

DIOCESAN NEWS

DeSales principal, board clash over departure

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

Edward J. Tracey, longtime principal of Geneva's DeSales High School, will be leaving his position on June 28. His replacement will be Daniel E. Skinner, 56, who served as vice principal of Waterloo High School from 1994 to 1998.

However, Tracey, 68, won't be going willingly, claiming he was "fired" by the school's board of trustees — a comment with which board members disagree. They argue that Tracey said he would retire this year and that they merely acted based on his original announcement.

"My heart's here," Tracey said of DeSales. "I've been here 24 years. I came here when we didn't have a dime and worked with the people. We went through a lot of rough times, and we're still going through a lot of rough times."

Right now, the school and Tracey are going through a rough time because the principal did indeed change his mind about leaving this year.

He had told the school's board in March 1997 that he would be retiring. But at a board meeting on March 29 this year, Tracey told the school board that he had changed his mind, wanted to work two more years, and that he was willing to have his salary cut from \$41,000 yearly to \$17,000.

Kevin J. Powers, the board's vice president, said the 13-member board had planned at the March 29 meeting to discuss the candidates recommended by a search committee. The committee had been looking for a new principal since January. When Tracey unexpectedly an-

nounced that night that he didn't want to retire, his action threw the board into a "tizzy," Powers said.

"It was at such a late date that we had all our work done," Powers said. "Needless to say, we were in a total state of shock."

Tracey said he understood that by telling the board in March that he wanted to stay, the board might have felt "I was pulling the rug out from under them." However, he thought the board would have been pleased with his desire to keep working at the school, and his willingness to accept a lower salary.

Powers said "that was a nice offer" when asked about Tracey's lower salary proposal, but Tracey simply waited too long to tell the board of his decision. The board decided it was best to move ahead with a new principal. He added that the board admired Tracey's service to the school.

"At no time was his performance in question or anything of that nature," Powers said.

The board told Tracey via registered letters sent to his home and office on May 6 that they had chosen a new candidate to fill his position. On May 17, the board officially announced Skinner's selection.

When asked how he felt about the selection of a new principal, Tracey declined to comment.

Tracey's reluctant departure from the school has generated a firestorm of controversy in Geneva. The editorial page of the local paper, *The Finger Lakes Times*, has run several letters on the issue, and members of DeSales senior class staged a walk-out in support of the principal on

May 7. Meanwhile, several faculty members have run advertisements in support of Tracey in the *Times*.

"Mr. Tracey is perfectly capable of continuing as principal of DeSales," read an ad in the May 12 *Times*. "The last twenty-four years are adequate testimony to the competence and sacrifices of Mr. Edward Tracey. We support Ed Tracey's decision and ask you to lend your support."

A school staff member who helped get the May 12 ad published said the vast majority of the staff at DeSales supports Tracey's decision not to retire. The staff member — who asked not to be identified — said that Tracey should be allowed to stay in his current position because he told the board he wanted to before the board formally voted on the new principal.

"We maintain that he was fired because Mr. Tracey has decided to stay, and (the

board) is overlooking that," the school staff member said.

The board will meet on Monday night, May 24, and will take comments from school staff members concerned about the controversy, Powers said. However, the board will not change its decision to hire a new principal, he said.

Meanwhile, Msgr. Gerard Krieg, another board member and pastor of St. Stephen's Church in Geneva, said the board hoped that Tracey might continue to serve the school in another capacity. In fact, Powers said the board had discussed such options with Tracey before he changed his mind about retiring.

"I feel so saddened that Ed (Tracey) would see this as a firing," Msgr. Krieg said of the situation. "It is not a firing ... I hope and pray that healing will come to all of us and (Tracey's) place in our heart will be acknowledged and revered."



Greg Benenati/Photo Intern

A call to sainthood

Father Charles Curran, left, speaks with Father Jim Lawlor before lecturing on spirituality at Nazareth College's Arts Center May 15. Father Curran, a Rochester diocesan priest who teaches at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, explained to an audience of about 100 how the church's notions of sainthood evolved over the centuries, and pointed out that all believers are called to be saints.

Recognizing

★ **Jeff Owens** has been awarded the 1999 OPPY Award by St. Joseph's Hospital, Elmira, where he works in the Facilities Engineering Department. The award is for service, courtesy and creation of goodwill among patients, employees, visitors and the public.

★ **Quyen Lau**, a longtime volunteer at the Catholic Family Center, won the 1998 JC Penney/United Way Golden Rule Award. Quyen is a volunteer services coordinator, program management team member and agency team leader for CFC Refugee Resettlement Program.

★ **Our Lady of Mercy High School** has received a \$25,000 grant from the Davenport Hatch Foundation. The money will be used for the Mercy Scholarship Endowment Fund.

★ **Rachel Corsetti** and **Antwan Lockett** received Gold Key Excellence in Printmaking Awards and a Student Artists in Residence Award, and **Matt Lazio-Maimone** earned a Silver Key

Award for painting at the 1999 Rochester-Finger Lakes Scholastic Art Awards and Exhibition. The Nazareth Middle School students' work was on display at Monroe Community College's Damon City Campus in March. Corsetti and Lockett's work will be sent to the National Scholastic Art Awards and Exhibition in New York City.

★ **Glenn McClure's** "St. Francis in the America's: A Caribbean Mass" was performed by the Nazareth College Choir on a visit to Mexico City March 25-29. The Geneseo-based musician converted to Catholicism after visiting Italy 12 years ago.

★ **Mary Fiore** celebrated her 100th birthday March 8. The resident of the Heritage, part of St. Ann's Community in Rochester, has been an active volunteer since retiring at age 67.

★ **Joseph Fornieri**, chairman of the social studies department at Bishop Kearney High School, received the Award for Excellence in Secondary School Teaching March 15 at the University of Rochester.

Obituary

Sister Mary Reginald, OP; 52

Sister Mary Reginald, OP, a resident of the Monastery of Mary the Queen in Elmira, died Feb. 21, 1999, from ovarian cancer. She was 52.

Born Angela Cecerra, she was a native of Los Angeles, Calif. She professed her final vows in the Order of Preachers in 1975, and resided at Our Lady of the Angels Monastery in Los Angeles until the early 1990s.

After she spent a few months at Elmi-

ra's Dominican monastery in 1992, Sister Mary Reginald requested a permanent transfer there. Her wish was granted, and she took up residence in Elmira in 1994.

During her time at Monastery of Mary the Queen, Sister Mary Reginald served as assistant bursar, and was also a volunteer for many other duties.

Sister Mary Reginald celebrated the silver jubilee of her profession in June 1997.

Correction

The Holy Name of Jesus Parish religious education program was credited with hosting a pasta luncheon for seniors April 27 in the May 13 *Catholic Courier* ("Parish program honors gifts of older adults," Page 8). The luncheon was actually hosted by the parish's youth group.

Appointments

Bishop Matthew H. Clark has announced the following pastoral appointments, effective June 29.

★ **Father Roy J. Kiggins**, from pastor, Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Brockport, to pastor of the newly formed Roman Catholic Community of Geneva (St. Francis de Sales and St. Stephen's parishes). Father Kiggins will be on sabbatical from July 1 to Dec.

31, for immersion in Spanish language and culture.

★ **Msgr. Gerard Krieg**, from pastor, St. Stephen's Parish, to administrator, Roman Catholic Community of Geneva, for the term of Father Kiggins' sabbatical.

★ **Father Paul Bonacci**, from parochial vicar, St. Stephen's Parish, Geneva, to parochial vicar, Roman Catholic Community of Geneva.

LAMPGLIGHTER

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Our chef selects a new combination daily \$5.95

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Sautéed chicken served over escarole \$7.95

SHRIMP ALEXANDER
Grilled shrimp stuffed with goat cheese wrapped in bacon served over sautéed escarole \$8.95

FRENCH ONION STEAK SANDWICH
Rib eye steak, caramelized onions, melted mozzarella served on toasted French bread \$7.95

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Menus upon request, with a choice of sit down, buffet or hors d'oeuvres.
We have private accommodations for up to 50 people for parties and banquets.

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MAITRE D' PRIME RIB
Crusted with peppercorns, grilled, served on a hot sizzler \$15.95

PENNE CON SALSISIA
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Twin filets topped with crabmeat, artichoke hearts and a luscious bernaise sauce \$19.95

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