



Jesuit Retreat House
4800 Fahrnwald Road
Oshkosh, WI 54902

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org
U.S. Postage
Paid
Oshkosh, WI
Permit No. 272



Reflections Newsletter
Volume 31 • No. 2 • May 2017

4800 Fahrnwald Road
Oshkosh, WI 54902
920.231.9060
800.962.7330 (WI only)
www.JesuitRetreatHouse.org



The Jesuit Retreat House in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, fosters spiritual enrichment rooted in the Gospels, the Catholic tradition and the spirituality of St. Ignatius of Loyola. Our ministry is dedicated to creating a rich variety of retreat experiences and providing an atmosphere of quiet, peace and prayer in which men and women of all faiths are encouraged to discover and respond generously to God's personal invitation to wholeness and holiness.

www.JesuitRetreatHouse.org



Employee Spotlight Sheryl Bradley – dining room & housekeeping

Sheryl Bradley, an Oshkosh native, joined the JRH staff in November 2016. Prior to joining our staff as a part-time employee, she worked ten years for the UW-Oshkosh Food Service System and now currently

works at the Oshkosh Post Office. Sheryl assists in the dining and kitchen areas with Chef Jeff Martin to provide our retreatants with the highest quality service and delicious meals that they have come to appreciate and love here at the retreat house. Besides her food service experience, Sheryl also works with Dawn Gorenshek in housekeeping to keep the Manresa and La Storta facilities looking spick and span. Sheryl is very pleased to be a part of the JRH team. "When I saw the posting at the Black Wolf Town Hall during voting season, I was intrigued. It was a good decision to apply. I love coming to work at the retreat house ... it is my happy place! It reminded me how much I missed food service and it helped me to rediscover my love of cooking and interacting with people."

According to Chef Jeff, "When we hired Sheryl, it was clear to us that she had many talents and gifts that would be great additions to our kitchen and housekeeping staff and, most importantly, she would fit very well into the JRH mission of service."



Art room supplies at capacity

The Manresa (lower level) Art Room is becoming a favorite contemplative space for many of our retreatants. Ruth Hoenick, a retreatant and advisory council member, who helped coordinate the purchase and donations of materials commented that, "our shelves and cabinets are full with a wonderful variety of art supplies that provide our retreatants with the opportunity to express their Ignatian Spirituality through art, silence, solitude and peace."

However, due to the large volume of supplies and the lack of storage space, the retreat house will not be accepting further art supply donations until our current inventory is reduced.

Again, thank you and blessings on all of our generous art supply donors!

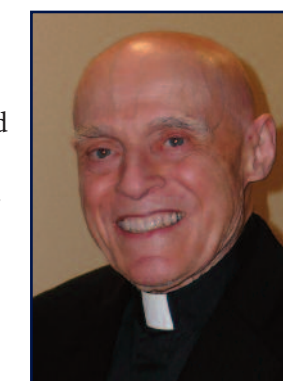
Reflections on sixty years of Jesuit life

During my novitiate in 1958 one of the older fathers celebrated his fiftieth jubilee as a Jesuit. During that celebration, I asked him, "How does one live for fifty years as Jesuit and be so content with Jesuit life?" He told me, "Well, I just get up in the morning and do what has to be done and all of a sudden it is fifty years." As I celebrate my sixtieth jubilee, I now realize the wisdom of what he told me.

After novitiate, I had the usual course of Jesuit studies – humanities, philosophy, teaching high school, theology, ordination to the priesthood, and doctoral studies. Once I finished all this preparation I was asked to do many years of administrative work as my primary apostolic focus. I bristled at this work because all I really wanted to do was teach philosophy. A breakthrough occurred when I realized that protecting people from sometimes large and unfeeling institutions is one job of an administrator. With that discovery, I was able to



function as dean of our philosophy program, assistant chair and chair of the Marquette University Philosophy Department, academic dean of our theology school in California, and Provincial Assistant for Higher Education in the Wisconsin Province. When I moved to the Jesuit Retreat House in 2013, it was the first time in thirty-eight years that I was not in charge of something. In the spring of 2000 I made a retreat with a wonderful laywoman. This retreat turned out to be a major turning point in my life. My retreat director introduced me to a key thought of Sister Dorine who had celebrated her 104th Birthday. She told a newspaper interviewer, "It is useless to say, I could have done this or that. I am at peace. I did all that I could. I did the best that I could." Yes, I have lived sixty wonderful years as a Jesuit, but the journey is not over. Dorine inspires me to peace, to do my best, and to do all that I can for God's people.



Fr. Jack Treloar, S.J.
Assistant Director

"When one flower blooms it is spring everywhere."

John O'Donohue, a Catholic scholar, includes this quote in his book, *Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom*, and attributes it to an unnamed Zen mystic. I think all of us can identify with this sense of being lifted above our immediate difficulties by signs of hope.

The first blossom, first bud, and first robin this time of year stir that sentiment. "It's spring!" I proclaim, even though a huge ice shove is within 50 yards as I celebrate the first daffodil bloom. Why the excitement? Why the uplifted spirit? Because I know eventually what will "win out" no matter how fragile it appears now.

A bit of hope puts what is around me in a different light. Our faith is that bit of hope, and while on retreat we take the time to tend to it so it can grow and deepen its roots within us. While it may not rid me of the dark, foreboding, and ominous parts of life, the silver linings it exposes keep me from despairing.

We are surrounded by blooming flowers during this Easter season – the rooted kind and the spiritual sort – so let us celebrate the hope that Christ inspires and the Holy Spirit sustains.

Fr. Chris Manahan, S.J.
Director



1973 Construction of Casey's Crossing, boat house seen below.



Casey Roemer far right

Casey's Crossing history revealed

Closing our iconic A-frame bridge this past winter was a big decision but a necessary one. We knew it would need to be replaced, but before that happened, Fr. Chris was determined to learn its history. Fortunately, retreatant Andy Killoren noticed our February newsletter article about the bridge's closing and pointed Fr. Chris in the right direction.

Andy connected us with Jay Jack, son of longtime retreatant Lloyd Jack of Superior Electric Co. in Appleton, WI. More pieces of the puzzle were supplied when Jay tipped us off to Casey's son, Tom Roemer, and his whereabouts. The Jack, Roemer, and Killoren families had been in business together over the years. Tom filled in the rest of the story earlier this winter when he visited the bridge and the Retreat House.

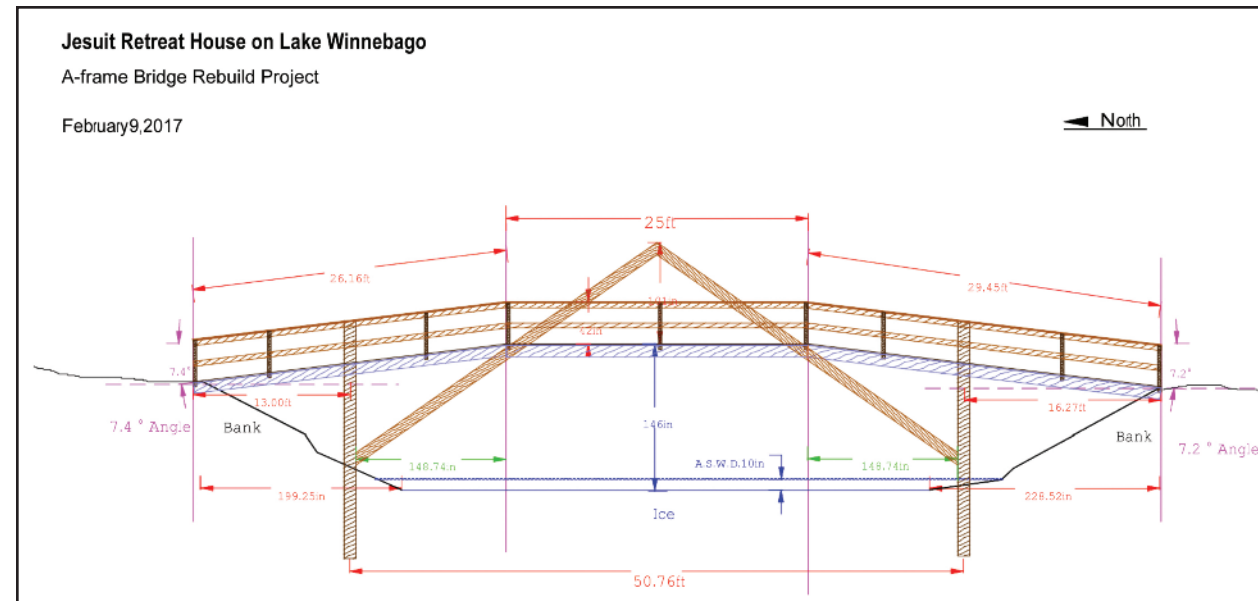
Tom told us that in the early 1970's, Fr. Ken Killoren, S.J., who served as a missionary in South Korea and was a founder of Sogang University in Seoul, mentioned to his first cousin Clarence "Casey" Roemer that the Jesuits in Oshkosh wanted a bridge over an inlet on the grounds. Casey Roemer, who grew up with Killoren and was a JRH retreatant, sprang into action.

With the help of his company, Superior Electric, Roemer organized the volunteer labor, provided the utility poles and other materials, and used his own design for the bridge's construction in 1973. Three years after the bridge was finished, however, Roemer died of a massive heart attack. A plaque on one of the poles that form the A-frame christens the bridge, "Casey's Crossing," in Roemer's honor. It also gives the year it was built (1973), Casey's birth and death

years (1918-1976), and attributes the work to "S.E. Co." (Superior Electric Company).

Tom recounted a recent conversation he had with Don Goehring, the digger operator who placed the vertical poles at the ends of the bridge. Don chuckled as he explained how tough it was to get his truck backed up to the edges so he could reach the designated spot to dig. Although the first three holes were dry as he dug and set the poles, halfway down the fourth hole, the wall collapsed and the "dad gum" hole filled with water. It was difficult to keep digging because the hole would fill with debris. Finally, he got deep enough to set the pole and displace the water and sand in the hole.

Estimates on replacing the bridge with the same design, but with approaches that are less steep, have been finalized at approximately \$32,000. Fortunately, a couple of retreatant families are considering funding the entire rebuild project which would be a blessing. We hope to get the work done during the EAA Airshow this summer when we have a break in the retreat schedule.



Engineers drawing of replacement bridge.



Tom Roemer, Casey's son, earlier this year.

New salad bar & stove upgrades complete

A new salad bar and commercial stove with two convection ovens add the finishing touches to the dining, serving and kitchen upgrade project. Through the efforts of one of our retreatants, Joe Carlson, the larger salad bar and four new serving stations are gifts from Lakeside Manufacturing, Inc. located in Milwaukee. The commercial stove with convection ovens was made possible through the generosity of retreatants who contributed to this year's Annual Appeal.

Jeff Martin, our chef, is very excited about the new additions. "The new salad bar allows us to increase our serving space and the new stove with convection ovens will allow us to prepare our foods more efficiently and bake our delicious, homemade cookies in nearly half the time."

Bon appetit!



50% challenge match going strong

The Challenge Continues

Let's burn the mortgage by the end of 2017 and save \$300,000 or more in mortgage interest. If our retreatants continue to contribute and to match at the 50% or more level, the remaining \$1.6 million dollar mortgage will be history!

Suggested Offerings

Original capital campaign donors:	50% or more of original gift
No Debt / Burn the Mortgage donors:	50% or more of original gift
Other donors:	\$250 or more
Have never donated before:	\$50 / \$100 / \$250 or more

Once you have decided at what level you are able to help, please use the enclosed **50% Challenge Match** envelope or contact Deacon John in the Development Office at (920) 230-6992 or deaconji@gmail.com to help with pledges or stock transfers.

A True Blessing

The positive response to our 50% challenge match by over 320 of our retreatants and families has been a true blessing. Since the mailing went out in mid-February, over \$251,000 dollars have been secured in either one-time gifts or multi-year pledges. When added to the original challenge match gift of \$300,000 by the Wisconsin Jesuit Province, these gifts will allow us to pay down our mortgage principle by over \$551,000.