. After courting a couple of years, they were married at Our Lady of Grace Church in 1981. Their family has since grown to include Nicholas (age 18), Christopher (16) and Angela (6). Baby Rick, who was stillborn, would now be ten years old.

Rick worked with his father-in-law Dominic at LaRussa & Sons until the company closed its doors in 1987. He then worked for numerous construction companies as foreman until he injured his back in the Summer of 1993.

Undaunted, he retrained as a barber and joined Marie in her shop – Marie's Creations – that she's had for 17 years.

Besides being active with the Knights for the last three years, Rick has also volunteered with Guiding Hands and the Boy Scouts. He was vice-president and financial secretary of the Italian-American Civic Association and taught 5<sup>th</sup> grade CCD at OLG for 6 years. His wife Marie has been teaching 3<sup>rd</sup> grade CCD for 10 years! And now his oldest son Nick, who wants to be a teacher, is teaching 1<sup>st</sup> grade CCD.

One of Rick's hobbies is woodworking. He is creating a miniature Knott's Berry Farm in his backyard. He also enjoys old cars and is presently working on restoring a 1963 Chevy pick-up truck.

When he is asked what he is most proud of in his life, he answers without hesitation – my children.

## DAVE NELSON

I was born on July tenth in the year of our Lord 1942 at Lucky Hospital, Wolf Lake, Indiana. My folks and two sisters and I lived in the nearby small town of Ligonier. This north central portion of the Hoosier state was, and still is somewhat, a beautiful example of midwest farming communities. It was, and is, a unique lifestyle that influences for a lifetime no matter future domiciles.

I was raised in the Christian faith as a Presbyterian and nurtured by both the “in town family”, and the “farm family”. The Christmas and Easter celebrations of my youth are filled with warm (and cold) memories of “Indiana” family life.

1955 began a new life adventure as our family, plus dog, drove via Route 66 to another planet! That being Phoenix, Arizona. I believe we explored every square foot of the “sticker patch” up to our departure in 1962. After two years in Florida attending community college, fishing and flying, Uncle Sam called. After training as a combat engineer and paratrooper I served most of my tour in Europe, specializing in atomic demolition. In 1967, I was discharged in New Jersey and zigzagged across the U.S.; sport parachuting, seeing old friends and family and enjoying probably the most carefree time of my life. San Diego became home; Grossmont College beckoned as did Gillespie Field. The G.I. Bill allowed me to complete my flight training and work as a flight instructor at El Cajon Flying Service. I met and married my last student!!! There she....the owner’s daughter. After thirty two years, four daughters and one son, I can say that the all consuming job of husband and father is the greatest blessing I have ever received. The community of Our Lady of Grace has been another blessing to our family. Inspired by the faith that I witnessed at O.L.G., especially that of my wife, I went through R.C.I.A. What a GREAT program! And later I was a sponsor myself.

Trucks and airplanes have been my gainful employment focus, actually the tools of my trade, I guess. We had our own trucking business for some twenty years. After selling out nine years ago, I have been driving for a local concrete producer. Varied jobs flying have filled in slow times over the years and sustained my love of aviation. As the years have progressed though, I have not devoted the time needed to remain current. Priorities dictate.

We’ve three of our kids through college, with two to go! I think I can see a pin prick of light.....

If retirement comes in the future, I look forward to being able to become more active in the Knights, travel the United States once again, do a much better job in correspondence; possibly do some historical fiction writing, pop in on our kids as often as is a nuisance, and grow old with my lovely wife. In the interim; eat, sleep, and work. Look for the good -- watch out for the bad.

## MIKE MOORE

I was born and raised in Fresno, California, located right in the heart of the central valley. I am the youngest of five children from a modest family. My Mom and Dad separated when I was three years old. My eldest brother and sister were close to adulthood at this time so Mom was left raising me, my two brothers and caring for my Grandma. Mom was working, so grandma was the security in my youth. She passed away when I was eight and I still remember her laughter and advice. Mom sacrificed much in raising me and my brothers and I am very grateful for all she has done for us. Mom turned 80 this year and is still healthy and active in my hometown parish. Dad died when I was 17. He was not active in my life for many years, but I was able to see him more after he retired and moved back to California. My two brothers that I was raised with are also deceased and I miss them all. I have one brother still in Fresno and my sister lives in Denver. We talk on the phone, e-mail back and forth and see each other as often as possible.

I have been married for 25 years to my high school sweetheart, Aimee, who I have known since we were in elementary school together. We have 3 children -- Mike Jr., Meggie, Mollie. All are working hard between school, work, and life in general. When Mike Jr. was born, our faith was put to the test, when it was discovered he had a heart defect, and vocal cord paralysis, and would go through a series of 40 surgeries, all before he was 12 years old. With the support of family, and many prayers from friends in our faith community, he made it through. He is now working on a Sociology degree. Meggie, is working towards a Marine Biology degree, and Mollie is working on a Social Work Degree. After high school, Aimee started on a court reporting career. With the kids on the way she decided that being a mom was most important so she took a break from her schooling. She is great mother. After our youngest started school, Aimee went back to school and received her degree and is working as a deposition reporter.

I had been working in the floral industry since I was 16, and I had been dreaming of living near the coast since childhood. In the year 2000, I was presented with the opportunity to make this dream come true. The company I had been working for, sold into a major corporation, and they in turn needed a General Manager for their San Diego area stores. After careful thought, prayer, and consideration, my family and I made the move to San Diego, where I supervised the five locations of San Diego Florist Company. Thinking I was living the dream, my life was given a slight detour, and the company that moved me down here four months earlier, filed for bankruptcy, and in September of that year closed their doors, and I was left without a job for the first time, since I was 13 years old.

Again after careful, thought, prayer, and consideration, my family and I decided to stick it out, and in December, our prayers were answered, and I found a position with SDG&E. I know the company sometimes gets a bad rap down here, but I have been thankful for every opportunity they have given me.

I have been a member of the Knights of Columbus since 1994, when my home Parish, St. Helen's, chartered a Council. It was started by Brother Joe Fitak, who is now deceased. Joe felt the need for a men's group, to help around the church, and recruited 35 men from the parish, to be founding members of Council #11135. When Joe asked me to join, I was at a point in my life, where I felt a desire to really give back to God, who has

given me so much. I felt, and still feel, that being a member of the Knights of Columbus provides many great opportunities to give thanks to God.

With the St. Helen's council, I held the positions of Deputy Grand Knight, Grand Knight, and Trustee. During my time as Trustee, Joe's health deteriorated, and at his, and the council's request, I stepped in a second time as Grand Knight, and stayed in the position the following year.

I have made many friends, and have met many wonderful people, through my association with the Knights of Columbus.

As we all know, life takes many turns, but through it all, the gift of my faith has saved, strengthened, and guided me to where I am today.

### **JIM JOHNSON**

I was born in San Diego, California on August 21, 1953 to proud parents Eugene and Kathleen Johnson. I am the oldest of 5 children. My father was a civil engineer working for the city of San Diego. I have lived in San Diego all of my life. I grew up as an infant in southeast San Diego, and then moved to Allied Gardens in 1956 and Del Cerro in 1962.

The year was 1961 and my father along with a partner named Tommy Clark founded what was known as Cla-John Construction Company. The company grew to become a very successful excavation and grading firm in San Diego. While growing up in Del Cerro, my parents took me out of public school for two years for the fifth and sixth grades and sent me to Francis W. Parker School in the Hillcrest section of San Diego. I am eternally grateful to my parents for sending me to Francis Parker. I was able to get the attention academically along with fond memories of that time period in my life.

It was around noon time November 22, 1963 that I received word that our president John F. Kennedy had been shot and killed. I still remember where I was when I heard the news – standing in the hall at Francis Parker School. It was only a year prior that my father took me and my sisters out of school to watch President Kennedy's motorcade whiz by us on College Avenue on his way to give a speech at San Diego State College. It was at Francis Parker where every Wednesday morning the whole school congregated in the auditorium for chapel service. At public school, we weren't allowed to have any kind of prayer service. This was a foundation to my faith today.

After Francis Parker, I went to Lewis Jr. High and then Patrick Henry High. At age 12, I joined the Boy Scouts of America, belonging to Troop 920 in Del Cerro. I really liked scouting. For me it was a challenge how far and fast I could go up in rank. The year was 1967 and at age 14, I was already an eagle scout. I quit Boy Scouts with 23 merit badges. I remember my Eagle Scout ceremony. Another scout in my troop (King Ackerman) and I were the very first Eagle Scouts for Troop 920. It was a big deal for me, and especially my parents. The guest speaker that night was the famous Archie Moore (the boxer) who lived in San Diego. You can still see his old red brick house along side I-15 and Highway 94.

My father was a real football fan and loved the San Diego Chargers and his loyalty rubbed off on me. I am still a loyal fan of the Chargers. My fondest memory for San Diego sports was going to the very first Chargers game at the brand new San Diego

Stadium in Mission Valley. The game was very significant in that it was one of the first inter-league games played that summer between the old NFL and the AFL. The opponent that day, August 20, 1967 was the Detroit Lions.

In the fall of 1968, I attended the brand new Patrick Henry High School and my class, the Class of 1971, was the first class to make in through all three years. I tried out for football and basketball but I wasn't what they were looking for, so I tried swimming. The swim team took just about anyone and I was on the team. Swimming was a lot of hard work. I stuck with it and became the most improved swimmer my first year. I continued to swim as an adult and have completed seven La Jolla rough water swims in recent years.

After graduating from Patrick Henry, I went to work for my father's construction company. It was the hot summer of 1971 and you could find me on my back inside a drainage pipe down in Santee, mudding the joints. I received no special treatment being one of the owner's kids. In the fall of 1971, I started to take classes at Mesa Junior College here in San Diego. I transferred to San Diego State University for the fall semester in 1973 and pursued a business degree. I graduated with a BS in Information Systems in December of 1976.

Four years earlier, I met my wife at St. Therese's parish social hall while attending a teen dance. Her name was Catherine Maria Morton. She was studying for a career in nursing at Grossmont College. We dated for almost 5 years before getting married at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Ocean Beach. My mother worked there as a secretary in the rectory. She actually worked with Father Michael Gallagher during the mid 1970's. We were married on September 10, 1977.

We lived on Reynard Way just north of little Italy and down the canyon from Hillcrest. At this time, I worked for Crown TV Rentals in downtown San Diego. Crown TV was close enough to home that I used to ride my bicycle to work. I worked for Crown TV for seven years and managed their Navy exchange TV rental contract. We had rental TV's at all the Navy Exchanges in San Diego. Crown also rented/leased home appliances and operated a small gas station where I also worked occasionally. I was going nowhere at Crown, so in January of 1983 I enrolled at Coleman College in La Mesa and eventually earned another degree in Information Science. This was a turning point in my life because a friend told me that General Dynamics was hiring people with computer experience. I went to work for General Dynamics Electronics Division in November of 1983. I worked in the Master Scheduling Department for almost 9 years, scheduling and planning electronics projects for the B-1B, F-16 and C-17 military aircraft.

During this time my wife and I were raising our three girls, Amber, Ashley and Allison. We registered at Our Lady of Grace in 1980 after we bought our first home located on Lake Arrowhead Drive in San Carlos. We enjoyed 14 wonderful years in this house bringing up our kids Catholic.

Sister Carmel saw my family picture in the 1987 Church Directory and called me and wanted to know if I would consider working with the Remembering group. I said yes and shortly after I was a sponsor for RCIA. I sponsored three people and watched them grow into fully initiated Catholics. I have also been a Eucharistic Minister for over 10 years now. I was very blessed to have the support of Sister Carmel and Father Scott when my father passed away in February of 1994.

During the last twelve years professionally, I've worked for design and manufacturing firms as a purchasing agent and materials planner mostly on a temporary basis. I think you could call me a professional job seeker. I've worked for General Instrument, Maxwell Technologies (two different divisions), Intel, Kyocera Wireless, Northrop Grumman (twice), NASSCO, Instrumedix and Tempo Research.

Recently, Catherine and I celebrated 27 years of marriage.

### **ANDREW JOSEPH GANSE**

Andrew was born on January 14, 1979 in Los Angeles, California. His three older sisters, one older brother, mother, and father lived in Glendale. They attended Holy Family Catholic Church ever since his mother and father moved out to California in 1964 from the Midwest. Andrew attended Holy Family Grade School from 1st-8th grade. Starting in the third grade all the way up through high school, he was an altar boy who was able to serve several Masses for the bishops in L.A. While at HFGS he was elected on Student Council as Commissioner of Boy's Athletics for his 7th/8th grade years. Before graduating in 1993, he earned several honor roll certificates and the Boy's Athlete of the Year Award.

From 1993-1997, Andrew attended St. Francis High School in La Cañada. As a Golden Knight he participated in Track and Field (4x100m relay, 100m, 200m, long jump), and volleyball. Throughout high school, Andrew continued to work and serve Holy Family as a student worker in which he was an office secretary and sacristan. In the summer just before his senior year, he had an amazing conversion into which Christ became personal and not just book knowledge. Thank to the Catholic organizations of the National Evangelization Teams (N.E.T.) and Life Teen, Christ truly started to become more fully alive in him. He, along with several other parish teens helped start a youth program at Holy Family. Andrew graduated high school in 1997 and was awarded a Service Award for his leadership at school.

In the fall of 1997, Andrew moved to San Jose where he attended San Jose State University (SJSU). He had every intention of studying and receiving a degree in meteorology. God had other plans. As the difficult first year of college was nearing the middle of the spring semester, Andrew knew he may not be returning to SJSU. Without a real plan of what he was going to do next, God sparked an inspiration in applying to serve a year with N.E.T. If accepted he would be traveling around the U.S. in a 15 passenger van doing retreats and rallies for junior-high and high school aged students as well as for families. With other like minded Catholic youth adults they would be sharing the basic Gospel message to thousands of young people. Andrew was accepted into this international, Catholic youth ministry missionary organization. He just bought himself one year's time to think about what God was calling him to do before he would go back to college somewhere and finish his degree.

In August 1998, Andrew joined almost one hundred other confirmed young adults (18-30) for 5 weeks of training in St. Paul, MN. After being commissioned by the Archbishop of Minneapolis-St. Paul, eight teams of 12 were sent out to all parts of the U.S. to bring teens closer to Christ and embrace the life of the Church. Andrew's team conducted 139 retreats in seven dioceses during the next nine months. It was through this

experience that he heard God's call to become a teacher. Because Andrew's sister was already a teacher, he knew exactly where he was going to study to become a teacher...the University of San Diego. But God said, "Good, you know what I want you to do, but you're not ready yet." God was leading him to serve a second year with N.E.T. but this time in Canada.

Inspired by his experiences with N.E.T. and seeing Pope John Paul II in Rome for World Youth Day in 2000, Andrew was now ready to dedicate himself to his studies in becoming a teacher.

Beginning in the fall of 2000, Andrew started to earn his degree at the University of San Diego. While at USD, he led retreats and other campus ministry type venues (i.e. Freshman Retreat, T.J Spring Breakthrough, R.I.O.T., Search); was a certified track and field assistant coach with Special Olympics (2001-2002); co-founded Fronteras, a U.S./Mexico border immersion trip for USD students; co-founded XALT, a campus worship night geared specifically for Catholics but welcomes people of all faiths; made the Dean's second honors list his final two semesters; was the recipient of the Bishop Buddy Maher Scholarship Award for three years (2000-2003); was the recipient of the first ever Degheri Scholarship (2002-2003); was the recipient of the 2002-2003 Servant Leadership Award for campus ministry; and was the recipient of the 2002-2003 Student Employee of the Year for the whole University. In the Spring of 2003, Andrew received a Diversified Liberal Arts (DLA) degree along with a preliminary State of California teaching credential.

After substitute teaching for two years in the Diocese of San Diego and the Poway Unified School District, he landed a 7th grade homeroom/8th Algebra teaching position at St. Didacus Parish School in Normal Heights. While working, Andrew started his Master's degree program at Point Loma Nazarene University. During this same time period he also met his future wife, Christine. After just a few months of courtship, Andrew got engaged. After two years of working at St. Didacus and working on his Master's degree, Christine and Andrew got married on August 25, 2007 in New York City. With a new life ahead of them, they decided to move to Maine.

The happy newly-wed couple ended up moving to Bangor, ME where Andrew worked as a 4th grade teacher at All Saints Catholic School. It was during the fall season that he actually finished his Teaching and Learning Master's degree along with receiving a professional credential from the state of California. Without any promising job outlooks for the future, Andrew and Christine decided to move back to San Diego despite having an adventurous year in the Northeast.

In July of 2008, Andrew, Christine, and Sugartail (their cat) made the week long trek across the country. Shortly after settling into their new home in La Mesa, Andrew went right to work as a 6th grade homeroom/5<sup>th</sup> grade Science and Social Studies teacher at Saint Charles Borromeo Academy in Point Loma. Soon Andrew and Christine registered at OLG parish and in February 2009 Andrew joined the Knights of Columbus. On Flag Day 2009, Andrew received his 3rd degree honor and quickly started working on the council's newsletter for July. As of May 2011, Andrew still works at SCBA and will be the 2011-2012 Grand Knight of Frances Cabrini Council 8879.

## DANNY FULKERSON

My name is Danny Ray Fulkerson, born in San Diego on June 29, 1947 and raised in San Diego County. My homes have been in "Frontier Housing", National City, Linda Vista, San Diego, Spring Valley, and La Mesa. I am the youngest of six children born from 1940 to 1947. I and the younger of my sisters are the lone survivors. I grew up being called Danny, changed to Dan for most of my adult life, and now prefer to be called Danny. Yet, I like the expression - "You can call me anything except late for dinner."

A most important aspect about me that I would like all my brother knights to know is that I experience a peculiar learning disability. It can be described as a defect in the processing of incoming words, while the outgoing words are less affected. I sometimes experience difficulty "getting" words accurately, and will often think that I have heard what was said, but I get it wrong and don't realize that fact. Words get scrambled when transferred from short-term to long-term memory. This experience was formally identified by the County of San Diego in 2005. The testing also showed that I read at ninth grade level and perform at grade level sixteen. Paradoxically, I am very effective at "reading aloud".

If you want to be sure to communicate to me with words, the best way is to give me a note in writing (or other visual form, such as email), which will allow me to read and re-read until I "get it right".

I graduated high in academic standing from Kearny High School in San Diego and was an accomplished athlete. My best subjects were in mathematics, music, the sciences, and physical education. My Interscholastic Sports were football and wrestling. I attended Stanford University with an athletic scholarship. In my second year I sustained an injury which ended my athletic career and I left college.

I had two brothers serving in the USAF during the Vietnam Era and they both persuaded me to enlist. From 1967 to 1971 as a Parachute Rigger I was stationed in Texas, Illinois, California, Japan, Korea, and Maine.

During my military years, one of my brothers had become a Computer Programmer by attending Coleman College, and steered me in that direction. I checked into it and found that it was "just my cup of tea". During the next few years I accomplished additional classes and have completed credits equivalent to a third year of college in Business Administration. I worked seventeen years in the computer industry with seven years as an "independent contract programmer".

While I was in the Air Force, I married a girl from San Diego. We were married 35 years and raised two wonderful children, and divorced after they both graduated from college. My son has a PhD from UCLA in Computer Science (emphasis in Computer Vision and Robotics) and my daughter has a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from UCLA, and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Georgetown University. During the second half of my marriage, I was a "Mr. Mom" and performed additional duties as Cub Scout Den Master, assistant soccer coach and assistant basketball coach. I worked as a handyman at-large and then for 5 years as a janitor at Our Lady of Grace. I did volunteer work in Mississippi after Hurricane Katrina, and in San Diego following the big fires in our mountain communities.

I was "unchurched" until I was about 40 years old. I was baptized in the LDS Church, re-baptized in the Episcopal Church, and confirmed in the Roman Catholic Church. I have read the King James version of the Bible from front to back once, and many selected passages in many translations in preparation for reading the Sunday Lessons as a "Lector" in the Episcopal Church. I also performed duties as a "Server of the Host". I have been a member of the church choir in the Episcopal and Roman Catholic churches.

I am a fan of the TED.com web site ("Ideas Worth Spreading"), and a long time Movie Fan.

I am currently retired and interested in working as a "Voice Actor", "Stage Actor", and "Film Actor". I sing and recite selected poetry and have appeared on stage in 2010 at the Balboa Theater in San Diego with the Christian Community Theater - Senior Follies.

### **GLEN GASSMAN**

I was born on January 30, 1966 in Dubuque, Iowa, a medium-sized city on the Mississippi River. I am the youngest of three boys and I attended Holy Ghost Elementary School for four years until my family bought a marina restaurant in Belleveue, Iowa in 1976. I attended St. Joseph's elementary, junior high and then Marquette High School in Bellevue while working at my family's restaurant. Upon graduation in 1984, my parents sold the family business and I enrolled at the University of Dubuque. The following year I transferred to the University of Iowa, completed a year there, but then decided to join the Navy.

After recruit training at Great Lakes, Ill., I was assigned to the USS Midway in Yokosuka, Japan for three years as an aviation firefighter and rescueman. Next I went to the USS Carl Vinson in Alameda, Ca. as an ABH3 (Aviation Boatswain's Mate Aircraft Handler, Third Class). Immediately following an Arabian Gulf deployment, the ship was sent to Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in Washington for repairs and upgrades. It was here that I met my future bride, Trish. In 1992, I was advanced to ABH2 and transferred to NAS Alameda as a flightline supervisor.

Trish and I were married in April of 1992 in Port Orchard, Wa. In 1994, after graduating from the U.S. Armed Forces Law Enforcement Academy I accepted orders to the USS Tarawa as an MA2 (Master-at-Arms, Second Class). After three years there, I longed for a more law enforcement intensive atmosphere so I did a split tour as an MA1 to the USS Constellation. I spent four years aboard the "Connie" and shortly after my 14<sup>th</sup> year in the Navy, I was selected and initiated into the ranks of the Chief Petty Officer.

In 2001 I transferred to Assault Craft Unit ONE on the Naval Amphibious Base, Coronado and in 2004. With my 20-year mark looming on the horizon, I set my sights on finishing my degree, so I went back to college at night and graduated from National University with a BS in Criminal Justice Administration. I report to the USS Nimitz in January of 2005 for one last glorious sea tour.

Trish and I became members of OLG in 2000 and Trish was baptized here in 2004. We have no children but will be continuing our family in the very near future. We are both active in RCIC and the Interfaith Shelter Network. I've been a Knight for three

years and I also volunteer with International Relief Teams, the Girl Scouts and Las Palmas Elementary School in National City. I have always enjoyed helping people, so it's no wonder that I've found serving my country extremely gratifying. I am looking forward to serving this community once I retire from the Navy in two years.

## **MICHAEL AGUIRRE**

Albert Einstein once said, "A hundred times every day I remind myself that my inner and outer life depend on the labors of other men, living and dead, and that I must exert myself in order to give in the same measure as I have received and am still receiving."

I think this rings true for most of us. As I have been blessed by many people who have had a great impact on my life.

Our family moved around a bit, but the majority of childhood years were spent in the small steel mill town of Gary, Indiana. My father worked in the steel mill for many years. Unfortunately he died when I was 6 years old. My mom, being a single parent, worked very hard to assure that my sister and I received a catholic education through high school. I often worked alongside my mother after school, evenings, and on the weekends in a restaurant my uncle owned. The best pork tacos in Gary! I have such deep respect and admiration for my mothers' hard work and sacrifices. She exemplified to me what is required to provide and love your family. She was a strong woman. My mom passed away when I was in my early twenties. I have learned that it is important to spend time with the ones you love, for life is unpredictable.

It was commonplace in Gary for sons to follow in their father's footsteps. But I chose a different path. In high school I took night classes in computer science at the local junior college. With my interest in computers, I moved to Dallas, Texas after high school graduation. I received my B.S. in Computer Science and began my career in Detroit, Michigan. Family needs brought me back to Dallas once again, where I lived for many years.

After my mom passed away, I was fortunate to be surrounded by a wonderful group of friends who became my extended family. With them I became involved in athletic activities joining many sporting leagues. One of my passions is playing volleyball, whether it be on grass, sand, indoor or in a racquetball court. This leads to how I met my wife, Eva, obviously playing volleyball.

She at first thought I was a jerk – funny how these love stories start out, huh? She was not easy to catch. She was soon to leave Dallas because she got tired of the hot summers. I chased her to the east coast where we traveled and lived in various cities. Finally, we settled down in Charlotte N.C., where I convinced her to marry me. The wedding took place in San Diego since all of Eva's family lives nearby.

Once we decided to begin a family of our own, we moved back to San Diego. Not long after unpacking, along came Maura, now 2 ½ years old. Before we knew it, the Good Lord blessed us once again. Along came Samuel, now 15 months old. Two wonderful children that bring such joy to my heart everyday. Because the

childhood years provide such an important foundation, we made the decision that Eva would be a full-time homemaker, giving up her career as a Physical Therapist.

A strong commitment and desire to help others brought me to the Knights of Columbus. A family with whom to share my family. It was nice to be welcomed by so many friendly faces. I look forward to assisting the community, and the parish. Keeping my promise to Father McGivney.

## **PAUL J. AUBE**

My wife Kathy and I have had a wonderful life together for 40 years in 2004. We have two sons, Matt and Sam. Matt lives in West Chester, Pa and is in the HVAC installation and maintenance business. Sam and his wife Jen live in Marietta, GA and he is Southeast Regional Director of Sales for a large global company.

I was born and raised in Torrington, Ct spending my spare time interested in sports, cars, girls, working and school probably in that order. After graduation from High School, I attended Norwich University in Northfield, VT graduating with a BSME and an ROTC commission. Norwich is the oldest private military academy in the US and the perfect place to develop the discipline and leadership needed to be successful in career and life.

Following graduation I went to work for the Torrington Company as a Sales Engineer in training. Torrington was a manufacturer of small and large bearings. During my early employment, at the wedding of a good friend from college, I met my wife. I was the best man and she was the maid of honor for her sister. We were married a few months later and almost immediately went off on an adventure we still treasure to this day. I had to temporarily leave Torrington for my obligatory tour of duty with the US Army. I was assigned to the 553 Engineering Battalion as Construction Officer at COMZ Headquarters in Orleans, France. Kathy and I had many great experiences touring France, England, Spain, and Italy, and we spent many glorious weekends learning the ins and outs of Paris.

After being discharged from the Army, I went back to work for Torrington where we spent the next 18 years of our life. My work with Torrington took us to the mid west where we raised our family in the shadow of the golden dome of Notre Dame in South Bend, IN. Our boys spent their youths playing ice hockey in the winter and honing their golf skills in the summer. Our lives evolved around traveling with the boys and their different sports teams.

In 1984 it was time to move on due to the closure of the South Bend facility. I took a job as Director of Marketing for SKF USA in King of Prussia, Pa. SKF is the worlds largest manufacturer of anti friction bearings. After 2 ½ years in PA, we made an acquisition of a bearing company in Jamestown, NY, and in 1986 we moved as empty nesters to become VP Sales and Marketing for MRC Aeroengine Bearings. Our oldest son stayed in West Chester to attend Pennsylvania Institute of Technology and our youngest went off to “happy valley” to attend Penn State.

While in western New York, Kathy built a beautiful Timberpeg post and beam home on the shore of Lake Chatauqua. It was a grand house. We enjoyed life in NY

golfing, boating, fishing, and cross country skiing. We were very active in the community with Kathy working with the Arts committee that put on the first Lucy fest (Lucille Balls hometown was Jamestown, NY) comedy festival and I worked with the Jamestown Chamber of Commerce.

Now that the boys were grown, it seemed time for me to pursue my dream of getting into general management. I found such an opportunity in 1994 with a small bearing company and became General Manager of West Coast Operations for RBC Bearings. This entailed moving to Los Angeles. We decided to make a big change in our lives and start new in California. We sold at auction our entire household including our decades long collection of antiques and moved the bare essentials to Newport Beach.

This job didn't work out and we ended up taking a job in Ogden, UT with Barnes Aerospace. We sold our condo in Newport Beach and moved into our new condo in Utah in 1995. After a few months with Barnes I got my big break and was promoted to GM of Barnes' Lansing, MI operation. So again we sold our condo and trekked off to our new condo in Haslett, MI. The next 3 ½ years were spent taking a dying old company and making it successful.

In 1998, an old acquaintance from EG&G asked me if I would be interested in taking over their Fabrications Division with operations in St Louis and El Cajon. The companies were down on their luck and the challenge seemed like it would be fun. With Barnes Lansing now stable and profitable with a good management team, I resigned and headed west again.

Kathy and I settled in the Fletcher Hills area of El Cajon and I took over as GM for the two operations. After a year, the El Cajon company was sold to The Triumph Group and I stayed on as GM.

Outside work we both got involved with church activities, golf and learning about San Diego. At Our Lady of Grace, Kathy is involved with the St Vincent de Paul parish food pantry and I am a Eucharistic minister and a member of the Knights of Columbus. We both can get around any part of San Diego without a map and have enjoyed our adventure in SD.

## **RALPH D. HUNT**

Just before Ralph was born in 1923, his parents moved from their farm in southern Missouri to Chicago, where his father became a steam engineer. Not driving a locomotive. In those days, most machinery was powered by steam. Ralph attended Maternity BVM School in Chicago and then Crane Tech High School. After graduating in June of 1941, he got a job as an apprentice dental tech at \$10 a week. In December of 1941 he became a precision tool inspector for Stewart Warner.

In March of 1942, Ralph joined the Navy and was sent to boot camp in San Diego. He tried for flight training but his eyes were not up to flight standard. His next choice was aircraft engines, so the Navy sent him to Aviation Machinist Mate School in Chicago for six months and he graduated on Christmas Eve of 1942. From there Ralph was sent to LION-1 (Landing, Invasion, Occupation, Navy) in Norfolk, VA. In February

of 1943 half his class was sent to Africa and his half was sent to the South Pacific. Ralph was assigned to the 4th Marine Division in the New Hebrides Islands where he became an inspector for overhauled aircraft engines.

After 18 months, he was rotated back to the United States via the USS Hollandia (CVE-97) and USS Intrepid (CV-11), which was being returned to the States to repair serious damage done by Kamikaze planes. After some well-deserved leave, Ralph was sent to Boeing's School of Aeronautics in Oakland. The war ended while he was attending this school, so the Navy sent him to VR-4 at Moffitt Field to inspect overhauled R-5D engines until his discharge.

Once again in civilian life, Ralph looked for a job in aviation. The closest to Chicago he could find was TWA in Kansas City. It was there that he married his Chicago sweetheart, Juanita Byrd, in 1947. And it was there that he found employment as a precision tool and gage inspector for Bendix Corporation. A company he stayed with for 34 years. In 1972, Ralph was promoted to field quality representative and transferred to San Diego.

Ralph and Juanita have been blessed with four daughters, all of whom they were able to put through college - two at St. Louis University and two at the University of Missouri. Unfortunately, Juanita is suffering from both Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases. Ralph visits her everyday at Stanford Court Nursing Center. He is able to receive Communion with Juanita on Thursdays, thanks to a Eucharistic Minister who comes to the Center from Guardian Angels.

A resident of Santee for the last 24 years, Ralph is very active in the Aerospace Museum in Balboa Park. You will find him there most Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, rebuilding or repairing aircraft engines, both old and relatively new. He has been a Knight of Columbus since 1980.

## **JAMES HAM**

Last month our membership was reduced by one. Jim Ham lost his long battle with Parkinson's Disease on Holy Thursday, April 13. His wife, Sharon, was kind enough to sit down with your editor and share these highlights of Jim's life.

Jim was born in Paducah, Kentucky, in 1931, but in 1935 a flood destroyed the family's house and everything in it. His father went north to Detroit and found work in a Chrysler plant and soon the family moved there.

Jim went to public schools in Detroit but his superior grades enabled him to attend Cass Tech, which was a school for music and the arts. Jim was an exceptional artist and was employed by an ad agency after graduating from high school. He was drafted into the army during the Korean War and had the distinction of creating the signs telling the North Korean prisoners that the war was over and they were free to go home. Of course these signs had to be printed in the Korean language!

When his tour in the army ended, his old company was required by law to take him back and he picked up where he had left off before the war. The ad agency was on

the 12<sup>th</sup> floor, so Jim would obviously take the elevator to and from work. It just so happened that there was a young lady by the name of Sharon Hively working on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor. And it was the elevator operator that introduced these two people to each other.

Jim and Sharon dated for about a year, and during this time Jim converted to Catholicism. They were married at Detroit's Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in 1960 in a double wedding with Sharon's sister Judy and her husband Tom. The next year, 1961, Jim and Sharon were blessed with their first born, Kevin. It was also the year Jim joined the Knights of Columbus.

In 1963, Jim and Sharon paid a visit to San Diego. It was a vacation that changed their lives. While on vacation, Jim looked into job opportunities here and was surprised to find Philips & Ramsey Associates eager to hire him. So they became San Diegans. In 1966, their daughter Kimberly was born. Jim started his own graphic design business, Graphic House, in 1969 that he ran until illness forced him to close the business in 2001. One of the many signs that Jim designed is the San Diego Scenic Drive sign that still appears all over San Diego.

Jim loved singing and acting. He appeared as John the Apostle at OLG's play, the Messiah, many years ago. He was also active in the Christian Community Theater's productions on Mt. Helix. Jim and Sharon were also very active in the Cursillo movement at Our Lady of Grace.

### **RICHARD (DICK) PATRICK**

My dad was born in Portugal and immigrated to America in 1913, at age 17, became a U.S. citizen, served in the Army and passed away when I was five. My mom was born in Mexico and lived in San Diego when she married my dad in Coronado. My brother, their first child, was born in San Diego but lived only three days. My parents were so heart broken, especially my mom. When she was ready to give birth to me, she insisted she wanted to be with her mother, who had twelve children in Mexico and was very experienced in child birth matters. My dad argued that he wanted me to be born in the U.S., but she won the argument because she wasn't comfortable in giving birth in a "modern hospital" where she had been disappointed. Therefore, I was born on a farm in San Vicente, Mexico in 1939, where my grandparents raised their family. At birth I became a Naturalized U.S. citizen, and I am so thankful to God that I am an American and honored to be the recipient of all the benefits it has to offer.

I've been a native of San Diego all my life. In parochial school I attended Our Lady of Guadalupe, I then went to St. Augustine High School. I spent my first year of college at Loyola University in Los Angeles, and my last three years at the University of San Diego. I received my degree in accounting in 1952, and was employed in public accounting for seven years, then in private industry as a controller as well as in various executive positions.

While in college I joined the Platoon Leaders Class, an officer training program offered by the Marine Corps, in hopes that I would become an officer upon graduation. Unfortunately, since I was married and had a child while still in college and for career

purposes, I made the tough decision to drop out of the PLC program and spent the rest of my military duty time in the reserves until I was honorably discharged.

In July 1975, I started my own tax and accounting practice. As an Enrolled Agent I specialized in individual taxes as well as corporate, partnership, LLC's, trusts and estate tax returns. My firm also performed accounting and payroll services for various small businesses. When I sold my practice in 2008, I had prepared close to 20,000 tax returns. In 1995, I received my Series 7 and 63 securities licenses and became a registered representative in financial services. I kept this part of my practice until I sold it in 2014. I was also an instructor and taught various income tax courses for many years.

I married my high school sweetheart at a very young age. Together we had five children. Two have died but I'm still the very proud father of a daughter and two sons. After almost 25 years of being married, sadly we were divorced and I received my annulment from the Catholic Church.

After being unmarried for ten years I met my current wife, Mary Jo, dated for two years and we now have been married for 20 years. She too was divorced and had been unmarried for eight years and received her annulment before we met. She has a son and a daughter. Together we have ten grandchildren, and we love spending as much time as we can with them.

MJ and I lead very active lives. We enjoy traveling all over the world. She plays tennis, and I play golf. We ride our bikes and scooters and work out on a regular basis. We do volunteer work with the Knights of Columbus, Life Perspectives, St. Vincent de Paul, and Whispering Winds. We're both Eucharistic Ministers at Our Lady of Grace Church. I joined the Knights in 2005, and have always been an active member in St. Frances Cabrini Council 8879. I worked my way up through the various officer positions including Grand Knight during the 2013-2014 Columbian Year. I am currently a Trustee with our council as well as a 4th Degree Trustee with the Bishop Cirilo B. Flores Assembly 3610 in Lemon Grove.

## **DENNIS BAILLEUL**

Born: December 16, 1944 in Inglewood, CA. Attended primary and secondary school in Torrance, CA. Graduated from Bishop Montgomery High School in 1962. Attended El Camino College 1964 to 1965. Married Mary Liena ala Grace on July 2, 1966 at St. Catherine Laboure Parish in Torrance. Joined the Navy in September 1966. Made three West Pac tours to Vietnam. Was assigned to Heavy Attack Squadron Two (VAH-2) which flew the KA-3B and EKA-3B Skywarrior. Transferred to VAQ-132, combining VAH-2 with VAW-13. First deployment was aboard USS Ranger (CVA-61) in 1967-68. Second deployment was with the USS Enterprise (CVAN-65) in 1969. Third deployment was on the USS America (CVA-66) homeported in Norfolk, VA in 1970. Primary duty was as plane captain; secondary duty as mechanic in Power Plants (WC-110).

During this time frame my wife gave birth to our two sons - Timothy in 1967 and Jon in 1968. Just prior to my separation from the Navy, Mary gave birth to our daughter Denise in 1970. After my discharge I resumed my education in Police Science at El Camino College. In the next several years our two other sons were born, Gregory and

Christopher. In 1977 we moved from Torrance down to San Diego where we settled in Mira Mesa. We attended Good Shepherd Parish there.

After being out of the Navy for several years, I sensed something was missing - the camaraderie of my fellow shipmates. So, I joined the Naval Air Reserves. At about this same time I went to work for NAVAIR, formerly known as NARF (Naval Air Rework Facility). My field of expertise was with F-4 Phantoms, F-14 Tomcats and F-18 Hornets. I worked the test line, Barrel Change and Field Service at NAS Miramar, and saw the transition back to MCAS Miramar. In 1991, my reserve squadron, VR-57, was activated for Desert Storm and served out of AFB Sembach, Germany, with detachments going to the UAE. In 1993, I retired from the reserves after 20 years. While standing up the squadron as a Plank Owner, I had the privilege of designing the squadron's logo and name "VR-57 Conquistadors"; our motto: "We Circumnavigate the World". In 2005, I retired from NAVAIR after 31 years of service.

In March 2000, I lost my wife to a five year battle with ALS. She is interred in Sorrento Valley, El Camino Memorial Park, Madonna Lawn. In 2004 I was invited to attend Mass at Our Lady of Grace Parish. I was overcome with everything! Especially with Monsignor Gallagher! After attending Mass for a month or so, I was approached by a member of the Knights of Columbus and convinced to join the local council. And, as they say, "the rest is history"!

## **HANK MARCOTTE**

Hank is a native of Salina, Kansas. He played basketball all four years of his high school years. He and his brother were both members of the 1954 basketball team that won the Class AA state basketball tournament. They were both selected for the State Outstanding team. He graduated from Regis College, Denver, Colorado in 1960. He enlisted in the Air Force in 1960, was commissioned in 1962 and retired as a Lieutenant Colonel in 1983. He completed the Air Force Squadron Officers School and Air Command and Staff School. He had assignments at Myrtle Beach AFB in South Carolina, Thule AB in Greenland, McGuire AFB in New Jersey, Charleston AFB again in SC, Chanute AFB in Illinois, Randolph AFB in Texas, and in New York before his final duty station at Vandenberg AFB in California. Hank's military decorations and awards include the Outstanding Unit Award, Defense Meritorious Service Medal and the Air Force Commendation Medal.

Hank is married to the former Jean May, RN, of Tipton, Kansas. They have four children, Andrea Crankshaw, Brenda Marcotte, David Marcotte and Sarah Newlon.

After retirement from the Air Force, Hank and his family spent a year in Marysville, CA, with Jean's Mother. He then found a job with General Dynamics\* Convair Division for a short time before General Dynamics established a new Division, Space Systems Division. Hank was transferred to this new Division where he worked for 9 years until General Dynamics closed that Division.

Hank next found a position with Qualcomm in the cell phone Division until Ericsson bought that cell site operation. He moved to Ericsson with the sale. Ericsson only operated the cell site operation for two years before they closed operations in San Diego and released the employees. So, in 2002, Hank retired.

Hank, Jean and family have lived at their original San Diego home on Lake Athabaska Place since 1984. They have been members of OLG since that time and have been involved in many on the different church activities over these many years. Hank is a charter member of Council 8879 and is now an Honorary Life Member. Over the years he has participated in many of the activities sponsored by the Knights of Columbus and served as Chancellor for two years.

## **GIL GRAJEDA**

I was born in 1922 right here in San Diego. I was the oldest of eight children. Following me came Louis, Anita, Phillip, Dolores, Josephine, Juanita and Estela. My father worked at the Benson Lumber Company on the San Diego waterfront. Growing up, we kids did a lot of pushing each other and we had our disagreements, but nothing serious. At nine years of age, I was sent to Mexico to visit my grandparents. I remained there for three years, then returned to San Diego to continue my education.

At the age of 17, I was invited to join the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) for one and a half years. After working at what became Cuyamaca State Park and then Yosemite National Park, I was transferred to the California State Division of Forestry.

When World War II broke out in 1941, I volunteered for a six year hitch in the Navy because I didn't want to be stuck in an Army tank! After boot camp, I was assigned to the USS Curtiss in the South Pacific. It was a seaplane tender with two planes aboard; its job was reconnaissance in the area.

After six months of that sea duty, I was assigned tug boat operation duty in Pearl Harbor. By 1947, the war was over and so was my six-year service to the Navy. I was honorably discharged in San Diego.

The experience in operating large equipment that I gained while working for the CCC and the state forestry people enabled me to get an equipment operator's position with the city of San Diego. After 36 years there, I retired in 1985.

Gloria and I were married in 1950. We have two children \* Richard was born in 1952 and Irene was born in 1957.

In 1962, we moved to La Mesa and became members of Our Lady of Grace Church. I became a charter member of KofC Council 8879 when it was formed in 1985. I also volunteered with the California Highway Patrol for 4 years. I have been an usher at OLG Church from day one. Come to the 5:30 Mass on Saturday and you'll find me in the left wing.

## **ROBERT (BOB) SULIER**

Robert “Bob” Sulier was born in Toledo, Ohio on January 4, 1965, the 8<sup>th</sup> child to Rosemary “Badger” Sulier and Edward Sulier. Edward was a WWII Vet, an Electrician and a 4<sup>th</sup> Degree Knight of Columbus. Rosemary was a ballplayer, secretary and a Mother to 8 hellions. In 1983 Bob graduated from Monroe Catholic High School in Monroe, Michigan and then attended University of Toledo while working as an auto mechanic at Jim Walz Automotive. He quit college and entered the U.S. Navy as Yeomen. While in the Navy, Bob served at HSL-41 at North Island and went back to college. In 1991, Bob had a choice to get out of the Navy and finish his college, or stay in and go to sea. He chose to get out of the navy and stay in the Navy Reserves, finish college and sell cars at Peck Jeep in San Diego. After completing college, Bob was turned down for Navy OCS, so he joined the California National Guard and received both a State Commission in California and a Federal Commission in the U.S. Army. On the civilian side, Bob was both selling real estate in Coronado and writing software as a civilian for the U.S. Navy. He eventually would give up his real estate career and stay in the I.T. (Information Technology) sector for the rest of his career.

Bob soon found himself in love with Jean Massicotte and they married in September 2002. In 2005, they were blessed with their son, Christopher John Edward Sulier (John Edward is the first name of his 2 grandfathers). While Christopher was an infant, Bob got orders to GITMO (Guantanamo Bay) for one year. Because of his I.T. expertise, he was moved to the Detainee Operations Center and was named the Information OIC (Officer in Charge) where he developed reports that were used to understand the detainee population and the reports were also sent to Washington D.C. for analysis. Bob came home for a few years and was then given orders to Iraq where he served as the Deputy Support Operations Officer charged with the complete sustainment and support of 35,000 citizens and soldiers in Iraq along with supporting several base closures and the withdrawal of the last combat brigade in Iraq. He came home with a Bronze Star Medal in (2011), Combat Action Badge (2011) and other awards for his services there.

Bob now serves as a Lieutenant Colonel with the 75<sup>th</sup> Training Command in Long Beach, California, where he trains units for battle and instructs the MDMP (Military decision making process). He currently remains in the I.T. business as a Software Developer, ETL (Extract transact load) Specialist and a DBA (Database analyst). He still serves the KofC as the Chancellor and remains a 3<sup>rd</sup> degree Knight with almost 20 years of service to the Knights. Bob, Jean and Christopher still reside in their Mount Helix home and Christopher attends Our Lady of Grace School.

Bob and Jean currently have a cabin in Big Bear, California and he’s also a member of the Coronado Yacht Club where he plans to have his retirement boat.