

J O Y F U L  
**Echoes**

ISSUE 2

WINTER 2017

*Welcome!*

Joyful Echoes is a new Alumni Newsletter published by the Onondaga Central School Education Foundation for the purpose of keeping alumni and friends of OCS engaged with the Onondaga community and informed of current activities happening at OCS.

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**HOW NARCOLEPSY AWOKE OCS IN 1976**



**NARCOLEPSY:** a condition characterized by brief attacks of deep sleep often occurring with cataplexy and hypnagogic hallucinations.

On June 10, 1976 at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, DC, Wheeler Middle School student Tim Kneale (OCS class of 1980) correctly spelled narcolepsy in the 21st round and won the National Spelling Bee. The classrooms of Wheeler erupted in celebration at 10:00 that morning with the public address announcement from Principal Dick Meyer.

A predecessor to the current-day spectacle that is televised live on ESPN, the 1976 Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, DC featured 87 finalists. The correct words spelled by Tim also included: *fatigue, conceit, opalescent, carafe, egalitarian, supernumerary, persiflage, literati, aphotic, bellipotent, physiolatry, demulcent, hagiology, and sauerbraten.*

*Continued on pages 2 & 3*

**About the OCSEF** The Onondaga Central School Education Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit, all-volunteer 501(c) charitable corporation whose purpose is to provide support to students, staff and academic programs at Onondaga Central through charitable donations. The OCSEF was founded in 1984 with a vision of growing an endowment over the years.

# HOW NARCOLEPSY AWOKED OCS IN 1976



*'Narcolepsy' didn't put Tim to sleep*

The post-bee celebrations kicked off upon his arrival from Washington at the Syracuse airport with a greeting from the OCS community, including his little league baseball team. Onondaga had "Tim Kneale Day" at the school that summer, and he was honored on a float in the Syracuse bicentennial parade.

Shortly after returning home, the family received a call from people at the Mike Douglas TV show from Philadelphia. They flew Tim and Tim's mom, Pat, there for the show honoring Tim and other young celebrities including Andrea McArdle, star of Annie on Broadway; Stephanie Mills, star of The Wiz on

Broadway; Ally Sheedy, actress and author; and Kristy McNichol, star of the hit tv show Family.

Tim shared his memories of the experience with *Joyful Echoes*:

*My first time on a commercial plane. Now I'm lucky if a week goes by without being on an airplane. Funny how you can start to take things for granted.*

*The hotel was a lot of fun. Big, beautiful old building in the heart of DC, one of the classic 19th-century type hotels that are very hard to find nowadays. Many of the spellers, myself included, spent*

*hours exploring every inch of the place (and no doubt driving the real guests crazy with our running up and down the halls). The rooms were pretty small, and the rollaway I slept on was crammed in the room, leaving almost nowhere to walk. My parents were pretty good sports about this, thank goodness.*

*The Bee arranged for tours of one DC area landmark or another just about every day of the visit. Highlights included the White House, where Gerald Ford happened to be in that day, so we all got to meet the President. We also all got soaked by the Presidential dog, which had just run through a fountain and decided to dry off in our presence. We saw the other big DC monuments, some via double-decker bus (another first for me). I remember spending my time during the Smithsonian tour looking for long words in the exhibit placards to use as practice for the upcoming competition. Pretty nerdy, but maybe it paid off.*

## "HOLY [COW], I COULD WIN THIS THING!"

*I was able to meet several NYS politicians during the stay. Jacob Javits, long-time Senator, made a real impression as probably the most personable public figure I've met to this day. He really made a*



*Tim meeting President Ford*

*skinny little middle schooler feel important. Then, walking back through the hotel lobby clutching my autograph book after the tour of Congress, who should come strolling through but Nelson Rockefeller, Ford's Vice President and former four-term NY Governor. Being the only speller in the room to recognize him, and not encountering the kind of security one sees for national figures nowadays, I walked right up to him and asked him for an autograph. He signed the page simply, "Rocky". [Side note: a few months later, Rockefeller was addressing a crowd and encountered a heckler*

*giving him 'the finger'. Rocky gave it right back, and this photo made most news publications of the time. A copy is attached to my autograph page to this day, much to the amusement of my kids.]*



The Bee itself was much smaller than today's ESPN-televized affairs. There was no preliminary round to eliminate two-thirds of the qualifiers, as there is now. We just walked in, took our assigned seats, and started spelling.

During the activities of the prior few days, we'd all sized up one another as to spelling ability. There was a consensus that the speller from Pittsburgh was the leading contender, and we'd all be scrambling for second place or worse. As the contest wore on, that young man breezed through some very tough words. But with about twenty spellers left, he got an easy word and that was his downfall.



"It was a pleasure and an honor for me to meet the nation's most prodigious orthographizer, the first National Spelling Bee pancratiast to come from New York State in 49 years."

- From US Senator Jacob Javits to Timothy Kneale on June 18, 1976

He chose to spell it fast, and accidentally skipped an obvious letter. He knew his mistake right away, but in the Bee there is no chance to correct oneself; you have to get it right the first time. The bell rang, he was out, and nineteen of us looked at each other bug-eyed, the same thought in each head: "Holy [cow], I could win this thing!" By the way, because the Pittsburgh kid was only a seventh grader, he was able to return the following year, take his time with each word, and collect his prize.

I'm not going to lie: I got pretty lucky that day. Through luck of the draw, most of my words were pretty easy, certainly no match for the words today's spellers face. Meanwhile, other kids kept drawing words I had no idea how to spell, and out they'd go. Soon it was down to two of us. The other finalist was a young lady representing Akron, Ohio. This was intimidating, as at that point in Bee history, an outside number of winners had come from two cities: Louisville and Akron. Oddly enough, she seemed a lot more nervous than I was. I think she had the weight of Akron history on her shoulders, whereas since nobody from NYS had ever won the Bee, I had no real expectations. We went back and forth for several rounds. When one of us missed a word, the other got a chance to spell it. At one point, she missed a word and started to lose her composure. I was able to settle her down by telling her, "Don't worry – I don't know it either."

Then it was over. Someone handed me a trophy and told me to hold it in the air. And then it was back to messing around in the hotel with the other contestants. It was a fun bunch of kids; several of us stayed in touch for years, no easy feat in the pre-Facebook era.

## "I'M NOT GOING TO LIE: I GOT PRETTY LUCKY THAT DAY."

Coming home was exciting. A bunch of family and friends, plus some local media met me at Hancock when the plane landed. A car from a local radio station gave me a ride somewhere – I can't remember if it was all the way to South O. In those pre-GPS days, they probably couldn't have found their way back to civilization from our side of town. The school also held a celebration, which was nice.

What I do for a living today has nothing to do with spelling, which is a skill now outsourced to Microsoft or Siri for most people. But despite the increasing irrelevance of spelling skills, the spectacle of spelling bees seems a bit more popular now than it was in the 70's. The prize money certainly has gone up. The prize for winning is now \$40,000. In my day it was a whopping \$1000. Of course that seemed huge at the time; little did I know it would not even cover my first month of college expenses!

William Walsh entered the following in the Congressional Record on June 10, 1976:

"With the correct spelling of the word 'narcolepsy,' Tim, a resident of the 33rd Congressional District, today became the winner of the National Spelling Bee, one of the most prodigious feats that any junior high schools student can possibly attain."

After graduating from OCS, Tim earned a degree at MIT in Chemical Engineering and is currently the President at TOPAS Advanced Polymers. Tim and his wife of 25 years, Mary, live in the Cincinnati suburbs with their three children.

[Thanks to Tim and his dad, Bob, for their contributions to this story.]



Left to Right (Back row) Betsy, Tim, Pat, and Amy (Front row) Megan and David

# SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

by Rob Price, Onondaga Central Superintendent

## DEAR ALUMNI,

It has been seven years since the District last voted on a capital project. Our buildings are starting to show the effects of aging, and it is the school's intent to maintain our community investment in our facilities.



*Aging Masonry*

The school architects have prepared a 5-year building conditions report, and after careful review, the Board of Education, Administration and Facilities Committee strongly believe we cannot delay in presenting a new capital project. The district is proposing a **No-Tax-Impact Project** to the OCS community.

The \$5.6 million project we are putting forward to the voters on March 8th includes maintenance, repair, replacement, renovation, rehabilitation, reconstruction, construction, and/or installation work at existing buildings within the District, including activities aimed

at improving energy conservation, High School Auditorium seating and updates to the Family Consumer Science Classroom. The project also includes the following key features:

### BUS GARAGE

Major renovations are required at our aging Transportation Facility totaling \$3.3 million for maintenance, repair, replacement, renovation, rehabilitation, reconstruction, construction, and/or installation work at existing building. The building's renovations include internal and external repairs and replacement in many mechanical areas: bus lifts will be replaced; drainage systems are planned to be replaced; and changes to working floor plan and improvements to indoor air quality will be made.

### ENERGY PERFORMANCE PROJECT

*\$1.115 million in lighting and energy upgrades in all buildings.*

Energy Performance Contracting (EPC) with Siemens LLC is an innovative financing technique that uses cost savings from reduced energy consumption to repay the cost of installing energy conservation measures. These savings, combined with state aid, will allow us to complete this portion of the capital project with no impact on the local tax levy.

Onondaga Central School District's EPC project consists of lighting upgrades, plug load management and control system updates that will help us achieve the energy savings to pay for the project. Our EPC contract with Siemens guarantees these savings, and if we don't see the savings they write us a check for the annual amount we did not save.

### ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY LABS AND STEM LABS

The Advanced Technology or STEM (Science, Technology Engineering and Math) Labs, as we are calling them, are fairly new phenomena. The instruction for students happens in an interdisciplinary and applied approach with four disciplines integrated into a real-world application. Students will produce projects such as programming computers and robots. Some of the innovations have drawn significant national attention. The hands-on learning centers will enable students to program, design, and prototype collaboratively in many disciplines such as computer science, sciences, technology, engineering and math. These Advanced Technology Labs can take the form of loosely-organized and organized times during regular classes, in lunch periods, and after school. The purpose of the new labs is to provide hands-on tools and equipment to facilitate problem solving. This is achieved

by students coding, designing and building solutions. Some examples of the equipment we are currently using are Spheros™, Legos™, Dash and Dot™, Meeperbots™, Gears™, Makey Makey™, Little Bits™ and Knex™.

Visit the Capital Project page on the District Website for more project details and regular updates: <http://www.ocs.cnyric.org/district.cfm?subpage=62732>



*Drainage Issue in the Bus Garage*

We are excited to get this work done for our current students and continue to make you proud of your alma mater. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at the district office.

## SINCERELY, ROB PRICE

Superintendent  
Onondaga Central School District  
4466 South Onondaga Road  
Nedrow, NY 13120  
315-552-5000



# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: DOROTHY GANN ELIZABETH GANN

by Mark S. Hopper ('71) as provided by Stan North on January 5th, 2013

From the 1950 Onondaga Yearbook Dorothy E. Gann was born on Oct. 1st, 1932 in Syracuse, NY to Ben & Helen Gann. They lived at 4650 Rt. 80 near Griffin Corners, and Dorothy attended Onondaga Central School where she graduated as Valedictorian of the Class of 1950. According to the 1950 yearbook, Dorothy, or "Dottie", was involved in the school newspaper and music. Dottie loved to sing and play the piano, and she sang the National Anthem at several school functions. She was heavily into 4-H for over four years and she won several silver medals at the state level. At graduation she was granted several scholarships which she used at Syracuse University.

After graduation she attended S.U. where she met Stanley H. North, from Syracuse. They were married on Dec. 7th, 1952. (Stan's Best Man

## "HER JOY MAKES THE SCHOOL REJOICE, AND HER SPIRITS ARE AS HIGH AS HER VOICE"

was my dad, Marshall Hopper, and my mother, Doris, was listed as a witness.) For the next two years she lived the life of an Army wife with Stan during which time they had a son, Wesley. They settled in

Massachusetts in 1955, where they lived until moving to Pennsylvania in 1963. Their family grew to include two more sons, Bradley and David.

Dottie eventually moved to Tucson, Arizona to live with their son David who had moved out there several years earlier. She died there in March of 2006.

She had an older brother, Ben Gann Jr., whose name is listed on the OCS Veterans Wall of Fame. Ben was included to acknowledge his military service just after WWII.

Dot's father was a disabled WWI U.S. Marine Sgt. Her parents moved from Maryland to South Onondaga in 1929 or '30. After Dot and Ben Jr. each married and moved on, their parents continued to live in South Onondaga until 1962 when they moved to California where Ben Jr. was living.

Now, you might be wondering why this particular alumna of our beloved O.C.S. is being written about here. Does anyone recognize the name? Do any of you remember her from your days here?

Throughout my life, Stan, being one of our dad's best friends, has always been around. Stan and his wife Dottie, and their family have been included in many of our families' events as we grew up. I have heard the stories of Stan and Dottie's younger years, where she lived and went to school (O.C.S.), and how they met. Their son Wes and I are still friends today and we still manage to keep in touch occasionally.

Well, Dot was involved in many things during her time at O.C.S., but the reason for my writing this is that she wrote something kind of important to us, too. You see, Dottie wrote the words that inspired the name of this newsletter. That's right, Dorothy "Dottie" Gann, (1932 - 2006), O.C.S. Class of 1950, wrote our Onondaga Central Alma Mater when she was here. "Now", as Paul Harvey used to say, "you know the rest of the story," and I sincerely hope we will all take a second to remember her kindred Spirit whenever we sing those verses in the future.

Note: Stan North had been one of my dad's best friends since they were

kids. A few years ago, Stan heard that we were looking for information about the composer of our OCS Alma Mater, his late wife Dorothy. After a

*Alma Mater*  
Dorothy Gann '50 William Peters

In this wide and open wall of sky She stands  
beau-ti-ful to see. The sun can't see her, should you  
gai-ly We will strive to overcome, carry  
on - ward through the years Goals reached by their be-fore us, Reached by  
sun's re-vels, stars, moon - ly you came join the cheer us, Join with us and cheer-ly  
sing of our dear old On-on-da-ga. Make the joy-ful ech-o-es ring.

little cajoling, he offered to fill us in with this brief insight into her life - the life of a 'kind-of-famous' OCS Alumna from the Class of 1950.

Stan passed away June 17, 2014, at his home in Penn., but before he left us, he helped shed some new light on a misplaced piece of our heritage. Thank you very much, Stan, from all the rest of the OCS Alumni, and thank you Dottie. May you both rest in peace.

# OCSEF UPDATE

## GOLFERS NEEDED!

Save the date - June 30, 2017. The annual OCSEF Golf Tournament will start at noon. Sign up as individuals or foursomes, or sponsor a hole if you cannot attend. Details can be found on the OCSEF webpage: <http://www.ocs.cnyric.org/community.cfm?subpage=40046>



## NEW ARRIVALS

Kayla Evans (Hourigan), class of 2011, and husband Todd welcomed two new additions in 2016. Lane was born January 22, 2016 and Julia was born on December 28, 2016. Congratulations!

## ANNUAL FUND DRIVE

The OCSEF will replace the annual phone-a-thon with a fund drive mailer this year. This will be your opportunity to donate to the OCSEF Endowment Fund or one of the many named funds in support of scholarships for graduating seniors. We will reach out to all OCS alumni and friends in the Alumni Database. The OCSEF can also accept donations through their PayPal account. The donation button can be found on the OCSEF Web Page.

## SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

The OCSEF manages multiple funds, including the OCSEF general endowment fund, to use for scholarships for graduating seniors. In 2016 a total of \$27,700 was awarded to 24 seniors, as outlined in the following table:

FUND NAME	NO. OF SCHOLARSHIPS	TOTAL AWARDED
OCSEF General Endowment Fund	9	\$9,000
Howe Memorial	2	\$600
Anne June Lohff	1	\$350
Brian D. Carpenter	1	\$1,000
Carolyn Cameron Carter	1	\$500
Dr. Bernard Finlay	2	\$5,000
Keehfus Family Foundation	4	\$7,000
Len Fellows	1	\$500
Moore/Powlesland	1	\$2,750
OCS Class of 1965	1	\$500
Marilyn & David Dominick	1	\$500

## TILE-BY-TILE PROGRAM

The OCSEF Tile-by-Tile program is a wonderful way to honor someone on the walls of the high school. Tiles are installed on the walls leading to the high school gymnasium honoring individuals or groups. Information and order form can be found on the OCSEF Web Page.



CLASS OF '86

The Class of 1986 had its 30th reunion on October 14-15. Over 30 classmates attended the various events on homecoming weekend.

## REUNIONS

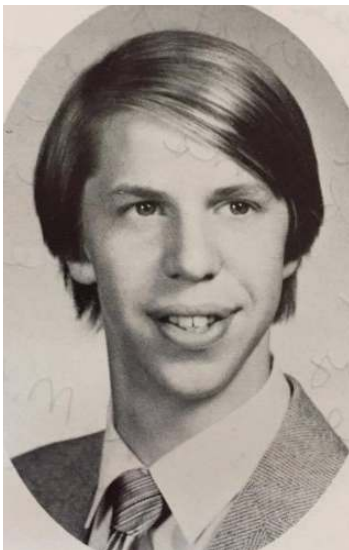
The class of 1972 45th reunion dinner will be at Barbagallo's

## COMMENCEMENT

The class of 2017 commencement ceremony will be held on Sunday, June 25 at 1:00 pm. Following OCS tradition, the ceremony will be held on the front lawn of the school (weather permitting), and the community is welcome to attend.

in East Syracuse on Saturday, July 22, 2017 from 6pm-10pm. A Friday night meet-and-greet and a golf outing are also being planned. All friends of the Class

of '72 are invited to attend as well. For further details, please contact Sandy Rienhardt Lynch at: SRLynch@aol.com.



## PETER EDWARD HOWE

Peter Howe, Class of 1972, of North Syracuse went to be with the Lord on Friday, December 23, 2016 at the age of 62. He is survived by his wife of 39 years, Joanne Porto Howe; four children, seven grandchildren, and six brothers and sisters.

# OBITUARIES

Peter was raised on Onondaga Hill, and volunteered for the US Army after early OCS graduation in 1972. Peter worked at Miller Brewing Company in Fulton, earned a Bachelor's degree from SUNY Regents College an MS in management from SUNY Oswego, then his Ph.D in Economics at Syracuse University in 2003. He went on to become a professor at Cazenovia College, SUNY Oswego and Syracuse University. His classmates remember him fondly:

*"Peter was always outgoing, funny and quick-witted. He made the morning announcements memorable. The last time I saw him we had such a great conversation and laughed our heads off."*

- Marlene Ouder Kirk

*"Our lockers were next to one another throughout high school. We were close, good friends. He brought out the fun side in anyone he knew. We wrote a fake bulletin together with Willard Rusch, just to get out of a social studies class. Our teacher didn't let us go. Peter voiced the "weather effects" of a weather forecast we announced every morning on the intercom. John Behm and myself were the announcers, with Peter in the background. Unfortunately, the forecast lasted only one week. Peter decided it would be fun to throw some other "effects" into the Friday forecast. The forecast was*

*canceled for the remainder of the school year. When he left for the service, he would call me occasionally. I know we will miss him at our class reunion. I have wonderful memories of Peter, and our friendship."*

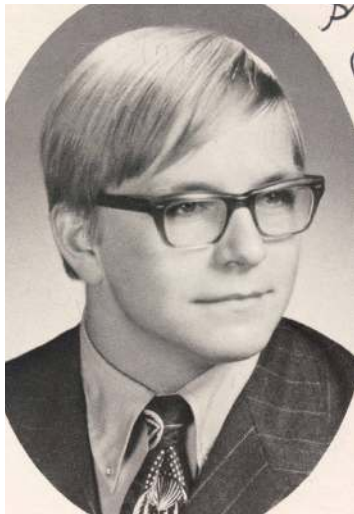
- Mary Ryan

*"Peter, I remember you as a motor-mouth. Very smart, very witty, very intelligent. Always wanting to talk about everything and anything. You always enlightened me. You had such a wonderful smile; that is the one thing I will remember about you."*

- Linda Kompf Schoonmaker

# OBITUARIES

CONTINUED  
FROM P7



## ROBERT F. "BUGSY" BUGNASKI

Robert Bugnaski, OCS class of 1972, passed away on December 25, 2016 at the age of 63. He was born

December 18, 1953 in Fort Rucker, Alabama. He retired after 38 years of service from Van Duyn Hospital and Home in Syracuse as the power plant supervisor. Bugsy enjoyed a variety of interests over the years including bass fishing, car racing, bowling, and especially golf and skiing. He was a member of three ski clubs including the Syracuse Ski Hawks. He was also a volunteer with the Adirondack Scenic Railroad.

Robert's classmates share their memories with him:

*"I remember watching his mother at wrestling matches, yelling and pounding the mat, as Bob wrestled."*

- Mary Ryan

*"Bugsy was a down-to-earth Nedrow guy. If he was your friend, it was forever. I saw him two years ago and it was as if we had just graduated from high school. The conversation just picked up where we left off."*

- Marlene Ouderkirk

*"Bugsy, after high school we all tend to go our separate ways. I will remember the parties that we went to, the joking, the drinking and the laughs. You were always such a joker but sincere too. Will miss you."*

- Linda Kompf Schoonmaker

## DORLYN "DOR" F. BAILER

Dorlyn Bailer, longtime member and president of the OCS School Board, passed away on May 21, 2016 at the age of 94. Dor was predeceased by Betty Lou (Seely) Bailer, his wife of 64 years. Dor is survived by his two sons, William D. and Thomas J.; Thomas's wife Susan Petty-Bailer; and Tom and Susan's three children, Lauren, Andrew, and Kathryn.

Dor operated farms in Navarino for 50 years. He was a charter and life member of the Navarino Volunteer Fire Department and a member of both the Onondaga County Extension Service and the Farm Bureau.

Dor and Betty raised their family on Bailer Road in Navarino and retired to Country Village in Bradenton, Florida in 2000.

# REQUEST FOR SUBMISSIONS & INFO

This newsletter is a product resulting from submissions made by our alumni. Please send us your stories and news! Do you have a favorite memory? An interesting story idea? Or an alumni announcement - wedding, birth, obituary - you would like to share?

For submissions of news, ideas and/or stories, please contact the OCSEF Alumni Coordinator at [ocsalum34@gmail.com](mailto:ocsalum34@gmail.com), or send to:

**OCSEF Alumni Coordinator**  
2598 Kamm Road  
Marietta, New York 13110

The OCSEF has established an Alumni Database. It contains contact information of OCS alumni, community members and current and former staff members. If you know of someone who would like to receive future issues of Joyful Echoes and other alumni-related

communications, please forward the Alumni Data Form to him or her. You can find it on the OCSEF Web Page.