

Nancy Eichelsdorfer

Villa Maria Academy

President's Hall of Fame



Daughter of Francis and Tillie Hinds, Nancy was born October 8, 1941. She and younger brother, Tim, grew up in Oil City. Living on the third floor of the building that housed St. Stephen School, Nancy simply walked down the stairs for her grade school education. The Benedictine Sisters taught in the school, and she says, "It was their influence and dedication that made me think about a career in teaching."

Nancy attended St. Joseph High School and was a member of the debate team, taught CCD, and loved languages. She graduated in 1959 with 50 classmates; most of whom still have reunions and birthday celebrations.

She went to Villa Maria College to be part of the "Cadet Program." Teaching two full years, attending college two years and five summers, she graduated debt free. In her junior year, she met her future husband, Dave. They graduated in 1963, became engaged, and were married at St. Stephen's Church in June of 1964.

In 1970, Nancy was working on a graduate degree in Sociology/Anthropology, and their first daughter, Kathleen, was born. In 1975, their second daughter, Susan, was born. In 1978, when Kathleen was in second grade, it was discovered that she had a brain tumor. In fourth grade, she passed away and her entire class, in uniform, attended her funeral.

After grad school, Dave began teaching at Gannon, and Nancy was able to take classes and not pay tuition. She was a full-time student for three years, which included taking two courses from her husband. She graduated in 1984 with a Business/Computer Science degree. She was an adjunct at Gannon and Mercyhurst, then taught employees at Hammermill. After Hammermill was sold, she taught at Mercyhurst College for 16 years. She strongly believes in constant, continuous learning, stating "I stressed to my students that their education did not end when they graduated; that was just the beginning of their learning."

An important part of Nancy's life is her daughter, Susan and son-in-law, Jeff. Susan is Director of Sales in Jeff's business. From them, Nancy learned about 'cowboys 'n Indians' - the Dallas Cowboys and Cleveland Indians! Nancy and Dave have traveled with them and enjoy working on major meals together.

Nancy did not attend Villa but has deep ties to both Prep and Villa. Dave, Prep grad of '58, organizes monthly lunches for his "Prep Lunch Bunch." They've hosted so many dinners with spouses and helped with reunions, that they made Nancy an honorary member of the Class of 1958 at their 50th reunion. Their daughter, Susan, graduated from Villa in 1993 and Nancy and Dave hosted two exchange students who attended Prep and Villa. Nancy sat on the Villa Board then after the Prep/Villa merger, she remained on the Board and has served for the past fifteen years. She continues to be so supportive because she says, "Having taught in elementary schools, colleges, and universities and having graduated three times in the 60's, 70's and 80's, I absolutely value education and see Prep and Villa students receiving excellent educations."

Although retired from teaching, Nancy never stops being involved: two book clubs, one of which is The Ladies Literary Club of Erie, which has met for over 30 years, an Investment Club for twenty years, and serves on the Parkinson Partners Board for ten years, learning from many lectures and taking art classes.

Thank you, Nancy, for your commitment to Villa Maria Academy. Congratulations on your induction into the prestigious Villa Maria Academy's President's Hall of Fame.