

March 2019



SAINT CATHERINE CENTER FOR *Special Needs*

New Canaan High School Class of 1978 Honors Memory of Katherine Schlegel

When Elena (Peters) and Stephen Schlegel lost their 20-year-old daughter Katherine last fall, members of the New Canaan High School Class of 1978 quickly focused their upcoming 40th Reunion celebration to make the event a fundraiser for Saint Catherine Center, where the Schlegels chose to honor Katherine's memory.

Katherine Schlegel carried a bright, bubbly personality in life and was a quick friend to many people she met along the way. As her father Steve pointed out, "Katherine was always the brightest light in the room." In a similar way, Saint Catherine Center has become a bright light to many area families of children and young adults with special needs.

"Many students and participants are now reaching the age where they need a new challenge," said Helen Burland, Executive Director. "An expanded living and learning facility is becoming a top priority."

Recently members from the Class visited Saint Catherine Center for a tour and to present the gift, which will go toward a capital campaign to help us meet the growing needs of the population we serve.



Members of the NCHS Class of 1978, including (l-r) Leo Karl III, Susan (Ambule) Galione, Susan (Burnap) Boston, Elena (Peters) Schlegel, Steve Yates, and Pam James, presented a check to Saint Catherine Center in memory of Katherine Schlegel. Pictured with Center participants: Gus, Eve, Ryan, and Natalie.



The Joy of Singing Together

"What I really enjoy about singing in the choir is singing *together*," says Anna Stowe, a Saint Catherine Academy student who has been part of the Diocese of Bridgeport's Youth Choir (otherwise known

as “C4Y”) for the past year and a half. The choir, which boasts more than 120 members, was formed at Bishop Caggiano’s special request to bring youth together in community while cultivating their talents.

Anna, who is 15 (“almost 16”) and an alto, had always enjoyed singing at her school in Chicago. When the family moved to Connecticut a couple of years ago, Anna’s mother Jill contacted the C4Y director, Mary Higgins. Anna met Mrs. Higgins and auditioned with the National Anthem—not an easy song!

“I was a little nervous, but really excited,” said Anna. The next day Mrs. Higgins called to invite her to join.

The choir is a serious commitment, with rehearsals every Tuesday night for an hour and a half. Because members are spread across the Diocese, Mrs. Higgins travels to multiple locations over the week to rehearse in small groups.

At the Christmas concert, Anna was called forward to play the tambourine during a special song. “I watched her walk across the stage,” her mother said. “When Anna joined the choir, I wanted her to be part of the crowd—not treated special—but that she was made *extra* special at the concert was humbling.” Anna took it all in stride.

The C4Y spring concert will be held at St. Theresa Church in Trumbull on May 5th.



Sr. Maureen and Sr. Cheryl from Saint Catherine Academy (pictured with Anna) attended the C4Y Christmas concert. “We’re so proud of her!” they said.

Mardi Gras-a-Go-Go

Here at Saint Catherine Center, it makes us happy to see the pleasure in the faces of all the guests who attend our regular dinner dances at St. Pius Church in Fairfield. More than 120 adults from all around the Diocese—some dressed in costume—came out for an evening of dining and dancing to celebrate Mardi Gras.

The dinner dances are a labor of love from many friends of the Center, including:



Charles Chiusano from our Board of Directors, who delivers the delicious pasta and meatballs from A&S Italian Fine Foods of Fairfield; his wife Ruth who helps us prepare; Fr. Sam Kachuba who offers us the space at St. Pius; Sylvia Calabro who brings delicious cookies; DJ Herb Ramirez with his fun and familiar tunes; Cathy Romano of Assumption Church in Westport who makes beautiful table centerpieces; and the group of enthusiastic young people from St. Andrew in Bridgeport who serve the guests—and then enjoy a dance or two themselves.



When the *Macarena* starts up, you know the evening has been a success!

[View more photos on our website.](#)

Thank you to all the generous donors who supported us on Giving Day. With your help we raised more than \$19,000!



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