

Alumni & Friends
**NEWS
LETTER**

Fall Edition 2023

FOOTPRINTS

MARQUETTE MAY MERRIMENT XLI RAISES \$285,000+

INSIDE:

May Merriment
Page 1

Upcoming Events
Page 2

Strategic Plan
Page 2

Student Spotlights
Page 3

Faculty Spotlight
Page 4



Marquette Academy's 41st annual May Merriment - Heaven or Hail, event was held on Saturday, May 6, 2023. This year's gross profits exceeded \$285,000! With the highest attendance since the pandemic, the overall energy in Bader Gym was positive and optimistic. We hosted many new guests at the event, and enjoyed a special performance from the Wreckin' Dixie band.

May Merriment is the school's biggest fundraiser and exists to help with operating costs, facility upgrades, and respond to the financial burden that many of our families face. Since we are a private school, we must rely on area churches, alumni, businesses, and community that believe in Marquette to help us succeed.

This year is the highest grossing May Merriment since its inception. Advancement Director, Julie Verona credits this to increased raffle sales, sponsorships, exceptional auction items and the hard work of the MMM XLI committee members who helped fundraise throughout the school year.

At Marquette Academy, education goes far beyond textbooks and classrooms. Marquette has been able to offer our students exceptional academics rooted in faith, athletics and extra-curricular programs provided by our outstanding faculty and facility. A special thank you to all who donated, supported, volunteered and attended May Merriment. Because of you we continue to thrive.



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1000 Paul Street
Ottawa, IL 61350
marquetteacademy.net



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Our new MMM 42 Chairpeople:

Katie and John Nelson,
Tara and Paul DeMink,
Honorary: Karen and Mike Obenhin

*A theme will be announced at
the Rip's party!*

You can support Marquette students any time of the year! Please contact the Advancement Office at 815-433-0125 ext. 1018.

To make a donation online visit: marquetteacademy.net, or scan the code to the right.



UPCOMING EVENTS

September 9, 2023
Saints & Sinners Golf Outing
Deer Park Golf Course

September 15, 2023
4-6pm Homecoming
Alumni & Family Tailgate
7pm HOCO Game - GO CRU!!
Gould Stadium

October 29, 2023
Annual Rip's Party
Knights of Columbus

November 6, 2022
Turkey Dinner Drive Through
Elementary Campus

December 2, 2023
Merry Everything Holiday
Home Tour (Raffle begins 12/1)

May 4, 2024
Marquette May Merriment 42
Bader Gym



ALUMNI & Family TAILGATE

HOCO 2023 (Sept. 15)

Friday, September 15 - Calling all alumni & fans! Tailgate with the Marquette family across from Gould Stadium starting at 4pm. Then watch some Crusader Football! The CRU take on Kewanee Wethersfield at 7pm. Great food, drinks, raffles and Marquette spirit! After the game, enjoy a tenderloin at the Knights of Columbus.

To sponsor an event, donate, or view the full calendar of events and athletic schedules visit:
marquetteacademy.net

Marquette Academy STRATEGIC PLAN



Marquette Academy is emerging as a top high school for Catholic education in our area. School spirit is high, enrollment is strong, and our Crusader AND Knight culture of teaching and learning continues to help each student reach his or her highest potential.

Our Academy has earned a reputation of academic excellence through the hard work of our students, teachers, parents, and staff. We understand the importance of our students being connected to school through positive relationships and a strong sense of community - and believe that every student can learn and be successful when provided the right support and opportunities. Our teachers and staff have an on-going commitment to ensure that all students receive an appropriate and challenging educational experience in a respectful environment that fosters learning and growth. The unwavering support of our families and community makes Marquette Academy an amazing place to learn and work.

IT'S AN EXCITING TIME FOR MARQUETTE ACADEMY - As we look to the future of Marquette Academy we know that long-term plans proactively address challenges and leverage opportunities that support our commitment to provide an exceptional, faith-based education that maximizes every student's growth in faith formation and academics. When we take the time to strategically plan, forge positive relationships, celebrate our achievements, and continue to build on our successful foundation, we can foster a learning environment where our entire Marquette community thrives.

For these reasons and with the approval of Most Rev. Louis Tylka, Bishop of Peoria and the Office of Catholic Schools we are pleased to publish and present to you Marquette Academy's Long Term Strategic Plan. This plan will be implemented to assist and guide our Academy during the next five years. **To download a copy, visit www.marquetteacademy.net/our-school/stratplan.cfm**

Thank you to the Strategic Planning Committee and the Marquette Academy Consultative Board for their help and guidance in creating and implementing this plan. With the initiatives that we already have in place, combined with this new Five Year Strategic Plan, we will provide an even stronger foundation for our Academy. We are MARQUETTE!



"I love coming to work each and every day! I feel blessed to work in such a positive, Christ-centered environment."
Mrs. Mann



MARQUETTE ACADEMY
#2 TOP SCHOOL EMPLOYER
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STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS



THE SKY'S THE LIMIT!

2 MAHS students to obtain pilot license!

Sean Kath, MAHS Junior

Sean's curiosity in aviation is certainly due in part to family legacy. His grandfather is a private pilot like his father before him. This sparked Sean's interest and so under the guidance of his grandfather his dream of becoming a pilot took off.

Sean is enrolled in Private Pilot Training at Sport Pilot Chicago out of Cushing Field in Sheridan, Illinois. This program requires 50 hours of ground school, 50 hours of flight training and 10 hours of

solo flight. Sean is currently proficient in operating the airplane. He flies with his instructor an hour a week and attends ground school instruction every Saturday morning at Aurora Airport. When his training is complete, Sean will need to pass his practical flight exam with a FAA examiner to secure his license. His aim is to make a career out of his love for flying and intends to study aviation in college.

Sean Kath

Nolan DeMink, MAHS Junior

Nolan decided to act on his love for aviation and travel and pursue his private pilot license this past May. Multiple times a week he travels to Aurora Municipal Airport for flying lessons and ground school. He is logging around 6-8 hours a week in the air. He is currently more than half complete with his training and coming close to his first solo flight! He is aiming to apply to the United States Air Force Academy....and then move onto commercial flying after a military career.

Nolan DeMink

GRAND CHAMPION!



Excellent job done by **Marquette junior, Lilliana Bernabei**, as she exhibited the Grand Champion Crossbred Gilt at the 2023 LaSalle County 4H and Junior Fair in Ottawa, IL! Lilly also had the opportunity to compete in "Master Showmanship", and gained great learning experiences.

Lilliana is currently president for the Marquette FFA chapter, which she has been a part of since freshman year. She is also a member of the North Stars 4-H club, where she has been a member since 2019 and has held an officer position for the last 3 years.

What it takes to make a champion: In March, Lilliana traveled to many different swine auctions and breeder farms in order to purchase her pigs. During this process she sorts through piglets that are

about 40-80 lbs. After purchasing her piglets she feeds, walks, cleans, and bathes the pigs everyday for months. In June, she completed entries to enter her pigs into the fair. Days before the fair Lilliana packs her trailer with items she will use at the fair along with the pigs. The day of the show she gets up early to head to the fairgrounds to wash her pigs and get them ready to head into the show ring and win! It takes a lot of hard work, determination, time, and money to be able to present her pigs at the fair.

Being able to showcase what she spends so much time on is rewarding, and to win in the end is why she keeps doing it! Even though this chapter of showing livestock is coming to an end soon she will always cherish the moments she had with all the pigs that have been on the farm.



Lilliana Bernabei

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT - Mrs. MELODY



Thank you for 40 years of teaching and guidance at Marquette. You are truly one of a kind!

There are lucky people who find a job they love, a career they were meant for and the right place to enjoy it all. Denise Melody is one of those people.

However, even she knew there'd be a time to step away and for her, that time is now.

Melody, a Streator native who for the last 40 of her 42 years in education has been in charge of the second grade class at Marquette Academy Grade School in Ottawa, is turning in her lesson plans for the last time this week and she will be missed by the generations of students and parents who've passed through on her watch.

"It wasn't an easy decision," said Melody, fighting back tears at the very thought of stepping down. "This has been my home for all these years and so many of the people I've taught with aren't just colleagues, they're really, really good friends. This is my family, to the point where I'm teaching children whose moms and dads I taught

... and I've taught with people who I taught as kids. Despite the offer to take whatever snow days she felt were necessary, Melody believes that wouldn't be living up to her commitment to Marquette.

"There isn't anything in the world I'd rather do than teach. In fact, I can't remember a time when I didn't want to be a teacher. People ask me what I'm going to miss about it, I'm going to miss everything, the students first and foremost, but also planning lessons, bulletin boards, parent-teacher conferences, all of it. There isn't one thing about it I won't miss, but it's time."

She started teaching eighth grade and then fourth grade in her first two years, but then was asked to lead second graders and knew right away that's where she belonged.

A lover of reading and good books, Melody has encouraged her students toward the same and

dedicates a large portion of their mornings on that, along with the principles of teamwork, friendship and Catholic values.

"The kids are young enough that they're still excited about school and everything we do, but old enough to be independent and do things on their own," Melody explained. "I'm so lucky to have found my niche."

Melody and her husband, former Streator and Marquette football coach Kirk Melody, have been living in Lake Wildwood near Varna for the last 20 years.

"I'm sure once I get into the next chapter, get into retirement and have a routine, I think I'll be fine, but it's hard to get started with that," she said. "It's an emotional thing for me, but I think it will be a good thing."

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