

## *Please Congratulate the 2009 Distinguished Alumni*

### **Maureen “Renie” (McCauley) Pelter, Class of 1944**

After graduation from St. Philip High School, Renie, as she is better known, worked in a factory in Chicago and then returned to work at Fort Custer. There she met Joe, who was stationed at Fort Custer. They married and moved to Herington, Kansas, where she still resides.

Throughout her life, Renie’s depth of faith remains an inspiration to many. Her example of living what she believes has brought both family and friends to the Catholic Church. Celebrating a private mass with Pope John Paul is a personal milestone in Renie’s life.

Renie’s contributions to her parish church are many and varied. For over forty-five years, Renie has been the organist -- pro bono, for her parish and plays all weekend masses, funerals, and weddings. She has been the Altar Society president for fourteen years, served on her parish school’s advisory board, attends daily mass, transports elderly parishioners to Mass, and worked for the Right to Life initiative.

She was the first person to deliver Meals on Wheels in her community and continued this mission for eight years every Sunday after Mass. She continues to volunteer whenever her help is needed. She has served on the Herington Library Board for four years and was responsible for reviewing books under consideration by the library. She also served on the Herington Historical Museum Board for six years.

For recreation, Renie plays bridge, reads, and travels. She really enjoys returning to Battle Creek for the Alumni Reunion and reunite with her family and good friends.

Renie was nominated by Lena (Maddalena) Wood, Class of 1944 who shared, *“She is steadfast in loving and defending her Catholic faith. This is the true spirit of St. Philip and a tribute to the priests and sisters who devoted their lives to our alma mater.”*

Renie is the widow of Joe Pelter and has six children: Joe David, Linda, Deborah, Chris, Tim, and Scott.

## **June (Klimmer) Crocker, Class of 1952**

As a graduate of St. Philip High School, June has always been very supportive of the alumni association and has been responsible for organizing many reunions for her class throughout the years.

June earned her LPN degree at Kellogg Community College in Battle Creek. She worked at Hospice and was in charge of the Volunteer Training Program and Scheduling. She retired in 1999.

June was nominated by Nancy M. Brown, Class of 1954, who expressed, "*June's life is greatly influenced by her strong faith and Catholic school values. Her dedication and compassion for the sick demonstrates what the spirit of St. Philip is about.*" "Bear ye one another's burden" Galations 6:2 describes June's devotion and her commitment to share friends' burdens, allowing personal burdens to become lighter and hope to become stronger.

June practices The Corporal Work of Mercy of caring for the sick. She has accompanied several of her friends to their cancer treatments and was always there for them whenever they needed her assistance. She also frequently transported their family members so they could visit with their loved ones. When a friend asked what she could do to repay June for helping, June's response was, "You don't repay me; you do something kind for someone else."

At St. Philip Church, June has been a Eucharistic Minister for thirty years, volunteers to assist with parish and funeral lunches, and serves as a Stephen's Minister. She was on the Parish Council at St. Joseph Church and taught CCD for many years. June is a twenty-five year member of Sweet Adeline's.

June has five children: Gail, Karen, Bob, Cathy, and David all of whom attended St. Philip School. She has eleven grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

## **Joseph Zuk, Class of 1965**

Joe attended St Joseph Elementary School through eighth grade and then went on to graduate from St. Philip High School. He continued his education and graduated from Western Michigan University in 1970 with a degree in English and Secondary Education.

In 1970, Joe began his teaching career at St. Philip High School as the English instructor. During his tenure, he wore many hats in addition to the teaching of the English curriculum. He served as Vice-principal, Assistant Volleyball Coach, Bus Driver, Dean of Discipline, Senior Class Advisor, Quiz Bowl Advisor and member of Discipline Review Board, Curriculum Committee, and various other committees whenever needed. Mr. Zuk impacted the lives of over 3,000 students at St. Philip Catholic Central High School at times influencing their career paths.

Joe was nominated by fellow classmate, Mary Cummings, who stated, *“I nominate Joe for the outstanding teacher and leader he has become. He has taught four of my children. He honored the trust I placed in him for the care and education of my children with humor, respect, and a blessed love of learning of English, reading, and creativity. He is generous of heart and time. What more can a Christ-like man do for others?”*

Joe and his wife, Carol, live in Battle Creek and are members of St. Philip Parish. They have three children: Stephanie of Anchorage, Alaska, Sara of Portage and Andrew, who lives in Los Angeles. They also have 2 grandchildren.

After 39 years of dedication to St. Philip High School and students, Joe retired at the end of the 2008-2009 school year. Joe is enjoying his retirement with activities such as cooking, playing with his grandchildren, enjoying the outdoors, and of course, reading

## **Patrice “Patti” (Schoder) Emmerson, Class of 1973**

After graduation from St. Philip High School, Patti went on to the University of Michigan and studied writing. While there, she received the University’s Distinguished Hopwood Writing Award for a play that she had written. Patti served as a lay missionary with the Jesuit Volunteer group after her graduation from the university.

Professionally, Patti is employed by Perry Ballard, Inc., a communications firm in St. Joseph, Michigan, where she is now a Senior Writer. She has won numerous local, regional, state, district, national, and international writing awards while at PBI.

Patti was nominated by Mary (Schoder) Collins, Class of 1981, who stated, *“Patti’s academic, professional, and spiritual achievements are an excellent example of how St. Philip prepares students to make a positive impact in their families, parish, community, workplace and the world. I think she is an excellent example of the great contributions that St. Philip alumni make.”*

While living in the area, Patti and her husband, Pete, were actively involved with the Diocese of Kalamazoo’s Office of Marriage and Family, which included helping at engaged couples’ weekends and promoting Natural Family Planning. They were also actively involved in supporting Catholic Schools and donated numerous volunteer hours to various parish activities and fundraisers. Upon relocating, they continue their support for St. Philip School, as well as, the Catholic Schools in the Grand Rapids.

In recent years, Patti has become involved in mission work in Haiti. She has traveled there and has coordinated securing resources from the United States. She also assists with immigrants from African countries, helping them find housing, work, health care, and familiarizing them with American culture. She cares for their children and provides activities to ease their transition to United States schools.

Patti and Pete have three children, Molly, Tim, and Maricolleen. Patti also foster parented a young mother until she was able to become self-sufficient.