



# Ventures

*Turning Faith into Action since 1859*

Summer 2006, Volume 2, Issue 4

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## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF: Principal and President share insights



**Above: Sister Maureen Oliver finds schoolyard supervision just one part of her busy day. Right: Sister Kathleen Ross takes delight in a shared moment with one of Heritage University's smallest day care treasures.**

It's six o'clock and St. Clare Parish School in Southwest Portland is dark and silent. The door opens and Sister Maureen Oliver, Moe, starts her busy day. The school centers around 288 students ranging from kindergarten through eighth grade. Sister Moe knows each one of them, their teachers, and the staff, byname. And at 6 a.m. she prepares for all of them.

First of all she checks her email, actually about 50 entries each morning. Next she fleshes out her to-do list: plans a meeting, revises a textbook list, looks over plans for the fourth grade religion class she will teach that day; all the multiple tasks a principal faces each day.

Soon teachers and students find her. She meets with the boy who will serve as principal for a day, discusses possible textbook changes with a teacher, meets a committee of eighth grade students to talk about their gift for the school when they graduate. A parent drops by to chat.

Sister Moe brings a formidable experience to all this work. She has a master's degree in Institutions for Catholic Educational Leadership from the University of San Francisco, and has served as a principal for 25 years at O'Hara Elementary School in Eugene, and at

St. Ignatius, Portland, before going to St. Clare.

Her main purpose lies in "creatively making Gospel values achievable," and she sees it fulfilled in the classroom and halls every day. One mother called to tell her that her kindergarten child and a friend were going to have a joint birthday party and they decided they would ask their guests to bring food for the poor rather than gifts. They got the idea at school.

Social outreach plays an important part in the education program. Studies come first, but the academic program is infused with lessons that include care and concern for others, reflecting God's love for us. "When you go down the hall you should see this in action. We have tried to create an environment where they feel free to think." This care also reaches outside the classroom.

No matter how young the students are, they take part in a program that includes service at the Outreach Program in downtown Portland, and at Blanchet House, where they serve meals and save pennies to support the people they see there.

Inside the school there is an emphasis on



creating community. Family groups, comprised of nine students, one from each level, K-through-8, meet regularly, providing leadership for the older students and role models for the younger ones. "Peer mediation" aims to see that no one is left out or neglected.

Sister Moe herself says that she loves to help those with low self-esteem; being an advocate for the students is one of her principal joys. A learning specialist, who works with both the slower and more advanced students, has joined what Sister calls "an outstanding group of educators," her faculty.

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At the end of the school day, both students and staff drop by to discuss their concerns. There might be an interschool game to watch; there might be a program to preview.

Life in her elementary school can be demanding—it is never boring.



**Left: Sister Moe Oliver listens intently to a student's story.**



**Above: Students and Sister Kathleen Ross plant oak trees on the Heritage campus. Left: Sister Kathleen congratulates student Maggie Alejandre on her accomplishments.**



Magister (Christ the Teacher). She urged the graduates to “stay open to the role you might be called to, in creating more justice and more charity in our world.” Sister Kathleen does this at Heritage.

As proof, we talked to one of her appointments that day, Margarita (Maggie) Alejandre, a 2006 graduate of the University, who will start a position in Everett next month using her brand new degree in business and the skills she honed the past four years.

She and her family emigrated from Mexico when she was ten, and she believed that college was not for her. For two years after high school graduation she worked in a beauty salon and found satisfaction in helping others there, as well as contributing to her family's economic welfare. However, when she heard a counselor from Heritage speak about the opportunities a college education would give her, she thought, “Maybe I can do that.” With a lot of help from her family, her teachers, the university's financial office, and Sister

Kathleen herself, she enrolled. During her college years Maggie worked at outside jobs, joined clubs, traveled to conferences, and studied hard. She intends to go on for an MBA after a few years. Following Maggie's example, her sister is now attending Heritage, taking science courses and planning to become a dentist. Part of the success of these plans she credits to Sister Kathleen

And Sister Kathleen credits her Holy Names Community with great support and involvement in the creation of Heritage. Starting with an abandoned elementary school building and 80 students, Heritage University now has 1,500 students, 155 full-time and 150 part-time employees, and 15 different majors. It not only has Holy Names Sisters on the faculty, but a number of the members of the staff are Holy Names Associates. “The community is truly invested in our work,” she says.

She finds seeing students become successful truly satisfying, and wishes there were

more scholarships available. “It is always a sadness when someone has to drop out because of finances.” With an enrollment, two-thirds of whom are female and predominately Hispanic and Native American, the challenges are chiefly financial, since 95% of the students qualify for financial aid. Hence raising funds has become a major part of her work.

All is not work, though. Sister Kathleen, who has a master's degree in History from Georgetown University and a doctorate from Claremont Graduate School, relaxes by reading, playing the violin, both in church and at parties, and is an ardent “birder.” These take her away from some of her problems and she cherishes time spent with friends and colleagues.

The days (and nights) are long when you are a talented president of a young institution but the rewards are immeasurable. When Sister Kathleen shuts her office door, she knows there is still much to be done. Sister loves her work, and like Sister Moe she is never bored.

## 2006 Jubilarians



**Sister Ann Paradis**

Sister Ann Paradis (Jeanne Michele) caps her nearly 50 years as an elementary school teacher and principal by visiting the sick and elderly in St. Ignatius parish in Portland, where she spent long years as teacher and knows many of the families.

She prays for and with them and advocates for them.

A graduate of St. Mary's in Portland, she earned a bachelor's degree from Marylhurst College and a master's degree from the University of Oregon.

She interrupted instructing upper grade students to become the first formation director to take charge of new entries to the Community in a place away from the traditional convent setting.

She has enjoyed teaching and still loves to watch her former students and to attend their games and meets.

Sister Eleanor Kratz (Christa Mary), fondly known as Ellie, left St. Mary's Academy in June 1954, and less than two months later entered the novitiate. She taught primary grade children, served as principal in Oregon and Washington parochial schools for over 20 years.



**Sister Eleanor Kratz**

After enrolling in a CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education) program, Ellie went to Lewiston, Idaho, as a chaplain at St. Joseph's Hospital. Her ten years there was a solid preparation for her current job as SNJM administrator of the Marie-Rose Center at Mary's Woods.

In her limited spare time, she belongs to a centering prayer group, reads, listens to classical music and plays “free cell” on her computer.

Sister Lucinda Peightal (Helen Patrice) like the other jubilarians, graduated from St. Mary's Academy, but Lucinda's alma mater was in The Dalles, rather than Portland. She attended Marylhurst College for one semester before she entered the novitiate in January 1955.



**Sister Lucinda Peightal**

After teaching in the elementary grades and serving as principal in Oregon parochial schools, she finished her teaching career at Portland Community College.

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## Education in the Yakima Valley

Over two hundred miles away from Portland in the Yakima Valley at Toppenish, Washington, Sister Kathleen Ross, president of Heritage University, starts her day praying with her living group and arriving at her office around 8:30 a.m. A quick glance at her calendar reveals that she has at least eight appointments scheduled for the day, with more in the evening. She lists a few of them: a conference with the Chief Financial Officer to discuss the budget; a meeting with visiting staff members from the University of Washington; discussing future plans with students.

One of the founders of Heritage 25 years ago, Sister Kathleen (known professionally as Dr. Ross, and familiarly as Kate), recently gave the commencement address at the University of Portland, where she was awarded the University's highest honor, Christus

## In Memoriam

Sister Margaret Petersen (Sister M. Alberta Louise) died on March 25, 2005, at age 92, after nearly 60 years as a Holy Names Sister.

After graduating from Marylhurst College, she pursued a long career as a music teacher in Washington and Oregon parochial schools. A creative teacher, she often worked with younger children, introducing them not only to piano and choral music, but to different forms of rhythm and percussion.



**Sister Margaret Petersen**

After ill health forced her to retire from the classroom, Sister Margaret devoted long periods of time to gardening, raising both flowers and food. An avid “birder,” she enjoyed going to central and eastern Oregon to find new species. She loved reading, particularly biography and history, and became a fine conversationalist.

Later, after being confined to her room by a heart condition, she found the Discovery Channel and her copies of *Audubon* and *Smithsonian* magazines great comfort. Her quiet life of reading and listening was enhanced by her devotion to prayer and the sacraments. Her Mass of Christian Burial was held in the Provincial House Chapel on March 31, 2006.



**Sister Patricia Jean Konrad**

Sister Patricia Jean (Mary Louise Konrad) died after a long illness on March 5, 2006. She was 90 years of age, and had been a professed Sister for 69 years. Mary Louise came from a family where music was always present; her father played the cello in the Oregon Symphony. After graduating from St. Mary's Academy, she attended Marylhurst College for two years before entering the novitiate. After receiving a Bachelor of Music degree, she started her ministry in the field of music as a teacher of piano and harp. Nine years later she completed her Bachelor of Education degree and taught in elementary parochial schools in Oregon and Washington.

As the next step in her teaching career, she earned an M.A. in History from the University of Portland and taught high school and college classes in that field. She spent her final teaching days at Marylhurst College, where she also worked as Academic Credit Advisor. At the same time, her love of travel took her to Europe, Asia, and the West Indies.

For ten years she was confined to the Marylhurst Care Center where she spent time enjoying music and her favorite TV programs. While watching one of these, she slipped quietly away to join her God and her family. Her Mass of Christian Burial was held March 15, 2006, in the Provincial House Chapel.

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Always interested in justice causes, Lucinda devotes her time to working for such issues as better health care for all citizens, helping women and children move out of poverty, and being mindful of our obligation as Catholics to be better stewards of our environment.

Sister Ida Van Hoomissen (Stella Marie) spends several days each week as a hospitality volunteer at the Downtown Chapel, working with men and women who come in for help and comfort.

She attended Marylhurst College for a year after high school graduation before her entry into the novitiate. She served as a music teacher for ten years, then switched to elementary education.

Later Sister Ida became director of religious education in two Portland parishes, Director of Pastoral Education at Mount Angel Seminary, and pastoral associate at Holy Name Parish in Ketchikan, Alaska. She enjoyed travel to Europe, Asia, and South America, as well as around the United States, and has wonderful tales to tell about them.



Sister Ida Van Hoomissen

## Sisters welcome first U.S.-Ontario provincial leadership team

(Editor's note: Three members of the new provincial leadership team are profiled in this Summer 2006 Ventures. Other members of the seven-person team were profiled in the Spring 2006 Ventures.)

**Mary Ellen Holohan, SNJM, Albany, New York:** Mary Ellen's background blends the education and perspective of both the scientist and the theologian into her unique leadership vision. Serving as a secondary school science and math teacher in early years, she moved into Educational Administration and Holy Names leadership, acquiring an M.A. in Theology and fluency in French in the process. Mary Ellen served as General Superior of the Holy Names Congregation from 1991-1996.

More recently, she completed clinical pastoral education at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal and served in parish ministry in Albany. She had a double focus: one in outreach to economically poor and marginalized persons in the parish and the second an outreach to senior parishioners, those sick and the dying.

A favorite quote: "O God your many-colored wholeness is one shade at a time!"



Above: Sister Mary Ellen Holohan. Left: Sister Shirley A. Roberg. Below: Sister Joan Saalfeld

**Shirley A. Roberg, SNJM Spokane:** Shirley is a practical visionary and a creative implementor. She says she gained her early training for administration and leadership in her family, as the eldest of 13! Shirley earned an M.A. in Elementary Administration, leading to a rich history in ministry with students of every age, with women parolees and retired elders, and in outreach at food banks and "hands-on" service to the poor.



She served as Provincial in Washington, directed Crossroads House for women released from prison in Coeur d'Alene. At Heritage College, she was Vice President for Administration, and later Assistant Manager at Clare House retirement complex in Spokane. Before selection to the U.S.-Ontario team, she was Director of Our Place ministries, an emergency assistance facility sponsored by four churches in West Spokane.

She says her favorite quote directs her actions. "I do not want to die until I have faithfully made the most of my talents and cultivated the seed that was placed in me until the last small twig has grown."



**Joan Saalfeld, Portland:** Joan's life and work reflect her commitment to education, to leading others in their personal and spiritual growth. With an ability to inspire through the writer's craft, she enables the reader or listener to understand more deeply and then to "come along." Joan's recent book, *Looking for the Song*, illustrates her style. The fable crosses cultures and religions to reveal a universal truth about the longing for spiritual fulfillment, that the elusive Song is to be found in the things of ordinary life, but only by the attentive and careful listener.

Joan has taught at the secondary and college level, served as English Professor and Chair of the Department of English and Foreign Languages at the University of Portland.

She earned a Ph.D. in Literature and Creative Writing from the University of Denver. She currently serves as Team Leader and Province Director for the new province.

A favorite quote: "Let God be God in you." (Meister Eckhart)



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## Sacred Spaces



### Sisters

Aged but not infirm,  
walking slowly, still intent  
upon the continuing movement  
of an eighty-year pilgrimage,  
purging self-pity  
and self-importance  
for a gentler fire;  
down the hall,  
crowding into the little elevator  
of the 1910 convent,  
twelve old nuns and me.  
From the high fourth floor  
we look out at bulldozers  
scraping the landscape  
some of them first saw  
as novices sixty years ago;  
they tell me of the past  
as we watch  
their dream for the future  
being shaped  
by iron and diesel;  
high about the intensity,  
looking out from old windows  
into a new creation  
birthed from the surrounding darkness  
through discipline and prayer,  
the Sisters share with me  
their gift of patience,  
and vision,  
sweet like wine  
amidst the chaos  
of new beginnings.

Don Hynes

(Written during the construction of Mary's Woods while Don Hynes served as Project Manager. He has published several books of poetry, including *Slender Arrow* and *Out From Under*.)



Top photo: The Old Novitiate Porch, Provincial House. Photo above: Aerial view, Mary's Woods, Marylhurst, Oregon.



**Mary's Woods at Marylhurst recently marked its fifth anniversary. Enjoying the celebratory event are, from left, residents Sister Annaloris Ward, Maxine Reinschmidt and Carol Thomas. Residents Philip and Dorothy Martin wrote of the anniversary that "we wish to express our deep appreciation ... We continue to value the Mission Statement as we have seen Mary's Woods take form and mature as a community. ... Mary's Woods is truly an environment of beauty... Undergirding it all is an atmosphere of a faith commitment which honors religious diversity without losing its core strength of appreciation for the sacred element of life."**

## *Ventures: A Publication of the Sisters of the Holy Names*

*Ventures* is a publication of the Sisters of the Holy Names (SNJM), printed tri-annually for the use of the Sisters, their partners in ministry and their various publics. It aims to support the vitality of the SNJM mission, education in the faith in all its forms, into the future.

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# *Ventures*

*Turning Faith into Action since 1859*

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### **In this issue: DELIGHTFUL DAYS OF SUMMER**

**SUMMER 2006**

Golden days invite us to acknowledge achievement ... and celebrate growth!

Sisters Kathleen Ross and Maureen Oliver ... remarkable Holy Names educational leaders share their vision and passion for the "gardens" they tend year round... SNJM Jubilarians gather back at Marylhurst ... can it be 50 years? The New Leadership Team gives us clues to who they are ... cultivating ministry for the future.

This VENTURES we dedicate to the abundance of Summer.

#### **JUNE 2006**

**June 5:** World Environment Day  
*"Earth, our home, needs us to ensure its survival."* (SNJM document, 2001)  
**June 10:** 50-Year Jubilee, Marylhurst

#### **JULY 2006**

**July 8-10:** Congregational Retreat opening 32nd General Chapter  
**July 14-29:** 32nd General Chapter  
*For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven...* (Ecclesiastes 3:1)

#### **AUGUST 2006**

**August 26:** Annual SNJM Picnic, Millersylvania State Park, Washington

#### **SEPTEMBER 2006**

**September 12:**  
 Feast of the Holy Name of Mary

#### **A glimpse of the past: Heritage College - My Heritage... My Future**

**HISTORY:** Heritage College is unique in its origins. Both old and new, it is a successor to Spokane's Fort Wright College (formerly Holy Names College), founded in 1907. Through a change in name, location, ownership, sponsorship, and under the impetus of two Yakama Nation women, leaders from business, religious, and educational communities in the Yakima Valley incorporated as Heritage College in 1981.

**VISION:** From its founding, Heritage College has been inspired by a vision of education which embraces issues of national and international significance. These issues revolve around the realization that cooperation across cultural boundaries—whether they be geographic, ethnic, religious, or economic—will be vital to human survival. From *Heritage Catalog*

***Yakima Herald-Republic*, June 19, 1986.**  
 Heritage College graduated the first class to complete all four years at the college. College officials pride themselves on offering a degree

to students who could not otherwise afford a college education. Of the 253-member student body, 35% are Hispanic, 25%, Native American, 40%, Caucasian. The average age is 31 and 70% are women.

***Congressional Record*, December 11, 1989.**  
 "Mr. President, this past summer a young member of the Yakima Indian Nation became the first woman in the history of her tribe to graduate from law school and become a member of the Washington State Bar. She was able to complete a rigorous course of study at the Gonzaga University School of Law, in large part because of the excellent undergraduate program she undertook as a student at Heritage College. The Yakima Indian Nation needs to have more success stories like hers."

***Parade Magazine*, March 31, 1991.**  
**Headline: "Don't Tell Us It Can't Be Done."**  
 "If this school wasn't here, I wouldn't have gone to college", says Edith Walsey, a Heritage student. "The teachers here understand my customs. Now, when I graduate, I hope to go home and work with my tribe."