



## Holy Family Seminary's Alumni Newsletter 2022

Annual Newsletter #12: August 2022 ● Ed Koeninger, Jr.: Alumni Director ● Maurice Prater: Editor  
 Missionaries of the Holy Family (MSF) ● 3014 Oregon Avenue, Saint Louis, MO 63118  
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### 2500 ASHBY ROAD: PAST TO PRESENT

by Weldon Ticken — Class of 1957

The history of the old seminary property has been written about in several articles by Sandy Jackson who is associated with the Overland Historical Society. They were *Wildwood*, *Home of Charles D. Garnett* and *Louis A. Cella*, *Racetrack and Saloon Owner*.

The property at Ashby Road, home of the former seminary of the Missionaries of the Holy Family, was one time under French, then Spanish, and later part of the Louisiana Purchase. (See the next page for a territory map of the Louisiana Purchase.)



In the 1770s, Louis Hessoun Honore, Sr. received a Spanish land grant of 272 acres. Louis and his wife Magdalene Paterson had eight children, five sons and three daughters. Mr. Honore later gave each of his sons a portion of this land, which passed on through the families and some of their friends.

The land at this address was part of Survey 1902, and the 31.50 acres was never developed until 1903. Then Charles D. Garnett, a paper manufacturer, bought the land. He built a house in 1906 which consisted of wood framing. In 1907, the house caught fire and burnt to the ground.

In 1908, Mr. Garnett built a mansion on the same foundation using mainly concrete, brick, and a red tile roof. He named the mansion *Wildwood*. A carriage house was also built on the property. Shortly after the mansion was built, his business ventures fell apart, and his wife divorced him. In 1909, Mr. Garnett sold the estate to Louis A. Cella.

Louis A. Cella was married to Agnes Johnson in 1900. Mr. Cella was already a rich man at this time, and he had many real estate interests. He opened a saloon in downtown Saint Louis and this led to gambling, along with his other interests such as horseracing. Rumors were that the carriage house on Ashby Road also involved gambling. However, this was never mentioned in any of the articles. If there was gambling on the property, he probably knew beforehand of any raids by the police because of his "connections."

In April 1918, Mr. Cella was hospitalized with a case of typhoid fever and died later that month on April 29. One of his wife's relatives, Mary Flynn, was awarded the property, and she sold it to Mr. Frank Lind in 1921.

Continued on next page »





Weldon and wife Marge: March 1, 1980.

Frank Lind and his wife Della lived in the mansion until his death on February 5, 1939. In 1944, Della and her heirs sold the property to the Missionaries of the Holy Family. A chapel and annex were added to the mansion, and this was completed in November 1954. Other buildings were added over the years.

In 1994, the property was sold because vocations to the priesthood were declining and the upkeep for the property was too expensive. Mission Omega bought the buildings, and in 1995, the City of Overland, Missouri bought the remaining property for a park and named it Wild Acres Park. Mission Omega later sold the buildings to the city to be incorporated into the park as well.

Based on the history of the property, some have speculated that there might be a secret passage between the main house and the carriage house. The other theory discussed was a secret passage from the second floor of the carriage house to downstairs, and a passage away from the building into the woods. So, if they were gambling during the reign of Mr. Louis A. Cella, and the police were coming, it could be a way to escape quickly. But who knows? The mystery remains to this day. **+JMJ+**

We would like to hear about your time at Holy Family Seminary! If you would like to write an article for the alumni newsletter, please contact Ed Koeninger at [ejrkoen@att.net](mailto:ejrkoen@att.net).



Bureau of Land Management: National Archives and Records Administration, public domain image.

## Letter to the Editor

by "Anonymous Alumnus"

Dear Editor:

I just wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed the article by Mike O'Neal in the 2021 Alumni Newsletter. It sure brought back some great memories! I was a classmate of Mike's, and he had the advantage of coming to Ashby Road as a freshman, and I came as a sophomore. It took a little while for me to be accepted in the group, since I was a new outsider, but eventually I became one of the gang. As a classmate of Mike's, I can attest to the fervor he showed when trying to find that *SECRET PASSAGE*; he left no stone unturned and checked everywhere possible. Mike, thanks for those special memories!

If you every see Mike or run into him, ask him about the rocket he and Pat Goddard built, and the night that it blew up on the parking lot, in between study halls. It is a classic!

+JMJ+



### *Eternal Rest Grant unto Them, O Lord*

Our alumni archivist, Weldon Tieken, has discovered, through *Ancestry.com*, that the following alumni have passed away:

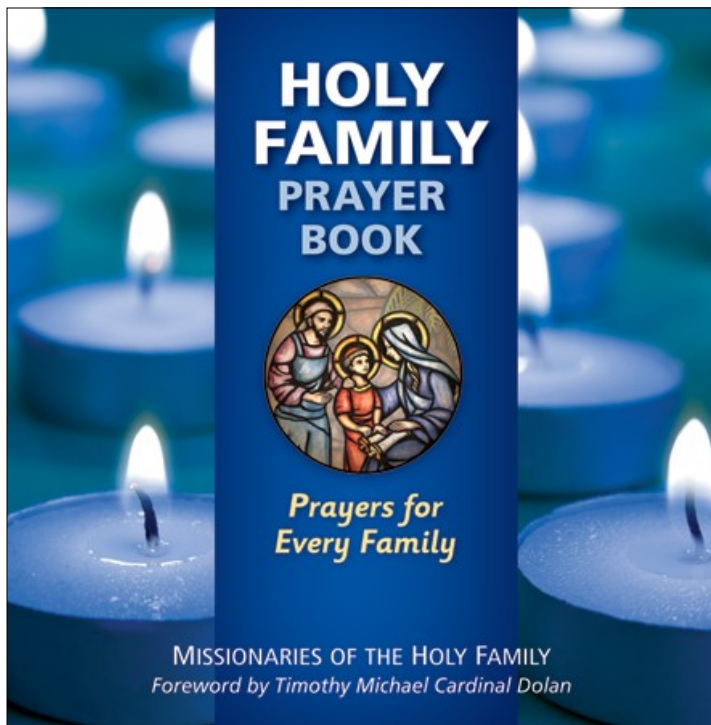
- James Boyer, Class of 1964, died on April 12, 2020.
- William Brannon, Class of 1960, died on November 25, 1988.
- James Falk, Class of 1970, died on February 14, 2015.
- George Fowler, Class of 1958, died on April 1, 1960.
- Douglas Hornberger (Class of 1968) died on December 2, 2015.
- Lawrence Klein (Class of 1975) died on January 25, 2020.
- Juan Martinez (Class of 1958) died on September 19, 1996.
- Michael Rockwell (Class of 1964) died on September 9, 2021.

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen. May their souls, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*

+JMJ+







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**God bless your family!**

“HOLY FAMILY OF NAZARETH, make our family one with you. Help us to be instruments of peace. Grant that love, strengthened by grace, may prove mightier than all the weaknesses and trials through which our families sometimes pass...”

— From the *Holy Family Prayer*

## THE MESSENGER MAGAZINE

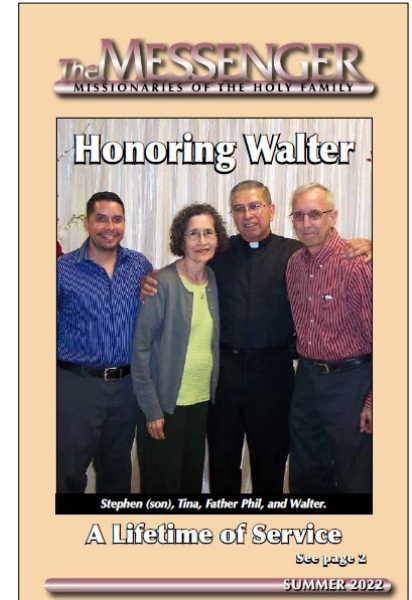
The Summer 2022 issue of *The Messenger* magazine from the Missionaries of the Holy Family is now available online at [www.msf-america.org](http://www.msf-america.org).

Are you receiving the printed version of *The Messenger* at your home? If not, be sure to let us know! Free, extra copies for your family and friends are also available from the provincial office in Saint Louis. Call toll free at 1-888-484-9945 or e-mail [mprater@msf-america.org](mailto:mprater@msf-america.org).

Please be sure to check out the many family life articles, including:

- When Walter met Tina
- Joys of Family Life (focus on siblings)
- Legend of the Secret Passage
- Please Come Home!

**Happy Reading! +JMJ+**



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