A NEW HORIZON

Auschwitz conference promotes peace through religion
September
5/Saturday First football night game, St. John’s vs. Sacred Heart, Campus Field, 6 p.m. Tickets: $5 adults, $3 children. Info: 371-7885.
11/Friday Rededication and renaming of Campus Center, 11 a.m. Ceremony and reception. Info: 371-7840.
16/Wednesday Opening convocation, Pitt Center, 2 p.m. Honorary degree to be conferred on Monika Hellwig, Ph.D., executive director of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities. Info: 371-7910.

October
1/Thursday Artist and Curator’s Talk with Ann Chernow and Deborah Frizzell, Gallery of Contemporary Art, 7 p.m. Info: 365-7650.
3/Saturday Elder Care Symposium, “Building Effective Interdisciplinary Teams in the Classroom and Clinic,” Mahogany Room, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Registration: $75, $100. Info: Dr. Michelle Lusardi, 365-4721.
10/Saturday 10th Annual Scholarship Dinner and Discovery Awards, Pitt Center, cocktails 6 p.m. Tickets and sponsorship info: Laurie A. Bellico, 371-7861.
19/Monday “Falling Catholic Attendance,” lecture by Dr. James Davidson, author and professor of sociology, Purdue University, Mahogany Room, 7:30 p.m. Fee: $10. Info: REAPS, 371-7867.
20/Tuesday 3rd Annual Nostra Aetate Awards, Sutton Place Synagogue, New York City, dinner to follow at the St. Regis Hotel. Awards program free. CCJU, 365-7692.

Events are free unless otherwise noted.

November
14/Saturday Men’s basketball at Nevada-Las Vegas. Group packages available. Athletics 371-7917 or Robustelli Travel 1-800-248-0319.
18/Wednesday Women’s basketball home opener vs. Colgate, Pitt Center, 7 p.m. Info: 371-7917.
20/Friday Business Leaders Breakfast, Stamford, 7:30 a.m. Info: 371-7862.

December
7/Monday Men’s basketball home opener vs. Hartford, Pitt Center, 7 p.m. Tickets: $5 adults, $3 children. Info: 371-7917.
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Finding meaning in life’s contradictions

One of the many pleasures of being the president of Sacred Heart University is that I am exposed to many diverse experiences that provide me with inspiration, contemplation and hope.

One such experience occurred this past May. On the 17th of that month, I participated in the University’s 32nd Commencement. It was a joyous occasion and, as always, a great pleasure for me to present degrees that signify the fulfillment of many dreams for our students and their families.

Of the many memorable moments from Commencement, one of the most significant was the keynote speech given by Dennis Weatherstone, the former chairman of J.P. Morgan, whom we presented an honorary degree. Mr. Weatherstone spoke of how he worked his way up from clerk to the boardroom, offering the graduates a mixture of advice and, more important, hope.

We learned from his speech that Mr. Weatherstone did not come from a wealthy family. In fact, he couldn’t even afford college when he graduated from high school. Instead, he went to work for J.P. Morgan and took six years of night classes to complete his studies at what is now the University of North London. Through hard work, high ethical standards and intelligence, he built his remarkable career. By his example and his words, he held out the promise of a good life for those who work hard, honor their families and serve others.

Immediately after Commencement, I flew to Auschwitz, Poland, where I attended a conference organized by the University’s Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding. Christian, Jewish and Muslim religious leaders from around the world gathered to discuss the role of religion in peace and violence. Coming from the gaiety of Fairfield, I was profoundly struck by the somberness of the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp. The camp stands as a stark reminder of a time when the world and its values were horribly out of balance.

For me and for many others, the most moving experience of the trip was a tour of the death camp. It was an overpowering experience, one that left all of us speechless. We offered prayers and sang at the site of a former crematorium. That night, I, like many others, was unable to sleep.

Against this backdrop, CCJU orchestrated a three-day conference that was both enriching and uplifting. To witness the cooperation, to see the beginnings of new friendships and to hear the open dialogue left me feeling hopeful about the future. As Cardinal Franciszek Macharski of Poland said, “Sincere authentic faith in God can be considered a factor of peace among people, (and) the best guarantee of peaceful, mutual relations between people.”

You will learn more about what the cardinal and others said at the conference in an article included in this issue of Sacred Heart University magazine. You will also find stories about Commencement and other interesting events at the University. I hope you will take the time to read about them all.

As you do, I know you will become aware of the continuing improvements the University is making. I’m particularly proud of the advancements in academics, especially in the sciences. This issue includes a story about our new neuroscience laboratory. To the best of my knowledge, no other institution anywhere has a similar laboratory that combines research, teaching and technology. Through hands-on experience or through their laptop computers, our students are able to share in the groundbreaking brain research of Dr. John D. Griffin, assistant professor of biology. It was Dr. Griffin who conceived of the lab and then secured the support of the National Science Foundation, which provided a $95,000 grant. Dr. Griffin’s research focuses on fevers and how they affect the brain.

When I consider Dr. Griffin’s work, the CCJU conference and Commencement, I feel optimistic about the future. I don’t know what our graduates will accomplish in their lives, nor can I predict what will result from the CCJU conference and Dr. Griffin’s research. But I am hopeful that the potential for good in these and other ventures flowing from this University will be realized.

Anthony J. Cernera, Ph.D.
President
Biggs to set University marketing pace

In response to the University's long-range goals and the increasingly competitive marketplace, Elinor U. Biggs has been appointed to the newly created position of vice president for University Relations.

In this new role, Biggs will be responsible for developing and implementing Sacred Heart University's marketing, public relations and external affairs. WSHU, the University's National Public Radio affiliate; the Center for the Performing Arts, and The Gallery of Contemporary Art will report to her. She will also serve as the University’s liaison with the Board of Regents.

“I've always had the highest regard for Sacred Heart and have watched it grow over the years. Its accomplishments are many and outstanding,” Biggs said. “The University is at a significant point in its development. To achieve the goals defined in its new strategic plan, it must strengthen its marketing and public relations. I look forward to leading this effort.”

Biggs, the great-great-great granddaughter of P.T. Barnum, brings a wealth of marketing and public relations experience to the University. Most recently, she served as the executive director of the International Festival of Arts & Ideas in New Haven, an annual, five-day cultural event that has contributed to the Elm City’s economic revitalization.

Prior to the festival, Biggs was senior vice president at The Advertising Council, a New York-based not-for-profit agency that develops public service advertising; director of advertising for SNET; a vice president of Wells, Rich, Green Inc., a New York advertising firm; and the principal in Barnum Communications, a marketing communications consulting firm. She also was a vice president with Chase Manhattan Bank.

Throughout her career, Biggs has been actively involved with the community. Currently she is on the board of trustees of the Greater Bridgeport Area Foundation, the Barnum Museum and the Eagle Hill School in Southport. She was the co-chair of the Regional Youth/Adult Substance Abuse Program (RYASAP) in Bridgeport, and is a former member of the University’s Board of Regents.

Biggs earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of North Carolina. She and her husband, Jim, live in Westport.

New program charts course for leadership

The world's great leaders are frequently celebrated, but their accomplishments can often overshadow the techniques and expertise that enabled these individuals to be successful. What is leadership? What skills do leaders possess? How can the examples of great leaders serve us today?

These issues and more are the focus of a unique and innovative undergraduate degree program leading to a B.S. degree in leadership studies developed by Sacred Heart University.

The program, approved by the Connecticut State Department of Higher Education, is targeted to working adults and features a curriculum designed by experts in leadership selected from universities across the country. Courses will be offered in an accelerated format of five- and eight-week modules. The program, which is being offered through University College, will begin this fall at both the Fairfield and Stamford campuses.

University College, one of four colleges within Sacred Heart University, serves adult part-time students and the community. Directed and staffed by experts in adult learning, the college develops and implements innovations in pedagogy, delivery and content.

"We are creating a national model for teaching leadership," says University College’s dean, Stephen M. Brown, Ed.D. "The program does not stress the technical aspects of leadership and is not constructed as a recipe on how to lead. Instead, it is a broad approach to leadership, emphasizing ethical and active participation in family, in community, and in civic and social organizations."

The program’s director is Sloane Whitehead, who joined the University this summer from Mount Senario College in Ladysmith, Wis., where he served as dean of outreach programs.

The Leadership Studies program will emphasize learning and learning outcomes, integrate thought and action and rely upon the emerging concepts of adult learning. The development of specific leadership skills necessary in today’s ever-changing world will be emphasized.

For more information on the Leadership Studies degree program, contact Whitehead at (203) 396-8064.
Five Sacred Heart University graduates drawn from diverse walks of life received the first Alumni Awards of Excellence at a champagne reception May 3 in the Mahogany Room.

The honorees were Réal Caron ’69, a youth leagues coach from Burlington, Ont., Canada; George Lombardi ’73, the general manager and driving force behind the University’s National Public Radio affiliate, WSHU; J. Daniel Merena ’81, a lieutenant in the Bridgeport Police Department and Police Activities League volunteer; Jo-Ann Pressman ’92, a community volunteer who earned an associate degree *cum laude* while paralyzed from the waist down; and Robert D. Scinto ’71, a prominent area developer and University trustee.

“These alumni have demonstrated a commitment to excellence in their daily lives,” said Donna Blewitt ’76, Alumni Executive Council chair and reception emcee.

Caron, who works in the insurance and reinsurance field, was chosen for his coaching in Burlington of youth hockey and baseball and for his dedication to his three sons. In 1997, he was named winner of a baseball coach’s special award in a field of more than 150. “The best years of my life were at SHU. I met my best friend and wife of 28 years (Gail Wydra Caron ’70) in the cafeteria,” Caron said.

Lombardi, general manager of the radio station since 1983, has developed WSHU into one of the finest National Public Radio affiliates in the nation, with more than 200,000 listeners in Connecticut and Long Island. He also shares his expertise as a classroom instructor and campus trouble-shooter for audio/visual equipment and telephone systems. “I am twice blessed — first as an alumnus and now being entrusted with five radio stations,” said Lombardi, married to Patricia Kean Lombardi ’74 and the father of daughters Karen and Sara.

Merena, a 30-year Bridgeport Police veteran, oversees the city’s PAL sports programs — basketball, softball, soccer and volleyball as well as a summer camp. His 20 years of PAL volunteerism include the past presidency and serving as current vice president.

As an undergraduate recovering from a freak accident, Pressman was elected to two national honor societies, Delta Epsilon Sigma (Catholic colleges and universities) and Alpha Sigma Lambda (Continuing Education). Her short story about her travails, “My One Moment in Time,” won first place in a statewide contest sponsored by the General Federation of Women’s Clubs. Pressman and her husband, Harold, are the parents of two grown children.

Scinto is the classic case of a self-made man, rising from plumber and attending night classes to chairman of R.D. Scinto, Inc., a Shelton-based development company. Scinto and his wife, Barbara, have four children, including daughter Dana, Class of ’98 president, who graduated on May 17.

Committee members contributing to the event were: Catherine Molloy Cottle ’91, ’93 MBA; Kristen Lalla ’97; Dorothy Lupariello ’77; Michael McCabe ’77; Wayne Sakai ’84 MAT; and Barbara Susi ’75.

*Don Harrison*
On the first weekend in June, the Sacred Heart University campus was the focal point of Special Olympics Connecticut's 29th annual Summer Games. More than 2,000 athletes, 4,000 volunteers and countless spectators converged on the grounds for the games' opening ceremonies and a myriad of athletic events. For the first time, the new William H. Pitt Health & Recreation Center provided a venue for the gymnastics competition.

This marked the third straight year that Sacred Heart University and Fairfield University served as co-hosts. The summer games will return here next June and in the year 2000 as well. D.H.

Kelly Lague traveled south for Spring Break. Fort Lauderdale? Daytona Beach? Some other tropical vacation spot for college students?

Not even close.

The Sacred Heart University senior from West Warwick, R.I. spent her week away from classes living in primitive conditions in San Hilario, a remote village in El Salvador. Lague was among the group of nine students and two faculty members who made the March trip to the University's "adopted" country.

Most of the group's daylight hours were devoted to constructing a basketball court for the village's young people. "To build the court, we mixed cement by hand. It was hard work, but really worth it. All the people in the village came out," she says.

Lague, an honors student who received a B.S. degree in nursing on May 17, seems to derive a special joy from her volunteerism. Her senior year encompassed a myriad of outreach activities ... two days a week as a volunteer in an area mental health clinic, leading a spiritual weekend for other Sacred Heart University students, the spring trip to El Salvador.

"My Mom — my parents — they are my role models," says Lague, whose mother, Susan Lague, is a nurse.

Nursing professor Glee Wahlquist, Ph.D., was among those impressed with Lague's willingness to give. "Kelly is really wonderful. After she finished her internship at the clinic, she came back as a volunteer. She even visited one of the clinic's patients, an older man, in the hospital. She does so many things and she does them unobtrusively," Wahlquist says. D.H.
University team most inventive

A device developed by a group of Sacred Heart University graduate business students that can be used by parents to locate a lost child won first place in the first Connecticut Venture Group Business Plan Competition.

A second Sacred Heart University team finished as a runner-up along with two groups from Yale University and one from Rensselaer at Hartford. A total of 25 graduate school student teams representing 11 Connecticut colleges and universities entered the competition in pursuit of $50,000 in cash prizes, including $20,000 for first place and four runner-up prizes of $5,000 each.

"This win was not an accident, it was well planned," said Benoit Boyer, Ph.D., Sacred Heart University's dean of the College of Business.

The winning plan was for the product SafeZone, a device that enables parents to track their children within a 2,000-foot radius. The wireless electronic tracking device can also be used for security purposes, emergency personnel and patients. The system requires a child to wear an electronic wristwatch, which a parent can track using a receiver with a directional antenna. There are no similar products on the market at this time.

Team members who developed the product are: Kim Angermann '98 MBA of Stratford, Joe Gargiulo of Trumbull, Bill Guerrero of Stratford and Susan Stalling '98 MBA of Norwalk. "It's indescribable how we feel. All of the hard work and effort has really paid off," said Gargiulo, after accepting the $20,000 grand prize at the New Haven Lawn Club on April 30.

Members of both Sacred Heart University teams were enrolled in the Entrepreneurial Organization class taught by Stanley Mason, a prominent inventor and entrepreneur from Weston. Mason, an adjunct professor who served as the mentor and coach for both teams, was impressed by the ingenuity and quality of work produced by his students.

"I gave the students advice, but they made the choices as to the products they produced," Mason says. "The results were spectacular. These are products that can be manufactured and sold."

During the fall semester, Mason divided his class into two teams. Each team made a list of several potential products to develop and market, eventually narrowing their lists to one product each. The teams then conducted research, developed prototypes, applied for patents and wrote business plans for bringing the products to market.

The other Sacred Heart University group — Wendy Hopkinson of Beacon Falls, Pam Morgan-Hickey of Fairfield, Paul Moriber of Easton and Antoinette Terenzio of Stamford — developed a product that uses ultraviolet light to kill bacteria that collects on toothbrushes known as Brush Clear. The device holds up to four toothbrushes and is powered by batteries or household current. There's a similar product on the market, Mason said. But his students were able to produce a competitive product that costs half as much to produce, he said.

"The success of our teams in the CVG competition exemplifies the essence of our MBA curriculum ... practical-based learning that will serve our graduates well in the challenging business environment of the next century," said Scott Colvin, the University's MBA Program director.

The Connecticut Venture Group, founded in 1974, is a non-profit professional organization dedicated to supporting investment by providing a network and forum for those involved in creating high-growth enterprises.

Dean Golembeski
PIONEERING

President honors Thomistic scholar on 80th birthday

The 80th birthday of a former professor became a truly memorable occasion when Sacred Heart University Press released a book in his honor that was edited by President Anthony J. Cernera, Ph.D.

The book, *Continuity and Plurality in Catholic Theology* (246 pp.) featuring nine essays by distinguished Catholic scholars, was presented on June 16 to the Rev. Gerald A. McCool, S.J., Ph.D., during a dinner held in his honor at Sacred Heart University. Cernera made the presentation to his former professor and “spiritual director.”

McCool is a professor emeritus of philosophy at Fordham and a preeminent scholar of Thomistic thought. His works are highly regarded, especially his book *Catholic Theology in the Nineteenth Century*, which is considered a standard work on the roots of contemporary Catholic thought.

Cernera and McCool met in 1970 when Cernera, then a sophomore at Fordham, enrolled in McCool’s metaphysics course. Cernera continued to study under the priest as a graduate student, and the two have maintained a relationship for more than 25 years.

“Each week I witnessed him electrify the class with his dynamism as a teacher and lecturer,” Cernera writes in the preface. “His extraordinary mind and imagination allowed him to show even young minds like ours how to bring ideas together, weaving in history to put thoughts into context.”

Through Cernera, the former professor also has forged ties with Sacred Heart University. McCool delivered the Curtis Lecture in 1989 and received the Bishop Walter W. Curtis Medal, named in honor of the University’s founder. The University also presented McCool a doctorate of humane letters, *honoris causa*, in 1993.

To order the book: write Sacred Heart University Press, 5151 Park Avenue, Fairfield, CT 06432, or call (203) 371-7971 or E-mail mirona@sacredheart.edu. The cost is $23 per copy (ISBN 1-888112-01-8), plus $3 shipping and handling. Discounts available for multiple orders.

Contributing authors are: John P. Boyle, Ph.D., Catholic Professor in the School of Religion, University of Iowa; William V. Dych, S.J., D.Theo., associate professor of theology at Fordham University; Donald L. Gelpi, S.J., Ph.D., professor of historical and systematic theology at The Jesuit School of Theology, Berkeley, Calif; Joseph A. Komonchak, Ph.D., professor of theology, Department of Religion and Religious Education, The Catholic University; Matthew L. Lamb, S.T.L., Ph.D., professor of theology, Boston College; John O’Donnell, S.J., D.Phil., rector of the Weston Jesuit Community, Cambridge, Mass.; Thomas F. O’Meara, O.P., the William K. Warren Professor of Theology, University of Notre Dame; Andrew Tallon, Ph.D., professor of Philosophy, Marquette University; and Frans Jozef van Beeck, S.J., the Chester and Margaret Paluch Professor of Theology at Mundelein Seminary, Mundelein, Ill.

Five for five

For the fifth straight year, Sacred Heart University earned a community service award from the Connecticut Department of Higher Education. Jack de Graffenried, assistant professor of art, was presented a 1998 special award for his numerous outreach activities ... the three-week illustration course he conducted for area high school students the past two years and the art show he organized last winter that raised more than $2,500 for Alpha Home, a Bridgeport facility that provides shelter for homeless families. Joining him for the April 16 ceremonies at the State Capitol was his wife, Judith Randall de Graffenried, an adjunct professor of art.
Lou Carnesecca dispersed humor as the guest speaker at Sacred Heart University's first Celebrity Breakfast, but the retired St. John's University Hall of Fame basketball coach issued a few serious words.

Asked to comment on the University's entry into the NCAA Division I ranks, effective with the 1999-2000 season, Carnesecca termed it "a great opportunity," but added, "You have to pay the price."

"Everyone should show patience. It's a great period of adjustment. But it's an opportunity you should go for. Every player wants to play at the highest level he can," he told an audience of 250 in the Pitt Center on June 3.

'Tips' for the celebrity waiters — drawn from the University's coaching ranks — totaled $8,500 and went to the athletic department. D.H.
Tiffany Ballew was on target throughout the national tournament, averaging a record 218.

By Gorinne A. Waldheim

"Sacred Heart University Places Third at Intercollegiate Bowling Championships."

This headline may seem hypothetical, but it was a reality that took just five years to achieve.

In mid-April, the Pioneer women’s bowling team boarded a plane to Madison, Wis., for their fourth trip to the national championships. The Pioneers were hoping for a top-five finish on day one of the rigorous two-day competition, giving them a one-way ticket to the finals.

“Our goal was to get into the top five,” recalls Coach Becky Kregling. With assistance from freshman All-America Tiffany Ballew of Danbury, the coach’s hopes were exceeded.

The Pioneers qualified in fourth place and were paired with third-seeded Nebraska, the reigning champion. No problem. The University stunned the Cornhuskers (343-334) to ensure a third-place finish. Central Missouri State University defeated the Pioneers in the semi-finals by a 12-pin margin.

“We shared a lot of good times as a team this year and I think we built a solid foundation for the years to come,” says Ballew.

The University’s road to bowling glory began in 1993, when Rebecca Kregling, a Stratford resident who competed on Team USA for two years, was approached by admissions officer Rob Cottle ’90. Cottle, who had established the men’s program one year earlier, asked Kregling to develop a woman’s team.

Utilizing the talents of Jen Swanson ’97, a Junior Bowling Tournament (JBT) star from nearby Shelton, and four other young women, Kregling led the Pioneers to instant success.

Landing Swanson, who entered the University with a 195 average, was a major coup; Jen could have attended Wichita, Nebraska or another school with an established program.

Swanson sparked the Pioneers to two championship appearances, capped by a fifth-place ranking in 1997 by the Bowling Writers Association of America. In her final two seasons of competition, she was voted an All-America and named MVP of the predominantly male EIBC. Three years prior to Ballew, she led the individual women’s field at the 1995 Nationals in Knoxville, Tenn.

In February, Swanson joined the PWBA tour. Her highest finish was ninth in the Southern Virginia Open in late July.

The vacancy created by Swanson’s departure might have been impossible to fill in the first few seasons. But success breeds success. Three outstanding bowlers, Chrissy Anania (197 average) of Bristol, R.I., Lisa Lautsen (193) of Staten Island, N.Y. and Adrienne Oshman (192) of Yorktown Heights, N.Y., joined the team in 1996 and ’97. Ballew (206) arrived last year.

With the entire national championship roster returning, Kregling anticipates even “bigger and better things next year.”

Corinne Waldheim ’98 was a four-year member of the women’s bowling team and, as a senior, sports editor of the student newspaper, Spectrum.
Advancement

Doyle takes Advancement reins

By James L. Meeker

The Office of Institutional Advancement is tackling the challenges of the future under the leadership of a new vice president, Luke Doyle, who began work at the University on July 15.

Doyle succeeds James Lyddy, Ph.D., who accepted an appointment at Marquette University last January.

Doyle is the former director of Major Gifts and Planned Giving at the University of Tulsa. He played a key role there, helping to successfully complete an $84 million capital campaign during the last five years.

In his new position, which encompasses all fund-raising activities, Doyle faces many new opportunities in helping the University continue its remarkable growth and vitality.

“It couldn’t be a more exciting time to come to Sacred Heart,” Doyle says. “Having just completed a five-year strategic plan, the University has carefully determined how it wants to grow to meet its goals. The challenge for Institutional Advancement will be to broaden our prospect base and tell our story to more people. We will also begin to create a culture for major gift fund-raising within the University community.”

Doyle is a native of Texas and a graduate of Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas. He was accompanied in his relocation to Connecticut by his wife, Cynthia, their son, Clarke, 12, and daughters Whitney, 9, and Lindsay, 6.

“I am very happy to have my family join the Sacred Heart family. This is a wonderful environment for all of us and we are very excited to be here,” Doyle says.

THE SIGN SAYS ‘DRIVE 35’

This year, Sacred Heart University is celebrating the 35th anniversary of its founding. In keeping with that spirit, “Drive 35” is the campaign theme for the 1998-99 Annual Fund.

The University has emerged as one of the leading Catholic universities in New England, thanks, in no small part, to the generous support and dedication of alumni, parents and friends. In fiscal year 1998, the Office of Institutional Advancement achieved its Annual Fund goals, raising $640,440.

Commencement:
Weatherstone urges graduates to find balance between family and career.
Graduating students seeking a model for future success had to look no further than the keynote speaker at this year’s Commencement. Standing before them was Dennis Weatherstone, the retired chairman of J.P. Morgan & Co., who told how he had to work days and take night classes for six years before earning his college degree.

“A college degree won’t ensure you success as chairman of J.P. Morgan, but it might help you understand what being successful really is,” Weatherstone told an estimated crowd of 7,000 gathered at Campus Field on May 17.

Weatherstone, mixing humor with advice, offered graduates his recipe for success and encouraged them to apply it to their lives. He told the students that those who are truly successful achieve a balance between family and career.

He pointed to his more than 20 years on Wall Street and further advised the graduates to be “useful and profitable — in that order.” He said that keeping this order is critical to being successful, but that it is often ignored today. He also warned students to be cautious in making choices in business and encouraged them to ask questions, even at the risk of sounding ignorant. “Better to sound stupid than to be proved stupid,” he said.

Weatherstone, a Darien resident, was awarded the degree Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*, during the University’s 32nd graduation exercises. Honorary degrees...
Valedictorian Elizabeth Meagher addresses graduates and their families at the Academic Awards program on May 16.

also were conferred upon Henry J. Leir of Ridgefield and Cheryl Driscoll, RSM, and Eileen Boffa, RSM, co-founders and co-directors of the Mercy Learning Center in Bridgeport.

They were joined at Commencement by 750 of the approximately 1,200 graduate and undergraduate students awarded degrees, including valedictorian Elizabeth Meagher of Trumbull and co-salutatorians Karen DiPrete of Shoreham, N.Y., and Susan Bailey Gannon of Bethlehem.

During Weatherstone’s tenure as chairman, J.P. Morgan honed its traditional focus on corporate and merchant banking, while engaging in aggressive trading in Latin American bonds. He remains a director of the company and also serves as a director of General Motors, Merck & Co. and the Bank of England.

Weatherstone was knighted by Queen Elizabeth as a Knight Commander of the British Empire. He and his wife, Marion, are the parents of four grown children. Their daughter, Hazel Weatherstone, earned a master’s degree in teaching from Sacred Heart University in 1997.

Leir’s career in gemstones and minerals spanned several decades in three countries (Germany, Luxembourg and the United States), but his humanitarianism knew no boundaries.

He devoted most of his later years to charitable endeavors, serving as chairman of The Ridgefield Foundation, a New York charity that supports education and Jewish organizations. In Luxembourg, he was a major contributor to creating homes for orphans and other charities. (Leir died on July 15 in New York City.)

Boffa and Driscoll, who share a combined 50 years’ experience in urban education, established the Mercy Learning Center in 1987. Under their leadership, the center has expanded from a literacy training center for women into a facility that offers classes in the arts and humanities, life management skills workshops, cultural events and field trips.

Since its inception, the center has guided nearly 500 women through its program and influenced the lives of approximately 600 children.

English professors Roberta Staples (left) and Marian Calabrese wait to congratulate ’98 graduates.

Class of ’98 president Dana Scinto is congratulated by a University trustee—her father, Robert D. Scinto ’71.

President Cernera is flanked by honorary degree recipients Cheryl Driscoll, RSM (left) and Eileen Boffa, RSM, co-founders and co-directors of the Mercy Learning Center.

Honorary degree recipients present (Henry J. Leir, left) and past (ophthalmologic surgeon Rocko M. Fasanella, 1990) share a moment with President Anthony J. Cernera.
MIND OVER

Biology professor John Griffin leads undergraduates in brain and neurology research

By Dean Golemen

Although the secrets of the brain in Sacred Heart University's technology laboratory are being kept, they are being kept with enthusiasm. Griffin, along with his students, are participating in important research. It was among only a handful of university labs in Connecticut participating in National Brain Awareness Week (March 16-22), sponsored by the Society for Neuroscience and the Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives.

A special open house was held on March 19.

"I'm unaware of any other neuroscience lab that incorporates a research and teaching laboratory in this manner," Griffin said.

Typically, teaching and research are separate elements of a professor's duties.

It was Griffin's goal to have a research and teaching process that results in grants. Griffin received a $95,000 grant from the National Science Foundation for his research on the brain.
Although the brain remains a mystery, some of the secrets of its power are being revealed to students in Sacred Heart University's new science technology laboratory.

Using living brain tissue, specialized equipment and the latest in computer technology, students are able to witness firsthand how temperature fluctuations and other environmental changes effect the flow of electrical impulses among neurons, which are involved in controlling body temperature.

It is believed to be a unique laboratory in which undergraduate students are participating in important brain research. It was among only a handful of university labs in Connecticut participating in national Brain Awareness Week (March 16-22) sponsored by the Society for Neuroscience and the Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives. A special open house was held on March 19.

"I'm unaware of any other neuroscience lab that incorporates a research and teaching laboratory in this manner. Typically, teaching and research are separate," says John D. Griffin, Ph.D., assistant professor of biology.

It was Griffin's desire to continue his doctoral research of the brain as well as his interest to involve his students in the process that resulted in the creation of the laboratory in the University's new science wing. He sought and received the support of the National Science Foundation, which awarded him a $95,000 grant. The University matched those funds with $35,000, allowing Griffin to equip the lab with the latest available technology. The results have been overwhelmingly positive.

Since its opening, the new laboratory has been regularly filled with graduate and undergraduate biology, psychology, physical therapy and nursing students completing their studies in anatomy, neurobiology and physiology. Each semester, up to three students can take an independent research class with Griffin, allowing them to do independent research projects focused on neurobiology topics.

Through hands-on experimentation and advanced technology, students are receiving a rare educational experience. Some days students observe the reactions of living neural tissue to changes in their environment, while on other days they may observe a fellow student's reaction to stress or exercise.

In every case, the experiments are channeled through the lab's computer network, allowing students to save the raw data on their laptop computers for later study and review. The result is that students are more engaged in their studies, and they are learning more and achieving higher grades.

"I think it's unique that students can come in here and plug in their computers to do data analysis," Griffin says. "I've seen grades improve dramatically because there's more energy in the classroom. Students get to see their friends..."
demonstrating a lesson rather than just reading about it.”

With degrees from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington and Ohio State, followed by a three-year fellowship at Harvard, Griffin is a pioneer in the research of how temperature variations, specifically fevers, affect the brain. It is his goal, as well as that of a handful of researchers worldwide, to understand how the brain controls body temperature. Now assisting in that research is a select group of Sacred Heart University undergraduate and graduate students, whose work will soon be published in leading scientific journals.

In the lab, students still conduct traditional scientific exercises, such as the dissection of organs. However, instructors also teach by using a computerized projection screen, and students can also use their laptops to view tutorials, anatomy models or other important information.

Each lab station is equipped with a port that allows students computer access. Under the Student Mobile Computing Program implemented three years ago, all first-year, full-time undergraduate students must own or have access to a computer.

During a biofeedback experiment, a student is connected to equipment such as an EKG monitor or a polygraph. Then as the student is tested, the remainder of the class can watch the results on the projection screen or on their individual laptops. The information can be stored on the main computer or downloaded to the student laptops and reviewed at any time.

The more intensive brain research takes place in an instrument room adjacent to the lab. In that room, live brain tissue is collected and then sliced into thin sections for examination and physiological experimentation. To study the anatomy of the tissue, some sections are placed on slides and observed under a microscope linked to a computer. In addition, this information can be displayed to students in the main lab, or can be accessed by students using their laptops.

“The projects the students do, in the majority, relate to my work,” Griffin says. “This still gives them many directions to pursue. For instance, we still know very little about how the body controls internal temperature and what mechanisms lead to such conditions as heat stroke. In heat stroke, the body must prevent dehydration, so it turns off the mechanisms that control sweating. The body preserves its water reserves, but heat is not being lost fast enough. This could result in severe tissue damage internally. If we understood the mechanisms, better treatments could be designed.”

Astronaut Joan Higginbotham believes that an orbiting space station will “be a unifying adventure for both the United States and all the countries we have involved.”

Astronaut’s message: peace through space

Joan Higginbotham, a civilian astronaut from NASA, is awaiting a date with a space shuttle, but the 33-year-old Chicago native first had an appointment at Sacred Heart University. She was the keynote speaker at the University’s second annual Science Breakfast Symposium on April 21.

The symposium brought together leaders in academics, business, industry and government, as well as students to discuss the future of science and technology in Connecticut. Students on hand included Sacred Heart University’s best and brightest national award-winning science majors, who shared their hopes and dreams as well as their undergraduate research projects and findings.

In her address, Higginbotham spoke about her experiences at NASA and provided insight into the building of an international orbiting space station. “We hope that building an orbiting space station is going to foster international cooperation, and has to if we are going to get it built,” she said.

“We hope that, as Lyndon B. Johnson said, ‘Men who we bring together to reach the stars are not likely to descend together into the depths of war and destruction,’” she added. “We hope this project is going to be a unifying adventure for both the United States and all the countries that we have involved.”

Higginbotham earned two master’s degrees (engineering management, aerospace engineering) before beginning her career at the Kennedy Space Center in 1987 as a payload electrical engineer.

The symposium is part of the University’s Presidential Science Initiative, which seeks to align the science curriculum with employment opportunities. Another of the Initiative’s goals is to produce well-trained graduates in the sciences who promise to be assets within the business and professional communities. D.G.
Science celebrities and the value of science to society were the topics of discussion May 28, when the University held its second annual Presidential Science Initiatives Awards Dinner at the Tara Stamford Hotel.

The Initiative was created to encourage youth to pursue math and science as an avenue for professional growth. All proceeds from the dinner support the University’s scholarship program.

Chief among the evening’s celebrities was Don Herbert, best known as television pioneer “Mr. Wizard,” who was awarded the degree, Doctor of Sciences, honoris causa.

Herbert’s lengthy career took off in 1951, when he began his weekly half-hour program, “Watch Mr. Wizard,” on the NBC Network. During its 14-year run, Herbert presented more than 4,500 demonstrations. Since 1983, a new version of the show, “Mr. Wizard’s World,” has been seen on Nickelodeon, the children’s programming cable network.

Three others who have made significant contributions to the sciences were presented Science Initiative Awards: Kenneth M. Rosen, Ph.D., vice president of Development Engineering and Advanced Programs, Sikorsky Aircraft Corp., Stratford; Basaam Shakhashiri, Ph.D., professor of chemistry, University of Wisconsin, and former assistant director of the National Science Foundation; and Willard M. Welch, Ph.D., research adviser, Central Research Division, Pfizer Inc., Groton.

Speaking to an audience of about 200 dinner guests, Rosen told of the opportunities available to those who chose science careers. But he also said that “with opportunity comes responsibility, responsibility to pay back the debt not to the last generation ... but provide the same opportunities for future generations in education and in the creation of good and satisfying jobs.”

Shakhashiri called upon those present to do all they can to improve science and mathematics skills among school children. He said there is no justifiable reason why American students score lower on math and science tests than other students throughout the world. One solution, he said, is to build private-public partnerships, pointing to professional sports as a model to emulate.

“We need scientists, and we need science fans. But we need those fans not to be only sitting in the stands as passive spectators, we also need them to be supportive of the science and technology activities that take place,” Shakhashiri said. D.G.
At Auschwitz, CCJU orchestrates a gathering for peace

By David Coppola, Ph.D.

Inside Auschwitz, the CCJU's executive director, Rabbi Joseph Ehrenkranz, is a somber visitor. The woman at left is Elisabeth Maxwell, a lecturer from London and widow of the late publisher Robert Maxwell.
It was a gray Monday afternoon in the rural town of Oswiecim, Poland. Children returning home from school waved to women on bicycles with baskets filled from the market. Workers returning from the fields with soiled knees hardly noticed the sound of the passing trains or the unique gathering of high-ranking interfaith leaders who had assembled from around the world.

On May 18, rabbis and priests, scholars and bishops, Islamic leaders and cardinals, and observers from 12 countries gathered for a three-day conference to discuss the role that religion plays in cultivating peace or promoting violence. They were invited to Poland by Rabbi Joseph Ehrenkranz, executive director of the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding of Sacred Heart University.

The conference, "Religion and Violence, Religion and Peace," was held at the Catholic Church-operated Center for Dialogue and Prayer, a short walk from the main gates of the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp, where an estimated 1.5 million people, mostly Jews, were killed amid the horror of the Nazi regime during World War II.

Not surprisingly, some participants had expressed reservations about the choice of the conference site. An infamous Nazi concentration camp hardly evokes thoughts of peace.

Ehrenkranz, however, chose Auschwitz because it is a “symbol of the international cemetery which the world will be reduced to if we don’t find some way to live in peace with one another.

“Our aim in this coming together of continents,” he said, “is to see how we can cooperate in eliminating the violent direction so much religious teaching takes. We want to establish that violence in the name of God cannot be justified.”

Among the conference’s participants were the Muslim president of Meshihat of the Islamic community of Croatia; the chairman of the Council of Imams and Mosques in London; a former Episcopal bishop from Cyprus; the archbishop of the Macedonian Orthodox Church; and representatives from the Vatican’s Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews. No fewer than three cardinals were present: the retired Catholic primate of Northern Ireland, Cardinal Cahal Daly; the archbishop of Krakow, Poland, Cardinal Franciszek Macharski; and Cardinal William Keeler of Baltimore, who chairs the U.S. bishops’ committee on Catholic-Jewish relations.

Of special importance to the CCJU was the participation of five Orthodox rabbis from Jerusalem, the West Bank Settlement of Efrat, France, New York and Connecticut. This was the first time that a group of Orthodox rabbis participated in an inter-faith discussion of a theological nature. Orthodox rabbis have considered inter-faith discussion of religious doctrine to be forbidden, due to the Middle Ages practice when “disputations” between rabbis and priests frequently resulted in a beaten or dead rabbi.

The CCJU conference at Auschwitz received strong support...
Representatives of three faiths, from left, W. Deen Mohammed, leader of the Muslim-American Society; Cardinal William Keeler of Baltimore and Rabbi David Rosen, executive director of the Anti-Defamation League of Israel, share a light moment.

from the Vatican. In a letter to Ehrenkranz, Cardinal Edward I. Cassidy, president of the Vatican's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, said, “His Holiness Pope John Paul II expresses strong encouragement for your endeavors and a sincere wish that your work may contribute to bringing about lasting peace for the whole human family.”

Ehrenkranz said, “From a Jewish viewpoint, it is hardly believable that the Catholic Church is still accused of indifference to Jewish concerns. We realize that more has been achieved in the last 30 years than in the previous 2000, and that we are living in exceptional times.”

University President Anthony J. Cernera, Ph.D., opened the conference saying, “We have come together because we believe that our respective religious traditions can contribute to creating a world where there is greater justice and peace. Our conference provides us with the opportunity to search together for meaning and to enter into honest and humble reflection together, in the hope that we can — because we will work together — take a small step in the direction of fostering peace and overcoming violence.”

In his welcoming remarks, Macharski encouraged participants to remember that “only religion is able to give us such a comprehensive outlook upon man ... Sincere authentic faith in God can be considered a factor of peace among people, the best guarantee of peaceful, mutual relations between people. Religions unite people of all beliefs who take deeply into their hearts God’s commandment: Thou shalt not kill.”

And so the conference began—a respectful, balanced and cautious dialogue discussing peace and violence in religion. Attendees heard papers on the roots of peace in the Torah, the New Testament and the Koran. Speakers warned that religions still have the potential to incite wars and, as such, have a grave responsibility to foster a spirituality for life and cultures of justice.

Samuel Piser, international attorney from Paris and New York and an Auschwitz survivor, described the violence that he, his family and friends experienced when religion did too little to combat prejudice and injustice. In a moving address entitled “Blood and Hope,” he said, “On these killing fields, we dare not forget that the past can also be prologue ... fundamentalism, fanaticism, all ideologies that despise the human being can push our societies toward a new delirium of violence.”

The subject of fundamentalism and fanaticism in religion surfaced several times in the course of the conference. The most systematic presentation of the roots and causes of fundamentalism came from Martin Marty, Ph.D., Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Service Professor at the University of Chicago. The world-renowned scholar on religion and society sees fundamentalism as a possible precursor to violence.

Marty pointed out that insecurity, danger and distrust cause groups or peoples to withdraw into themselves, protecting and fortifying what they believe is fundamental and essential to their cultural and religious identity. Thus fundamentalism can become the fuel that indirectly or directly leads to violence. Most fundamentalist movements “see themselves as chosen, as elect instruments to carry out divine purposes as they have been instructed to do in sacred writings,” he said.

He explained that the fundamentalist reacts to “the others” whose opposing views of God and the social order are perceived as an attack to this election. These “others” may be seen as wrong, ignorant or even demonic, thereby deserving of [in the mind of the fundamentalist] ridicule, humiliation or even military violence.

The Muslim speakers all stressed that the Koran outlawed violence and that the atrocities committed in Algeria, for example, bore “no relation whatever” to authentic Islam.
Noted one Muslim in a small group conversation, “The feeling I have when someone equates me with Islamic violence is probably the same feeling you have when a so-called Catholic bombs an abortion clinic.”

In late afternoon of the second day, participants were invited to visit the Auschwitz-Birkenau Nazi death camp. In the words of Pisar, this was “a cursed and sacred place, the modern Golgotha.” The visitors were stunned to silence and reverence as the shoes of children and the hair of countless women, small scraps of extinguished human lives, called out, “Never forget!”

It was gruesomely apparent that these were not only the remnants of martyrs, these were the remains of murders. The holy and the horror, the Holocaust and Shoah were understood in the universal language of compassion and all were reduced to their essential humanity.

Standing on the site of a destroyed crematorium, the group’s only possible response was prayer. Sung and spoken in Hebrew, Arabic, English and Spanish, all were drawn into the fundamental truth: We are all God’s creation, all life is sacred.

The next day, many participants remarked that it had been impossible to sleep because the weeping sounds of the trains by the hotel echoed like the Kaddish, the Jewish prayers for the dead.

One does not expect monumental accomplishments at a three-day conference. But it was clear that new friendships had been formed and trust had been strengthened through honest dialogue. The Orthodox Archbishop of Wroclaw and Szczecin, Poland, said this was the first time he had been at a meeting where people of different faiths could share ideas and break bread in peace.

Daly called the meetings an “important step toward better interfaith relations. The Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding has come of age with this conference. It has extended its outreach into the various religious communities and become more convinced of the need to pursue its contacts with ever greater courage.”

In his closing remarks, Rabbi David Rosen, executive director of the Anti-Defamation League in Israel, urged participants “to devote ourselves with renewed energy and vigor, because our works in gatherings like this are a testimony of what is possible. They are a sanctification of God’s name. They are a testimony of divine presence in the world and of divine purpose in the world. And therefore, we have every reason to be very grateful to you and all others who organized this very significant event.”

As the conference attendees departed, there was a consensus that their time had been well spent but much work still needed to be done. In the town of Oswiecim, children were on their way to school, women rode their bicycles to the market, men went to the fields to plant. Those who had been to the conference pledged to continue to work in the fields of hope and peace.

David Coppola, Ph.D., is the director of Conferences and Publications at the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding.
Vatican II inspired formation of CCJU

The Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding of Sacred Heart University was inspired by the Catholic Church’s vision presented in the 1965 Vatican II document, *Nostra Aetate*. The document repudiated historic Christian teachings of contempt toward Jews and positively asserted the ongoing validity and common spiritual heritage shared by Christians and Jews. The document also encouraged prudent, charitable discussion and collaboration with members of other religions.

Other official Church documents, notably the Guidelines (1974) and the Notes (1985), offered further encouragement and guidance to those who participated in interreligious dialogue and understanding. In short, the initiatives of the Second Vatican Council, as well as international conferences to focus on current religious, moral and social thinking within Christianity and Judaism, as each religion reevaluates its attitude and its relationship with the other in the light of new theological developments, the CCJU offers its skills and resources to advance shared goals and values.

In its first year, the CCJU began the process of reconciliation through numerous activities to further Christian-Jewish understanding and to confront issues that have caused both faiths mutual concern. Cardinal John O’Connor of New York said at its inception, “The good that can be accomplished by the CCJU is boundless.”

On April 28, 1994, Pope John Paul II endorsed the work of the CCJU in an audience with Bemporad, Ehrenkranz and Cernera.

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**1993**

Archbishop Henryk Musynski of Poland (center) and CCJU co-founder Rabbi Joseph Ehrenkranz (right) lead a Catholic-Jewish delegation in a special ceremony at a Warsaw Ghetto memorial.

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the participation of major Protestant communions and umbrella groups, have dramatically changed the path of Christian-Jewish relations for centuries to come.

Anthony J. Cernera, Ph.D., president of Sacred Heart University, knew firsthand of the possibility of charitable collaboration with other religions. He grew up in the Bronx, where his Jewish and Italian neighbors taught him that Christians and Jews can live together in mutual respect, cooperation and friendship.

Cernera, with rabbis Jack Bemporad and Joseph Ehrenkranz, saw the need to help educate religious organizations at the local, regional and international levels about these profound theological changes. In 1992, they founded the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding of Sacred Heart University.

The CCJU draws together religious leaders, laity, scholars, theologians and educators at local, national and campus levels to sponsor conferences and fora in New York, Los Angeles, Memphis, Kansas City, Dallas, Miami, Phoenix, on campus and, most recently, at Auschwitz, Poland, where more than 30 scholars and religious leaders from 12 countries discussed the role of religion in promoting violence or peace.

Other conference topics have included: “The Spiritual Significance of Jerusalem in the Jewish, Christian and Muslim Traditions,” “The Concept of Salvation in World Religions,” “Marriage in the Catholic and Jewish Traditions” and “Judaism in the Catholic Catechism.”

Future conferences are planned for Buenos Aires, Jerusalem, Chicago, Philadelphia, Atlanta and Boston.

The CCJU also promotes independent research and serves as a vehicle for processing and circulating its findings to appropriate institutions around the world through the publication of its newsletter, monographs and infor-
mative web site (www.sacredheart.edu/ccju).

The Center has been instrumental in supporting the publication of several books, including *Toward Greater Understanding* (Cernera, 1995) and *In Our Age* (Bemporad and Shevack, 1996). The current project, a book from the papers presented at the recent Auschwitz conference, "Religion and Violence, Religion and Peace," is underway.

In addition to the conferences and publications, the CCJU holds its annual Nostra Aetate dinner at which individuals who are known and respected for their commitment to dialogue and action on important moral, ethical and religious issues are honored. Past recipients of the award have been O’Connor, Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.), Cardinal William H. Keeler, Bishop Krister Stendahl and Rabbi Mordecai Waxman. This year, Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger and Rabbi Samuel Sirat, both of France, will be honored on Oct. 20 at the third Nostra Aetate Awards at the Sutton Place Synagogue in New York. The dinner will follow at the St. Regis Hotel.

Although the Center has already made remarkable progress in the last six years in overcoming hostilities particular to the Christian-Jewish relationship, daunting challenges lie ahead. The CCJU seeks greater understanding and greater cooperation among all faiths, all the peoples of God. Much more is at stake than the concerns of individual traditions. For the first time in two millennia, there is a window of opportunity to transcend the bitterness of the past and put our relationship on new footing.  

*David Coppola*

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1994

**Pope John Paul II** gives his blessing to the CCJU’s important work during an audience with then Archbishop William Keeler, Ehrenkranz and President Anthony J. Cernera.

1995

**Cardinal John O’Connor** accepts a special gift, *Toward Greater Understanding: Essays in Honor of John Cardinal O’Connor*, from the book’s editor, President Cernera, and CCJU co-founder Rabbi Jack Bemporad.

1996

**Sen. Joseph Lieberman** of Connecticut accepts the Nostra Aetate award from President Cernera at the initial CCJU dinner in New York.
'66

Peter Robbins was appointed chief of police in Greenwich, the community in which his father, David Robbins, served as chief from 1955-63. Peter and his wife, Eileen, live in Cos Cob with their children, Timothy and Colleen.

'67

Concetta Fiore Lopuszniak is a special education and English teacher for the Middletown (N.J.) Township. Concetta and her husband, Peter, live in Leonardo, N.J.

'68

Eileen Conley performed in "Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris," a musical presented in February by the Center for the Performing Arts.

Natalino Recine was named Ridgefield's Teacher of the Year. Recine has taught English at East Ridge Middle School for the past 28 years.

'69

Joseph Wynne is the chief of Collection Field Branches I and II in the Collection and Compliance Research Division for the Connecticut-Rhode Island District of the Internal Revenue Service.

'70

John Ulatowski's photography and poetry exhibit, "Place of Rest," was on display in the Stratford Library throughout June. Ulatowski has written a collection of children's stories entitled "Kidstories" and his photograph "Blue Drop" will be included in a set of photography books. He lives in Shelton.

'71

Diane Civitelli is a teacher at Central High School in Bridgeport. She and her husband, Robert, reside in Stratford with their daughter, Erin.

'72

Thomas McInerney was named to Derby's three-member Board of Police Commissioners. McInerney is a retired state police inspector and has worked as an investigator for the city of New Haven.

Thomas Shalvoy of Quincy, Mass., is the Northeast Regional manager with Truth Hardware.

Rita A. Verespy has been promoted to senior vice president and client service director at BankBoston in Providence, R.I. Rita and her husband, Jack, live in Portsmouth, R.I.

'73

Robert Shawinsky, a 17-year veteran of the Stamford Police Department, was promoted to sergeant.

Paul Velezis served as the 30th annual Greek Mayor for a Day on March 25 in Waterbury. Each year, Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church honors an outstanding member of its community on the anniversary of Greek independence — March 25, 1821. Velezis, 46, a mathematics teacher at Crosby High School, was the third generation of his family to receive the honor. He and his wife, Sonia, live in Waterbury with their sons, Stephen and Matthew.

'74

Charles Goldfeld is a member of the Deloitte & Touche Consulting Group in West Palm Beach, Fla.

Edward Messina of Watertown is the regional sales manager for G.O.D., a firm based in Kearny, N.J. Messina and his wife, Eileen, are the parents of Michael and Cheryl.

'76

Julie Buchanan '82 MBA is the assistant to the associate dean of the Yale University School of Medicine in New Haven. Her husband, Michael Buchanan '81, '88 MBA, is the proprietor of Car Master in Guilford. They reside in New Haven.

Simon Mikhail is a self-employed attorney in Carlsbad, Calif.

'77

Charles Balocca of Trumbull has joined Fairfield County Savings Bank as senior vice president and chief lending officer. He will be responsible for launching a new commercial services division. Balocca comes to the bank from Glastonbury Bank & Trust. He and his wife, Susan, are the parents of four children.

'78

Anne Pirog was married to Richard Landino on Oct. 4, 1997 in First Congregational Church, Derby. Anne is a site manager at Merritt Orthopaedic Associates in Shelton. The couple resides in Trumbull.
'79
Stephen Cullen '87 MBA is the manager of IS audit with UST, Inc., in Greenwich. Stephen and his wife, Margaret Cullen '79, live in Old Greenwich.

'80
Sal J. Dias '97 MBA is the regional sales manager for Webster Bank in Fairfield. Sal and his wife, Susan, reside in Stratford with their daughter Sarah.

'81
Michael Buchanan, see '76

Donald Bourdeau '89 MBA is the purchasing specialist with SNET in North Haven. Bourdeau and his wife, Mary, live in Milford with their sons Brian and David.

Jill Friedman MAT, a special education teacher at Bloomfield High School, was selected the 1998-99 Bloomfield Teacher of the Year. Friedman resides in Hartford.

'83
Mario Bartoli has joined People's Securities, Inc., in Milford as an investment specialist. Bartoli, who lives in Trumbull, returned to People's after four years with Center Bank as an assistant vice president.

Linda Hurd and Richard Fohrenbach are singing the praises of their 10-year-old son, Ricky, who placed first in Connecticut in the Quantitative Score for fifth grade in the Johns Hopkins University Institute for the Academic Advancement of Youth "Plus Test." The family resides in Milford. Richard Fohrenbach serves on the University's Board of Regents.

'84
Gail Brickel is the coordinator/clinical supervisor with Regional Counseling Services in Bridgeport. She lives in Weston.

Michelle Kalfayan of Beacon Falls is a guidance counselor at Memorial Boulevard School in Bristol.

Debbie Warrek, the human resources manager at American Protective Services-Ness of Milford, remains active in athletics as coach of 9-year-old daughter Amanda's softball and basketball teams. Debbie and Edward Warrek have another daughter, Amy, 5, and live in Milford.

'85
K. Maria Roy was elected chairman of Goodwill Industries of Western Connecticut's Board of Directors at its annual meeting. Roy, of Newtown, is director of human resources at Bridgeport-based Bodine Corp.

John Sass of Stamford is an insurance adjuster with Travelers Insurance. His spouse, Stacy Sass '87, is a business analyst for national accounts with Fort James Corp. in Norwalk. They have two children, Lauren, 6, and Tricia, 4.

'86
Jim Deecken, an artist from Westport, was among five finalists in the competition for Connecticut's version of the 1999 quarter. Connecticut, as one of the five original signers of the Constitution, will have its own design on the reverse of the 1999 quarter. Deecken, who submitted a "Charter Oak" design, formerly worked as an accountant for a Fortune 500 company.

'87
Tracy Hubbard of Sandy Hook joined Pappas MacDonnell, Inc., a Southport marketing communications firm, as a senior designer. Most recently, Hubbard was a senior designer at Metropolis in Milford.

Andrea Schlenk has been promoted to senior manager of human resources at Procter & Gamble in Cincinnati.

Clemente Alvear was named vice president and consultant with Sandy Hook-based Brandywine Retained Ventures Inc. Brandywine is a recruiting firm focusing on senior management.

'88
James Giaquinto was married to Karissa Larson on Oct. 12, 1997 in St. Catherine of Siena Church in Trumbull. Giaquinto is a risk analyst at GE Capital Corp. in Danbury.

'89
Lisa Gulli-Martire has joined the Trumbull office of NASDAQ as a support services associate in the Administrative Services Department. She lives in Trumbull.

Gina Monahan, oncology/hospice clinical supervisor with the VNA Home Care Services and Hospice Community Services of Meriden, was named director of Hospice Community Services.

'90
Patricia Falzone is a senior business analyst with Pitney Bowes Credit Corp. in Shelton. She lives in Fairfield.
Stratford with her husband, John, and their son Michael.

Terry Mohan is a staff accountant and billing manager at Smart Serv Online, Inc. in Stamford. Mohan also resides in Stamford.

'S91

Susan (Chop) DeAcutis and her husband, James, became parents of their first child, Michael James, on March 17. They live in Mt. Vernon, N.Y.

Dominic DiCocco was married to Cathy Downs on April 18 in Notre Dame of Easton Church. DiCocco is co-owner of Bridgeport-based Coreno Marble & Tile. The couple resides in Trumbull.

Andrew Madison is a vice president in the Legal Division of the Options Group, a legal consulting and placement firm in New York. Madison lives in New York.

Carol Patricia Smith and her husband, Michael LaManna, became the parents of a daughter, Meredith Rae, on Jan. 22. Carol is a portfolio manager at Citicorp, Inc. in New York. The family resides in Glen Rock, N.J.

'S92

Marlene Bristol is a family nurse practitioner at the Wells River (Vt.) Clinic.

'S93

Amy Madison was married to Kevin Broad on May 24. Amy is a second-grade teacher at John Winthrop School in Bridgeport. They reside in Milford.

'S94

John Carraro of the Bridgeport Police Department was promoted to lieutenant as evening commander of the East Side precinct. He lives in Derby.

Patricia Collins is co-owner and treasurer of the Brake Centers of America store in Stratford.

ALUMNI PROFILE

David Boone '87

HAVE JOKES, WILL TRAVEL

By Don Harrison

Since the dawn of the nineties, Dave Boone '87 has written jokes for some of the funniest people of this generation ... Robin Williams, Whoopi Goldberg, Jay Leno, the late Phil Hartman, fellow alum Kevin Nealon '75 and Billy Crystal. At one point, he crafted humorous material for another man who seemed to have an affinity for saying funny things — Dan Quayle.

"Anyone can learn the mechanics to write jokes," says Boone, "but you need a sense of humor. You have to look at things a little more off-center."

Boone has parlayed his off-center view of life with a media studies major and political science minor into a thriving career as a comedy writer. Have laptop and irreverent sense of humor, will travel.

At 33, he lives alone in the tony L.A. suburb of Toluca Lakes, but his work often brings him to New York and other locales. In June, he was sitting in a Rockettes dressing room at Radio City Music Hall writing jokes for the HBO special 'Comic Relief 8,' co-hosted by Crystal, Williams and Goldberg.

No big deal. During the winter, he was the new member of Crystal's six-man writing team for the 70th annual Academy Awards in Hollywood. Remember the opening musical medley, "Gilligan's Island," and the montage spoofing the five nominees for best film? Boone was responsible for much of that material.

"The first four or five meetings were at Crystal's house in Pacific Palisades. We hit it off right away," Boone related. "I'd recount some of his skits from 'Saturday Night Live,' and Billy would say, 'Boone, you're scaring me.'"

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So where did Boone watch the Oscars? Back stage. "There I was, sitting on a folding chair, wearing a tux and watching the show on a 13-inch TV. It was a very surreal experience," he explains. "But I had to be there to come up with extra jokes. If 'Titanic' wins everything, you
have to have a remark for that. If ‘Titanic’ wins nothing, you have to have a remark for that.”

The association with Crystal, an early inspiration, represents the fulfillment of a long-time dream. “When I was at Sacred Heart, he was on ‘Saturday Night Live’ in 1984-85. That’s when I began to focus on what I really wanted to do.” But Boone realized much earlier in life that he was funny. His grandmother told him so. “I was three years old. The week before my grandmother died, she said, ‘Whenever I’m feeling low, get David to say something. He’s funny.’”

Later, there were the evenings when he and his father, John Boone, a Norwalk CPA, would sit together listening to tapes of old radio shows — Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Jack Benny. Without a visual presence, young David learned the importance of dialogue.

After graduating from Central Catholic High School in Norwalk, Boone entered Sacred Heart University. To hear him tell it, he spent most of his four years hiding out in the Media Studies studio and learning about politics — his second love — in Gary Rose’s classes. But in reality, he was enough of a student to graduate magna cum laude.

“We were sort of in our own world in the round room,” Boone says, meaning the Media Studies studio. “Because I was an intern, I did a lot of work with Becky Abbott there. Some nights, we wouldn’t go home or we’d sleep in the studio, go home, grab a shower and get ready for class.”

Boone distinctly remembers sitting in a summer class, Constitutional Law, and contradicting a person he mistook for an older student auditing the course. “Bob has a good point, but …” Boone pauses and smiles before delivering the punchline. “Then Dr. Rose gets up and tells us we are fortunate to have a guest speaker — the University’s new president, Dr. Robert Preston. You can imagine how I felt.”

Boone’s progression from college student to comedy writer was remarkably swift, with few false starts. Within a year of graduation, he took a script, which he’d written for his senior project, to 20th Century Fox. His arrival in Los Angeles coincided with a writer’s strike, but even that didn’t amount to a major deterrent. A chance meeting with Jay Leno at the Improv led to his writing topical political material for the comedian, then subbing for Johnny Carson on ‘The Tonight Show.’ Their association was to last five years — including the period when Leno replaced Carson as host.

“Living in Norwalk, the three-hour time difference was in my favor. I’d scan all the papers, write my material and fax it to Jay,” Boone says. “Jay really was my first big supporter. With him, I started at the top.”

In 1991, a mutual friend introduced Boone to Kevin Nealon, and soon Dave was writing Nealon’s ‘Weekend Update’ monologue for ‘Saturday Night Live.’ “One of the nicest guys in the business,” Boone says of Nealon.

Boone’s memories of another SNL cast member, the late Phil Hartman, are bittersweet. When Hartman left the show, Boone was among the attendees at the cast party in the restaurant overlooking the Rockefeller Center skating rink. At 4 a.m., he accompanied the comedian to his car. “I remember Phil looking back at 30 Rock, shaking his head and saying, ‘Man, there’s a lot of years here …’”

Vice President Dan Quayle entered Boone’s life during the 1992 presidential campaign. He was seeking jokes to counter what President Clinton and Al Gore said about him in their speeches. Although not an admirer, Boone came through admirably. “He called me and told me he was thrilled with one of the jokes I wrote,” says Boone.

Boone’s subsequent list of credits is both extensive and impressive — ABC’s ‘Politically Incorrect with Bill Maher’; A&E’s ‘Caroline’s Comedy Hour,’ for which he won an ACE writing award; and a multitude of gigs — both TV and personal appearances — with comedian Richard Jeni.

On the immediate horizon are ‘The Hollywood Squares,’ a syndicated show featuring Goldberg, which is scheduled to premiere in mid-September; and six episodes of ‘The World’s Funniest,’ with sportscaster James Brown, due to air on the Fox network in early fall. Down the road is ‘Too Hot for Prime Time,’ an adult version of the funniest videos, and — he hopes — additional work with Crystal.

Is it any wonder Boone considers his livelihood “the most fun job in the world”?
CLASS NOTES

'96

Amy Almeida Carrk and her husband, Ryan Carrk, are the parents of their first child, Austin Alexander, born March 23. Ryan is employed by Enterprise Rent-A-Car in the Washington, D.C., area. The Carrks reside in Gainesville, Va.

Deborah Ferber MBA was elected to the Board of Directors of the Danbury Regional Commission on Child Care, Rights and Abuse, Inc. Ferber works as a human resources representative for Duracell International in Bethel and was named the company’s Volunteer of the Year in 1996. She lives in New Milford.

Fernando Fernandes is playing professional soccer with the Long Island (N.Y.) Rough Riders of the United States International Soccer League.

Susan Jahnke 6th Year is a first grade teacher at Kennedy School in Milford. She resides in Stratford.

Brian Johnson played professional basketball in Germany last year. As a guard with the Bayern Munich team, Johnson averaged 24.6 points across a 52-game season to rank second in the league.

Jacqueline Leo MAT has joined the faculty of Housatonic Community-Technical College in Bridgeport as an English instructor. Leo had been teaching English at Kolbe Cathedral High School, also in Bridgeport.

Scott Romano is a police officer with the New Canaan Police Department. He lives in West Redding.

'97

Joseph Arcarese MAT was appointed an assistant principal at Cheshire High School, effective July 1. Arcarese comes to Cheshire from Fitch High School in Groton, where he taught biology and coached varsity softball and boys basketball.

George Fedor III MBA was married to Jane Marie Jacobelli on Oct. 4, 1997 in Holy Name of Jesus Church, Stratford. Fedor is an engineer at Duracell International in Bethel. They make their home in Naugatuck.

Eileen McKenna is working as a marketing assistant at Real Estate Tax Services in New York. She resides in Congers, N.Y.

Jennifer Platt is serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Jamaica. As a member of the “World Wise Schools” program, Platt acts as a cultural contact and helps expand the students’ global perspective.

IN MEMORIAM

Dr. Timothy J. Hillis ’79

Timothy J. Hillis, MD '79, a medical researcher and co-valedictorian of the Class of 1979, died at his home in Oakland, Calif., on Feb. 27. He was 40.

Entering Sacred Heart University with a full presidential scholarship, Hillis more than lived up to his promise. He graduated with a double major, in biology and chemistry, and shared valedictorian honors with Igor Mikolic-Torreia.

In his address at Commencement, Hillis urged classmates and members of the University community to “accept the challenge to acknowledge rationality as the central core of your existence; to devote your efforts to minimize mediocrity in our society by exemplifying a thinking morality; and to help restore that dignity which is rightfully ours.”

After earning a medical degree from the University of Connecticut School of Medicine, he established a pediatric practice in San Francisco. A love of medical research, however, led him to a position with Enzo Biochemicals, based in Manhattan and Stony Brook, N.Y. Most recently, he was conducting clinical research with AIDS patients in the San Francisco area.

“It is very exciting to be part of this kind of ground-breaking research that impacts so many people,” Hillis said in a recent interview (“Valedictory Serendipity,” Summer ’97).

He is survived by his parents, Arthur L. and Barbara Hillis of Huntington; three brothers, Richard, Paul and Michael Hillis; four sisters, Susan Young, Karen Bellis, Judith Podolak and Barbara Iannetti, and nine nieces and nephews.

Contributions may be made to the Dr. Timothy J. Hillis Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o Susan Hillis Young, 32 Florence Drive, Huntington, CT 06484.

Henry J. Leir

Henry J. Leir, who received an honorary Doctor of Laws at Commencement on May 17, died in New York City on July 15. He was 98.

Leir fled Nazi Germany in 1933 and founded a major international trading business in the United States. After selling the company for $40 million in stock in 1968, he focused on philanthropy. He contributed to many causes, including homes for orphans in Luxembourg.
Continuity and Plurality in Catholic Theology
Essays In Honor of Gerald A. Mc Cool, S.J.
Edited by Anthony J. Cernera, Ph.D., President, Sacred Heart University, Fairfield, Conn.

A former university professor, preeminent scholar of Thomistic thought and author of Catholic Theology in the Nineteenth Century, which is considered a standard work on the roots of contemporary Catholic thought, the Rev. Gerald A. Mc Cool, S.J., Ph.D., has sparked the intellects of countless Catholics. Now in celebration of Father Mc Cool’s 80th birthday, nine leading Catholic scholars have joined to write new essays examining and discussing his ideas and impact.

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