



Vol. XLI, No. 3  
Fall 2020

# C of E NEWS

## REBUILDING

Much has already been accomplished in putting together the rescheduled October “Red, White and You” reunion in Emporia. The new dates are October 8, 9 and 10, 2021. A registration form will appear in our next newsletter, coming early in 2021.

Friday starts out with the golf outing and reunion registration. The Friday evening dinner will be held at the Granada Theater. Also, tickets will be sold for a raffle for an extraordinary C of E quilt donated by **Kent Craft, A68**, and his wife, Marcia.

**Chris Lovett, A70**, has successfully rescheduled the “Haunted Emporia” bus tour, arranged through Emporia Main Street. Classes are currently rescheduling the highly anticipated class luncheons. **Jim Mathis, A61**, is already finalizing details for an E Club meeting that will include recognitions, reminiscences and some special guests.

Reunion Committee Chair, **Mary Jayne (Barnes) Gamble, A70**, is very pleased to announce that the Saturday evening dinner, scheduled to be held at the new Lyon County History Center (LCHC), has been successfully rescheduled to take place on Saturday night. At that time, they will unveil their largest C of E exhibit ever. This major exhibit will remain open to the public after our reunion.

The 2021 Emporia reunion promises to be outstanding. Plan now to be there.

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## Loyal to the End

When C of E closed its doors forever at the end of 1973, 7 administrators and 37 faculty were employed there. Three of the faculty members had just been hired the preceding summer. All of these individuals were owed pay as the college had been unable to pay its employees in its last days. Nevertheless, these individuals hung in until the very end.

Most of these individuals were not new employees. Many were longtime C of E employees who had contributed greatly to all of the college's many

accomplishments. The longest tenured faculty member was **Mariette Simpson**, who came to the C of E music department in the fall of 1946 with a brand-new MS Degree from the Juilliard School of Music. She was herself an accomplished musician who was hired to teach violin, strings and music theory. Miss Simpson's 28 years at C of E were years of many notable accomplishments in music, and she played key roles in them.

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# Dancing With the Sun

**Jack Rickard, A57, Willie Gaines, A56, Norman Smith, A56 and Lloyd Elm, X57** teamed together at the KU Relays in 1955 to set an NAIA record in the sprint medley relay. Subsequently, Elm received a PhD from Penn State University and embarked upon a successful and innovative career in education. In addition, he served as Chief of the Onondaga Indian Nation.

Rickard retained many of his C of E college friendships. His career involved teaching and writing. He developed a growing interest, fueled by his friendship with Elm, in Native American culture. Ultimately, Jack was able to join Lloyd and other Native Americans at the annual ritual of the Sun Dance, a ceremony that was given to the people of the northern plains so far in the past there are no written records.

From those Sun Dances came a book, *Dancing With the Sun*, the third book in the Great Plains Trilogy. The

first two books, reviewed in this newsletter's previous edition, focus primarily on growing up in the small town of Kingman, KS. This volume, set primarily in North Dakota, is a series of vignettes about the people and places associated with this time-honored ceremony.

This book, described as "prose poetry," has a story on every page. It is divided into five sections which connect with not only the actual dance but also the sweat lodges, the history of the tribes, connections with the American landscape, the bonds between the dancers and the ancient beliefs of those who gather for this ceremony. Moreover, in the context of this book, it speaks to the strength of friendships formed at C of E and to the wide variety of roles our graduates have taken in their lives.

**This book is recommended.** It is available on Amazon and at other booksellers.

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## Dr. Bijjani

*Editor's note: As a brand-new student at C of E on my first day of classes, my Geology professor had his name written on the blackboard. He told us that we could remember his name by thinking of him as "The Uncanny Dr. Bijjani." It worked since I can still remember this phrase sixty years later.*

*Dr. Bijjani arrived at C of E in the fall of 1957. He died unexpectedly during the 1967-'68 school year at age 60. The 1968 Alla Rah ran a full two-page tribute to Dr. Bijjani, with one full page photograph and a tribute on the facing page. That article is presented here.*

**"Dr. George Y. Bijjani, FF,** was head of the Biology Department for the past nine years. During his stay, he greatly expanded the department with new courses and concepts of biological thought.

Dr. Bijjani was born on May 10, 1907 in Kahale, Lebanon. He attended the Gerard Institute, a Presbyterian mission high school in Sidon, Lebanon. After graduation from high school, he attended the American University in Beirut for a year. He then transferred to Alma College in Michigan where he received his B. A. degree in 1934. His M. S. and Doctor of Philosophy degrees were awarded from the University of Illinois. Before coming to C of E, Dr. Bijjani taught in Amman, Jordan, American University of Beirut, University of Dubuque, Iowa, Monticello College, Illinois, and Westminster College, Pennsylvania. In addition to being a Professor of Biology, Dr. Bijjani was, also, a Presbyterian minister and for the past ten years has

been pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Howard, Kansas.

On June 26, 1940 he married Anabel Clark. They teamed up together both as husband and wife and as educators at C of E. Dr. Bijjani's influence on the students could be seen on Fridays when every student enrolled in a biology class dressed up. Dr. Bijjani taught a wide variety of courses with a vigor that could not be compared. Doctor and Mrs. Bijjani split the courses between them with 'the Doc' taking the heavier load. He taught Bacteriology, Histology, Basic Principles of Biology, Comparative Anatomy, Embryology and Human Anatomy and Physiology. His favorite courses were Genetics and Entomology.

C of E suffered a great loss with the death of Dr. Bijjani. Not only was a great person lost, but also one of C of E's greatest educators."

*Editor's Note: Anabel Bijjani continued to teach at C of E until the school closed its doors forever in the middle of the 1973-'74 school year.*

## Keep Us Informed

Please send us news about yourself. We want to hear from you. E-mail John Acomb, newsletter editor, at [jacomb2@mac.com](mailto:jacomb2@mac.com) or Les Palmer at [lepalmer@aol.com](mailto:lepalmer@aol.com). If you prefer, please write us at P. O. Box 405, Emporia, KS 66801-0405.



## ZOOM

Your alumni association board held its first-ever virtual meeting on July 18. Zoom was used, and the result was a largely coherent and productive meeting.

We learned that **Linda (Sadler) Myers, X62**, is continuing to investigate the possibility of having a C of E flag available for sale at the 2021 reunion. There is no definite information as yet. We also learned from Treasurer **Cecil Lane, A71**, that your alumni association has \$85,694.04 in current assets. \$16,122 came in 2019 as dues or scholarship donations.

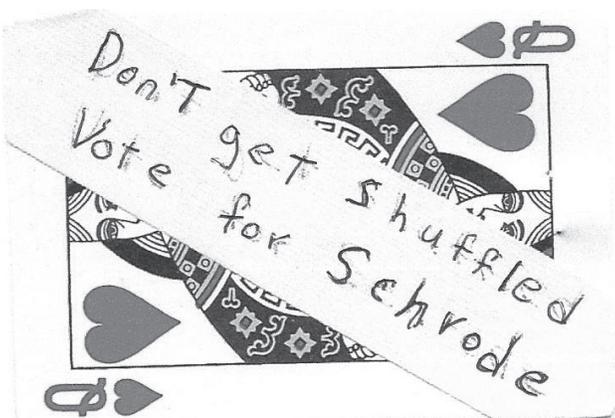
**Joanna (Mutchler) Brooks, A71**, had an interesting report on our website c-of-e.org. We continue to get strong traffic as both new and repeat visitors come to our website. A look at a

breakdown of visits to individual components of the website shows that the most visited is the Athletic Hall of Fame. The second most visited is the Campus Tour, which is followed by the Scholarships section.

There was, of course, much other information offered at the meeting. This appears in this newsletter in articles about the 2021 reunion, scholarships awarded and also on the election ballot.

Your board meets twice a year, in January and July. Whether or not we meet again virtually in January will, of course, depend on the nation's situation with the pandemic at that time. We now know that, if required, we can Zoom.

It's always fun to see our informal alumni networks in action. After **Pat (Riegel) Porter, A59**, passed away, her son passed along her box of C of E memorabilia to **Jean (Johnson) Gilmore, A59**. Among the artifacts in the box was a playing card with a slogan pasted over it saying, "Don't get shuffled. Vote for Schrode." These playing cards, along with sticks of chewing gum labeled, "Stick with Schrode," were handouts utilized at C of E on behalf of **Don Schroeder, A57**, who was a candidate for Student Council. Don lost his bid for office to **Roger Rickard, A58**.



**Maxine (White) Mitchell, A54**, writes that the 1950 performances of "The Devil and Daniel Webster," chronicled in the previous issue of this newsletter, were not the only performances done

of this folk opera. It was done again in 1954 with **Jack Mitchell, A59, FF**, cast in the role of Scratch, the Devil. Jack was in need of a vocal coach, and music major Maxine was given this role. The coaching apparently went very well, and Jack and Maxine were married in 1955. Music **Professor John Lewis, FF**, subsequently liked to take credit for this union.

**Jim Mathis, A61**, was recently pictured in the Leavenworth Times taking a drink of water from a very large container. Jim was taking a break from playing tennis on an afternoon when temperatures hit 99 degrees. *Editor's Comment: 99 degrees! Playing tennis??? Holy Cow!*

**Jeff Bartner, A73**, and **Cathy (Jacobson) Bartner, A74**, were married in 1974. They moved to Lake Jackson, TX when Jeff took a position with the Dow Chemical Company in 1975 after he earned his MS Degree at Kansas State University. In 1989 they relocated to Midland, MI, where Jeff continued to work for Dow. Jeff retired in 2015 after 40 years with Dow, and Jeff and Cathy now spend much of their time RV-ing around the US. They report that they've been spending winters in the Tucson area but will take weeks or months getting there and back to their home base in Michigan. They've seen some incredible sights.

**Rosemary (Siemers) Wilson, X46**, of Boerne, TX, passed away February 26, 2020 at age 97. She worked for many years as an accountant. Three children, seven grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren survive her. Her husband and two siblings predeceased her.

**George Crocker, A49, FF**, of Emporia died July 21, 2020 at age 97. He was a WWII U.S. Navy veteran who received many awards for his service, including the Distinguished Flying Cross. He taught and directed plays in his position as Associate Professor of Art and Drama at C of E. He had a similar role at the University of Miami (Fla.). Also, at various times in his busy life, George directed live theatre in Grand Rapids, MI, Sarasota, FL, Olpe, KS and Hollywood, CA, where he lived for 20 years where he devoted most of his time to script writing. After retiring to Emporia, he created the luminous paintings inside of the restored Granada Theater. George is also a published author whose recently completed novel is titled 1919. He is survived by two daughters and a grandson. His wife and another daughter predeceased him.

**John "Jack" Rongish, X51**, of Wichita, KS died November 19, 2018 at age 91. He was a retired Boeing Procurement Specialist. He is survived by his wife, **Laura (Clark) Rongish, X50**, three sons, nine grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Two brothers and a son predeceased him.

**Charlie Dehlinger, A55**, of Eureka, KS died on February 1, 2020 at age 86. His basketball prowess at C of E included being named All-Conference for all four of his years and induction into both the NAIA and the C of E Athletic Halls of Fame. In the 1952-'53 season Charlie's 28.6 points per game (ppg) established a new Kansas collegiate scoring record, which was broken four years later by Wilt Chamberlin's 29.6 ppg. After C of E Charlie served in the US Army and then played for the Wichita Vickers of the National Industrial Basketball League (NIBL). Subsequently, he married and began a career teaching and coaching for over thirty years at Eureka High School. His wife, three children, seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren survive him. Two sisters predeceased him.

**Jim Elliott, X57**, of Phoenix, AZ passed away November 22, 2019 at age 83. After leaving C of E, he graduated from Kansas State and earned his master's degree in mechanical engineering from the Illinois Institute of Technology. He worked as a systems engineer for Honeywell, General Electric and Inland Steel. He is survived by five children, nine grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

His wife of 63 years, **Lois (Force) Elliott, X56**, predeceased him.

**Gary Kufahl, A58**, of Overland Park, KS passed away on April 21, 2020 at age 83. At C of E he served as Senior Class President. After graduation he worked for many years as a mortgage banker with the Charles F. Curry Mortgage Company and the Home Savings Association, both in Kansas City, MO. His wife, **LaVerna (Hayes) Kufahl, A58**, a son and a granddaughter survive him. A daughter and two siblings predeceased him.

**Penelope "Penny" Williams, A60**, of Lincoln, NE died May 22, 2014 at age 75.

**David R. Young, A62**, of Omaha, NE passed away April 7, 2020 at age 80. At C of E he was very active in music organizations, serving as President of the college's chapter of national professional music fraternity Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia. In his lighter moments he often played "Shower Hose Taps" at post-game "Funerals." After earning a Master's degree from Wichita State, he served as band director at five high schools in a career that spanned 46 years. His bands, winners of countless awards, performed many places, including at the re-dedication of the Statue of Liberty, Walt Disney World and the Red River Exhibition in Winnipeg, Canada. He received many awards and served as president of the Nebraska State Bandmasters Association. He is survived by his wife, daughter, stepdaughter, two grandsons and his first wife **Janice (Walker) Young, A63**. A son predeceased him.

**John Geissert, A62**, of Clifton, CO passed away May 27, 2020 at age 85. Before attending C of E, he served in the US Marine Corps and then spent two years at junior college. After graduation he accepted a position to teach and coach at Palisade High School in Colorado and earned a M.A. from Western State College (CO). He stayed for 21 years and then switched careers and worked for the U.S. Postal service until retirement. Seven siblings predeceased him and one sister survives him.

**Lois E. Sarrel, X67**, of Shorewood, WI died August 23, 2019 at age 73. Until retirement, she worked for the University of Wisconsin system,

**Christine (Steele) Messenger, X73**, of Albuquerque, NM passed away May 8, 2018 at age 67. She completed her degree at the University of New Mexico, earned an MBA in accounting there and spent the rest of her life in New Mexico. She is survived by two sons, four grandchildren and ex-husband **Alan Messenger, A72**.

## Sterling Opportunity

Another less discussed scholarship opportunity for descendants of C of E alumni can be found at Sterling College, a liberal arts college located in Sterling, Kansas. Two scholarships, each worth \$1,000 were awarded for the 2020-'21 academic year to eligible Sterling students. The principal currently in this scholarship fund is \$48,323.

Sterling was founded in 1887 by the Synod of Kansas of the United Presbyterian Church of North America. When the Presbyterian Church (USA) came into existence in 1958, the newly formed Presbyterian Synod of Kansas considered combining Sterling and C of E. This idea was subsequently abandoned.

Today Sterling describes itself as "a Christ-centered, four-year college ... with a mission to develop creative and thoughtful leaders who understand a maturing Christian faith." 704 students are enrolled there.



The brass plaque attached to a boulder on the shores of Lake Mergendahl was a 1996 gift from your alumni association. Unfortunately, the plaque was removed from the stone and stolen in 2018. The thieves were never caught, but we are delighted to announce that this new plaque was recently put in place.

## C of E SCHOLARSHIP FUND

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ALUMNI: \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS OF: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
TOTAL GIFT PLEDGED PAYMENT ENCLOSED BALANCE

BALANCE TO BE PAID AS FOLLOWS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO "C OF E SCHOLARSHIP FUND"  
MAIL TO: P.O. BOX 405, EMPORIA, KS 66801-0405

## COVER: Loyal to the End

Another early arrival was **Helen Eppink**, who arrived as an Instructor in Art in the fall of 1945. Her tenure was not, however, uninterrupted. She stayed for two years and then left. She returned, presumably with a graduate degree in the fall of 1949 as a part of the art faculty. She then left after only one year but returned again in the fall of 1962 as Associate Professor of Art. She then remained as a member of the faculty until the college closed.

Another longtime C of E employee who remained to the end was **Dr. Stafford Studer**, Dean of the College. He arrived in the fall of 1956 and was a

key part of the administration team throughout his tenure.

Other faculty or administrators who had more than ten years of service at the closing were: **Anabel Bijjani, Fran Broadhurst, Jeanne Butcher, Victoria Daily, Genevieve Johnson, Roger Johnson, Frank Malambri, Marvin McCracken John "Jack" Mitchell, Max Pickerill, Pauline Spencer and Edmund "Ed" Shupe.**

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## Scholarships Awarded

Four scholarships for \$2,000 each were awarded by your alumni association for the 2020-'21 academic year. The options for the application process were expanded this year to include an on-line application process that can be accessed through the association's website c-of-e.org. In addition, the mail-in paper application remains an available option.

Interestingly enough, all four of this year's scholarship recipients are planning careers in some aspect of healthcare. Alicia Taylor of Platte, MO plans to attend Kansas State with the goal of becoming a physician assistant. Morgan Taylor of Olathe, KS will be attending St. Luke's College of Health Sciences Nursing School in Kansas City, MO.

The other two recipients are already in college, but they haven't finished. Madison Dehlinger

of Eureka, KS will finish her BA Degree at Northwestern Oklahoma State University this fall and will then continue for a Master's Degree and an Occupational Therapy license. Jake Jardon of Lansing, KS is attending Kansas University, majoring in biochemistry. He will go on to medical school with the career goal of becoming a cardiologist.

Descendants of former C of E students, faculty or staff are eligible to apply, and we hope to see many applications. These scholarships are awarded annually. While the next group of applications are not due until April 1, 2021, those interested in applying are urged to download these forms now in order to identify and to begin to get together the required information.

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## End of Year

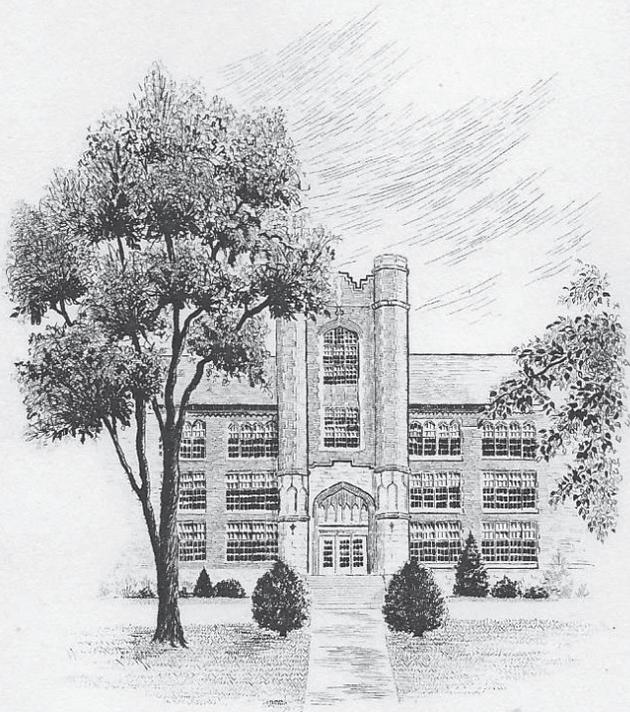
Before we know it, 2020 will be over. It has mostly not been a wonderful year, and we probably won't miss it very much. 2021 will be much better, culminated by our wonderful 2021 Reunion in Emporia.

Before the end of this year, we should want to be sure to get our tax-deductible giving in order. Have you made your 2020 contribution to the C of E Alumni Association Scholarship Fund? We are a 501(c)(3) tax-deductible organization. Our scholarship fund, which pays tuition for descendants of former C of E students, faculty and

staff, is our legacy as alumni. This fund is intended to go on well after our association has ended. Please consider an extra generous donation this year. We appreciate your support.

To donate, simply use the Scholarship Donation Form found elsewhere in this newsletter. If you prefer, you can simply use the membership renewal form found at the bottom of page 7. You can then renew your membership and donate all at the same time.

# College of Emporia



This print was the cover for graduation announcements sent out by members of the Class of 1957.

## Membership Information for the College of Emporia Alumni Association, Inc.

Please write legibly. Make checks payable to the C. of E. Alumni Association.

Last Name                      First Name                      Middle Initial                      Maiden Name                      \*C. of E. Class

Spouse's Info                      Spouse's First Name                      Middle Initial                      Maiden Name                      \*C. of E. Class

Street/Mailing Address                      City                      State                      ZIP + 4

Phone #                      E-mail

\*C. of E. Class is the graduation year of the class with which students were associated, whether or not they graduated. Please use prefix "A" for alumnus, or "X" for former student or non graduate. "O" here means did not attend.

Membership dues (\$15 per year per member): Number of memberships: \_\_\_\_\_ For Years \_\_\_\_\_

Total for Membership \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Scholarship Fund (Voluntary) \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to:**  
C of E Alumni Association, P.O. Box 405, Emporia, KS 66801-0405



College of Emporia Alumni Association  
P.O. Box 405  
Emporia, KS 66801-0405

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Return Service Requested

## Ballot

The following have agreed to serve on the C of E Alumni Association Board of Directors. Please vote for no more than five (5) for the three-year term ending in 2023. You may write in your name or the name of another C of E Alumni Association member who would be interested and able to fulfill the duties of a board member, which include attendance at two meetings per year, which are held in Emporia in January and July.

**Carolyn (Cruikshank) Day, A60**

**Ray Sager, A65**

**Chris Lovett, A70**

**Norman Tice, X61**

**Jim Mathis, A61**

Write-in\_\_\_\_\_

Mail ballots, postmarked no later than November 9, 2020, to: C of E Alumni Association, P.O. Box 405, Emporia, KS 66801-0405. You are encouraged to include dues and/or a scholarship donation with your ballot, utilizing the form printed on the back of your ballot. Another option is to e-mail your ballot to Les Palmer at [lepalmer@aol.com](mailto:lepalmer@aol.com). Also, as was done last year, easy-to-use e-mail ballots will be sent to our "Shout-Out" e-mail list.

Deadline for all e-mail ballots is November 9.

**c-of-e.org**

