



# IHM SISTERS E-NEWS

September 2024



## **Sister Mary Anna Riley, IHM, honored by Siena Literacy Center**

**By Mary Ellen Hochkins, IHM Associate**

On July 18, 2024, the Siena Literacy Center honored Mary Anna Riley, IHM in Detroit by naming the computer room in her honor. Sister Mary Anna has worked at the Literacy Center as the Assessment and Data Management Coordinator since August 2002. A ceremony was held to celebrate the room naming designation and was well-attended with present and past staff members, tutors, students, families and friends.

Executive Director Caitlyn Pisarski spoke of the many ways Sister Mary Anna has contributed to the Literacy Center and highlighted her role in the organization's success. Ms. Pisarski identified Sister Mary Anna's many achievements as one way the IHMs' commitment to the people of Detroit has remained constant through the years. Following the formal ceremony, attendees shared stories and enjoyed refreshments to celebrate Sister Mary Anna. Sisters Pat McCluskey and Anne Crimmins were among those in attendance at the ceremony.

In addition to her work at the Center, Sister Mary Anna Riley has spent over 35 years ministering in

local elementary schools. She holds a Master of Education degree in Occupational Therapy and enjoys traveling, photography and cooking.



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## Prison ministry by mail ... a ministry of acceptance and encouragement

By Sister Anne Wisda, IHM

In December 2022, an elderly, life-without-parole, prisoner wrote to the “Mother Superior” of the IHM Sisters to request a pen pal. I accepted this invitation. He sent monthly letters which included simple, creative drawings of flowers, plants, animals, biblical and historical characters. In November 2023, he mailed twenty-five creative hand drawings of various flowers for me to share with the sisters for Christmas. He also creates challenging puzzles. I always encourage him to continue his artwork.

He told me that in past years, he submitted some of his drawings to the University of Michigan Art Exhibit for incarcerated individuals and that some of his works sold.

In June 2024, I was surprised to receive a large envelope from the University of Michigan’s 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Exhibition of ARTISTS in Michigan Prisons. This event took place from March 18 – April 2, 2024. The exhibition report stated that 479 prison artists created 746 original works of art. My pen pal was one of these artists. He created a drawing using only a black pen and crayon entitled “Genius of America.” The exhibition does not return unsold artwork to prisoners. Each prisoner designates a primary contact to whom the unsold work is sent. My large envelope was a result of this designation. I will continue to help motivate him in his life’s journey by continuing to share letters and affirming his skill as an artist.



### Prison Creative Arts Project (PCAP)

Several groups work together to organize this annual exhibition. During the year, the Prisoner Creative Art Project (PCAP) members visit the artists in the secure area of 24 adult prisons in Michigan and can converse directly with each artist about their works. The group shares information with each artist before selecting a particular work for the exhibition. Most prisoner artists have access to pencils, pens and paper. Paint and other materials must be purchased and are very expensive. Materials such as oil-based and acrylic paints are not permitted in prisons. Incarcerated artists have TIME. This program offers an opportunity for them to use their imaginations and develop creative ways to express themselves. The exhibit booklet includes the following quotation by DaJuan,

***“Art has truly saved my life. It has brought light in a place designed to keep us in the dark. It allows us to tell our story or express our feelings without saying a word. Art gives a voice to the voiceless.”***

For information about this important project, visit [www.prisonarts.org](http://www.prisonarts.org).



## **Celebrating 17 years of dedication:** **Pat O'Leary Knipper '77 reflects on her Marian Legacy**

*Pat O'Leary Knipper '77, our Alumnae Engagement Coordinator, has been a cornerstone of the Marian community, overseeing countless alumnae reunions, senior luncheons and graduations. We invited Pat to share her reflections on the incredible legacy she has built.*

### ***What inspired you to join the Marian High School staff 17 years ago?***

I loved Marian. With my son at Brother Rice and my daughter graduating in 2005, I knew many people here, including many students. I appreciate the amazing breadth of the school's offerings.

### ***Can you share some of your most memorable moments from your time at Marian?***

The faculty and staff have performed amazing raffle skits over the years. One standout was a video using Pharrell Williams' "Happy." Graduation every year is always incredible to see the transformation from the practice ceremony to the actual event, with speeches delivering such positive messages. The year we held graduation at Meadowbrook due to COVID-19 was especially memorable. Conducting alum events via Zoom was remarkable. Alums eagerly participated in Trivia Night as well as Mix and Mingles on Zoom. We even hosted a reunion with class year breakout rooms.

### ***How do you feel your work has impacted the school community?***

The building projects for the gym, the auditorium, the Marian Commons, and the Sister Lenore Pochelski Atrium are tangible contributions. Getting alumnae involved in various activities at the school has been incredibly beneficial. Their energy, knowledge and experience have enriched the Marian community.

### ***Are there any specific programs, events, or initiatives you contributed to which you are particularly proud?***

All the alum events, especially since there were few when I started. I am particularly proud of being involved in STEM Career Night, the Dolores Chapman Scholarship Shopping Night and Live Your Best Life.

### ***How do you think the school's culture and environment have evolved?***

Cell phones have become big for everyone. Uniforms have changed; alumnae comment on that the most. The building has seen upgrades, but the people inside remain the same. While many teachers are different from when I started, they continue to work hard as a team, engaging their students to help them succeed in their classes. The students are high achievers in academics and are involved in as many clubs and sports as they can fit into a day.

### ***What are your hopes for the future of Marian High School?***

I hope Marian continues to be a place of incredible academics, athletics and co-curriculars with a strong, faith-filled student body. I also hope that alums remain engaged in alum and school activities so they can see what a great place Marian continues to be!

### ***What are your plans for retirement? Are there new adventures or projects you are looking forward to?***

Traveling with family is on the list, along with catching up with friends, reading as many books as I can, and doing some volunteer work with charities.





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## Development News



This year's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary raffle season is off to a great start! As of August 22, we have raised \$125,885.

Help us reach our goal of \$205,000. Cash prizes range from \$50 to \$500, with 144 chances to win. Drawings are held on the third Wednesday of the month, October through June. Get your ticket from your favorite IHM Sister or visit our [website](#). The suggested donation is \$25 each.

Your generous support makes it possible to ensure our retired sisters receive the care they need and deserve.

  
*Theresa Maxis Award*  
— 2024 —  
**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17**  
**6 P.M.**  
at the Monroe Golf & Country Club,  
to honor Cathy Miller



The *Theresa Maxis Award* recognizes community leaders who embody the values and vision of Theresa Maxis and the IHM community. This year, the ninth annual award event, we have the pleasure of honoring Cathy Miller for her service to the community.

Cathy, a graduate of St. Mary Academy and the University of Detroit, dedicated 42 years to Mercy Memorial Hospital (now ProMedica Monroe Regional) as a registered clinical lab scientist. Throughout her life, she has consistently impacted our community with her philanthropic spirit. Cathy's dedication to quality education and her active involvement in civic groups and numerous non-profit organizations are truly commendable. She has blessed many individuals, organizations, and the entire community.

Proceeds benefit IHM ministries and the retirement needs of the congregation as we seek to serve those in greatest need and maintain quality care for our elder sisters.

For tickets or sponsorship information, please call or email the Development Office at (734) 240-9860 or [development@ihmsisters.org](mailto:development@ihmsisters.org).

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## ***Worthy of Note from the Alphonsus Liguori Library... The Other Einstein*** **By Marie Benedict and reviewed by library staff**

Marie Benedict's interest in the hidden world of women's stories has roots early in her life, as her aunt provided Marie, a voracious reader, with a steady diet of incredible literature intending to expose her to larger mysteries of the past and different perspectives. Benedict notes that it was her aunt's gift of *The Mists of Avalon*, a female-centric retelling of the Arthurian legends that was a catalyst for what later became her mission to "excavate from the past the most important, complex and fascinating women of history and bring them into the light of present-day where we can finally perceive the breadth of their contributions as well as the insights they bring to modern-day issues."

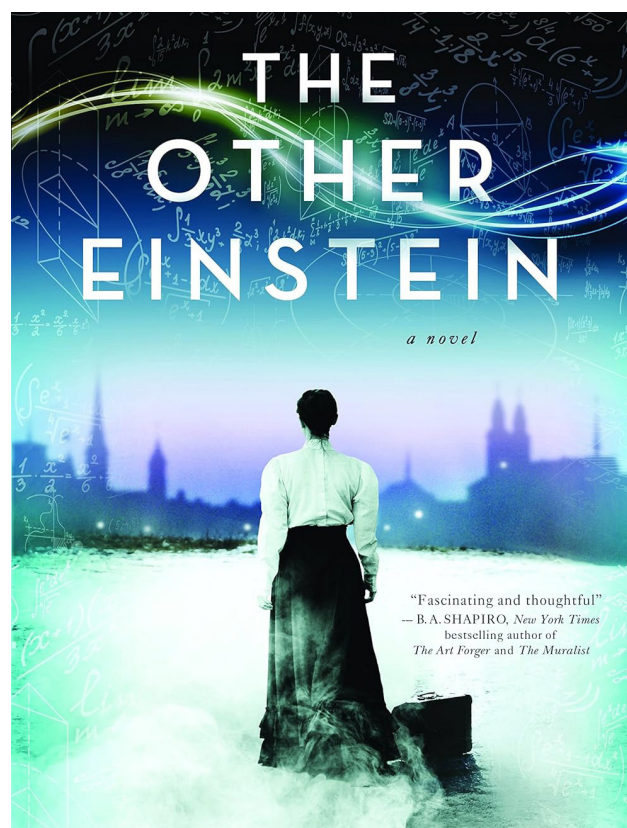
Benedict's historical novels debuted with *The Other Einstein* (2016), the story of Mileva Maric, the Serbian mathematician and physicist who was Albert Einstein's first wife. She was reading a children's biography of Einstein with one of her sons and was struck that the biographer devoted no more than a couple of sentences to Maric. In a *New York Times* interview, Benedict noted:

"I started thinking: Here's this woman who made this incredible ascent from the backwater of Eastern Europe, where it was actually illegal for girls to attend high school, to become one of the very first women at a university physics program in Europe. ... Why had I never heard of this woman?"

Maric's story is told from her point of view, carefully tracing her life from her struggles as one of the few women to study physics at an elite school, up until the demise of her marriage with Albert Einstein.

An intellectually gifted woman, Maric passionately pursues her interest in mathematics and physics despite her classmates and professor looking down on her for being a woman and earning her degree. It was during her studies that she first meets

Einstein, who is intrigued by Maric's intellect and aloofness. They would marry in 1903 and were together during his most creative and formative years. Although fictional, Benedict's story closely resembles the life of Maric, as it is known today, including the intellectual and emotional resources she provided that made Albert Einstein's scientific productivity possible. The story also presents the tensions for women in the 19th century between the demands of family and motherhood with professional life as the light of Maric's brilliance increasingly became lost in Einstein's enormous shadow.



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## Ending war; growing peace with justice

By IHM Peacemakers and Friends Planning Committee

IHM Peacemakers and Friends sponsored prayer and action opportunities on the Monroe campus titled “Ending War and Growing Peace with Justice” on Aug. 6 to 9, 2024. In relationship with God, the cosmos and peacemakers around the planet, we want to help end war and grow inner and societal peace with justice. All were welcome at every opportunity. There were 35 to 50 participants in person, and many on Channel 11 engaged in the opportunities.

Each communal prayer opportunity enabled us to face some of the war and peace challenges of this world together. On Tuesday, Aug. 6, we remembered the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the day in 1945 when an American B-29 bomber dropped an atomic bomb. Nearly 80,000 people died instantly. The city was razed. No one on Earth had ever seen such a destructive weapon. Three days later, a second American B-29 dropped another atomic bomb on Nagasaki. This killed 40,000 people. In the aftermath of these bombings, an estimated 110,000 people died of radiation poisoning and their injuries. Today, the air, land and sea carriers fitted with thermonuclear weapons can destroy entire nations and all life on Earth. In a spirit of repentance, we asked for forgiveness and prayed that atomic/nuclear weapons would never be used again.

We are most grateful for Joan Mumaw’s inspiring [reflection on Wednesday, Aug. 7](#). We prayed for global peace with justice, focusing mainly on Ukraine, Russia, Gaza, Israel and the civil wars in Haiti, Sudan and Myanmar. Over the years, IHM Sisters have been peace team members in Gaza, the West Bank, Israel, Haiti and IHM missionaries have ministered in South Sudan.

To our shock and dismay, some of the tolls these wars have taken:

- Ukraine and Russia: Estimates of those killed in the Ukraine-Russia conflict have been hard to substantiate, with neither side publishing tallies of their losses. U.S. officials recently said that Ukraine and Russia’s total deaths and injuries had neared 500,000.
- Gaza and Israel: Israel does not publish its Israeli death tolls. An estimate regarding Israel’s deaths from Hamas’s attacks is 1,865. Forty-one hostages are confirmed to have died in Hamas captivity. Dozens of hostages are still held captive in Gaza. As of Aug. 16, 2024, the U.N. reports that more than 40,005 Palestinians have been killed. Gaza is 25 miles long and 3.5 to 7 miles wide. It is sealed by land, air and sea; 2.5 million Palestinians cannot flee. They have been denied food and basic health care and they are continually uprooted, as more of Gaza’s housing is obliterated. Gaza’s universities and schools have been destroyed and its education system shattered.
- Infectious diseases are rapidly spreading and infant mortality has skyrocketed. According to the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor, Israel has already dropped more than 25,000 tons of explosives on the Gaza Strip since Oct. 7, the equivalent of the two atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.





- Haiti: The number of people reported killed as Haiti faces a worsening conflict between heavily armed gang members is 4,451 killings in 2023 and 2,500 through to March 22, 2024. The capital and the region around it are facing a catastrophic human rights situation caused almost entirely by the presence of various gangs - armed groups who kill, rape, torture, kidnap, and hold hostage their fellow citizens. They control the main roads in and out of the capital and the bay.
- Sudan: The ongoing conflict in Sudan, often referred to as 'The War the World Forgot,' has seen an army establish its state within a state. This war has claimed more than 15,000 lives. Nearly 11 million people have been displaced from their homes.
- Myanmar: Since staging a coup Feb. 1, 2021, the Myanmar military has conducted a brutal nationwide crackdown on millions of people opposed to its rule. The junta security forces have conducted mass killings, arbitrary arrests, torture, sexual violence, and other abuses that amount to crimes against humanity. Freedom of speech and assembly face severe restrictions. Junta authorities have arbitrarily arrested more than 16,000 pro-democracy supporters. The death toll is not available.

Fr. Tom Lumpkin celebrated a Mass for Peace with us on Thursday, Aug. 8. Following the Mass and his homily, Fr. Tom offered insights and information on questions we had gathered from the group. Fr. Tom began with a statement demonstrating he was ready for the task. He said, "There is no place in the Gospel that supports the killing of another person, nor is there anything in the life and mission of Jesus that supports killing. The Church allows killing in self-defense. The Gospel does not."

On Friday, Aug. 9, we gathered to enter into peaceful prayer, holding in solidarity all those affected by war, pleading for all wars to cease, and praying for peace on Earth. Using a thousand paper cranes and a peace bell as our symbols, we followed this process three times in succession: ringing the peace bell, asking a question of God and for us, singing an antiphon, praying in silence, and offering petitionary prayer. It was a beautiful ending to a week filled with meaning and inspiration.

Each planned action for the week provided ways to join together for peace. Our actions included citizen lobbying, learning about and signing on to United Nations peace efforts, pondering our list of peace questions and conversing on the final day with another person about what our communal prayer and actions meant to them.

In our sharing on the final day, we heard one person say, "These days have put us in solidarity with Peacemakers all over the world holding in our hearts those who have lived and died with the devastation of war in so many countries, especially Ukraine, Russia, Gaza, Israel, Haiti, Sudan and Myanmar. I am grateful I participated!"



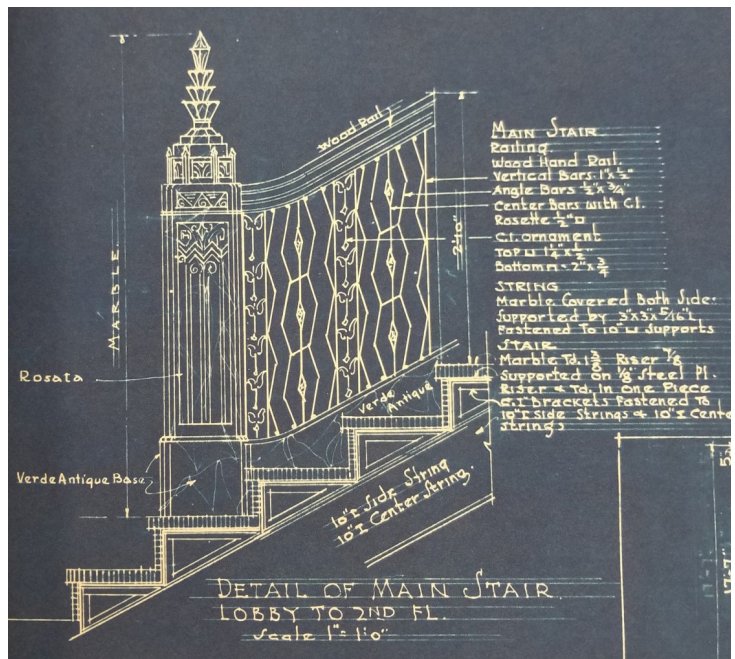
## From the archives ... a look back

The Archives staff recently had the occasion to bring out the original 1931 blueprints for the third St. Mary Academy. The massive 4-foot-by-5½-foot documents tell the construction story down to the minutest detail.

The 1929 fire that destroyed the second Academy loomed large in the planning process. A Monroe Evening News story in May 1932 said the building would be as fireproof as possible since it was made of steel, brick, marble, stone, and tile. The detailed instructions of the main stair railing came to life and can be seen in this photo, with students surrounding it. Some rooms sound odd to modern ears, such as a Eurythmy Room in the music department, the Cold Room next to the pharmacy and a Candy Room.



The newspaper article praised "the remarkable achievement of the Sisters" in financing, planning and constructing architectural masterpieces. "The effect is one of mingled magnificence and peace."



[here](#)



## Then & Now



Recalling family history is an armchair sport in Virginia. Patrick Leary Etheridge

came to Virginia in 1723 and his sons fought with the Virginia Militia during the Revolution. Near the fireplace in their home hung a picture of Capt. Jeremiah Washington Lane, CSA, who served in the Princess Anne Cavalry in that “other wah.” Later, the Virginia Cavalry merged with General Lee’s Army. That tradition was so inbred in me from childhood that it never occurred to me that anyone would ever willingly chose to leave “The Old Dominion” until I came nose to nose with my decision to enter the Pennsylvania IHMs. [continued...](#)



She wrote the way she lived:

***On the fly,  
Without retrospect,  
Always on the way,  
Climbing higher.***

– inspired by Teresa de Ávila written by Dennis Denny

“Driven,” Sister Emma declared to me one day. You are driven.”

Until that moment, I had no words to describe the inner intensity that I had long felt—an intense vibe that has always animated me in everything from playing to praying and working to wondering. So much of this life, my life, has been lived on the fly. Always in motion, always unprepared and always climbing. [continued...](#)

## Remembering

Eileen (De La Salle) Semonin, IHM:  
Sept. 4, 1926 - July 27, 2024



Catherine Winnell, IHM Associate  
Aug. 27, 1947 - Aug. 14, 2024



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## Marygrove minute

Happy September to all Alumni and friends! We are looking forward to another amazing day on campus for the September 14 All-Alumni Reunion with several special speakers and up close and personal tours of the Schools at Marygrove and the Starfish Early Education Center! If you read this before September 4, you can still register online at [Marygrove College Alumni Association - Marygrove Conservancy](#).



### Here is an excerpt from the Marygrove Conservancy for all alums and friends:

We hope this finds you well. We would like to extend our deepest gratitude for your unwavering commitment to the Marygrove campus and for your commendable dedication to projects that uplift Detroit residents' lives.

We are reaching out to you with a heartfelt request for donation support to address urgent interior repairs needed for the Sacred Heart Chapel in the Liberal Arts Building. Presently, the Chapel faces significant challenges stemming from age and wear. The recent roof issues (repaired as of April 2024) have had a cascading effect on the interior, impacting the floors, stations, and ceiling. The safety concerns posed by lifting and damaged floor tiles and the compromised stations and ceiling necessitate immediate attention. We have estimated the initial cost of the repairs to be \$110,000, which does not include asbestos remediation (if needed.) Your support will restore the chapel's structural integrity and ensure all visitors' safety and comfort. By contributing to this endeavor, you will play a pivotal role in preserving Marygrove's cherished history.

### An excerpt from the subsequent letter from President Burns:

As you know, the closure of the College has been a long and winding road. However, the Marygrove Conservancy is doing an excellent job working with the University of Michigan Marsal School of Education and the Detroit Public Schools Community District as well as Starfish Family Services for the new educational programs on campus. In addition, there are many non-profit organizations on campus, which are as lively as the days when the College was in full swing.

There are areas of the Liberal Arts Building that have not yet been renovated: the Theatre and Sacred Heart Chapel. Since they are not part of The School at Marygrove, the renovation wasn't scheduled with the major rebuild of 2019-2020. A grant has been obtained for the Theatre, and Dignity Detroit has made a wonderful donation for the Chapel roof repair. However, much more needs to be done for the Chapel.

St. Peter Claver uses Sacred Heart Chapel as their Parish church (masses and funerals) and by the IHMs and Dignity Detroit for Mass. In addition, the Chapel has been rented out for weddings regularly. The leaks in the roof damaged one of the Stations of the Cross, and the floor tiles have started to peel away. As you can see from the Conservancy's letter, the estimate for the repair is at least \$110,000 ... I would like to ask you to join me in donating to the Marygrove Conservancy for the Chapel renovations. As they receive the funds, they will schedule the necessary repairs.

THANK YOU for considering this gift to Marygrove. If you have any questions, please email me at

[burnszinser@outlook.com](mailto:burnszinser@outlook.com)

Sincerely,

Elizabeth A. Burns, MD, MA

President Emerita

#### To donate by mail:

Send checks payable to Marygrove Conservancy  
Attention: Turkessa Baldrige  
8425 W McNichols  
Detroit, MI 48221

To donate online, please visit the [Donation Link](#).

## From the IHM Associate Office



On Sunday, Aug. 18, 2024, John Zarb and Cheyney Thompson made their Associate Commitments. John Zarb was accompanied by Sister Jane Herb and Cheyney Thompson by Sister Joan Kusak. Sisters, Associates and family members of the new associates celebrated at brunch following the morning Liturgy. Congratulations to our newest IHM Associates!



### Explore the depth of your heart

Sept. 14, 2024 - 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

**every second Saturday of the month through June 2025**

Maxis IHM Spirituality Center  
17380 Grange Road  
Riverview, MI 48193

Starting in Sept. 2024 the Maxis IHM Spirituality Center will offer a two-hour engagement in dialogue. As a faith-based place to share what we hold in our hearts can serve as a basis for peace and hope in the company of others.

**Registration Deadline:** Saturday before program

Register at <https://bit.ly/hearttoheartmaxis>, [maxiscenter@ihmsisters.org](mailto:maxiscenter@ihmsisters.org) or 734-250-8314.



IHM sisters

Deep Faith. Courageous Spirit. Action for Justice.

610 W. Elm Ave., Monroe, MI 48162

Phone: 734-241-3660

[ihmsisters.org](http://ihmsisters.org)

### Pass it on...

If you know someone who would like more information about what the IHM Sisters and Associates are doing, please forward this publication. If you have received this from a friend and would like to subscribe, [click here](#).

IHMPact is published quarterly, highlighting news and events of the IHM Sisters as well as offering articles for reflection and contemplation. It is available by subscription or online.



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