

*Class of 2020
Graduation Ceremony
July 20, 2020
#NewmanStrong.*



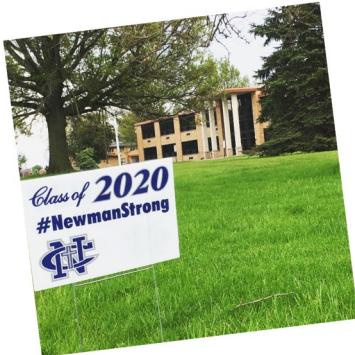
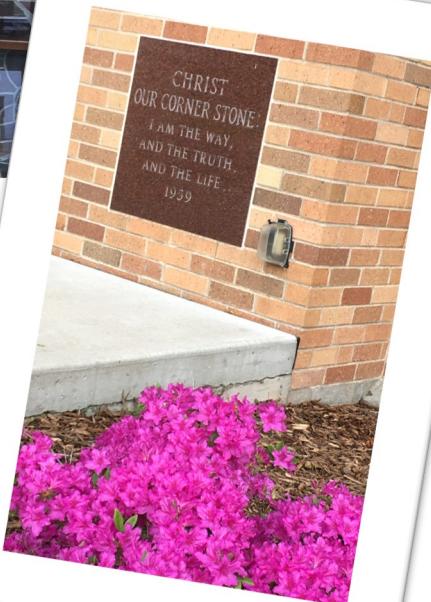
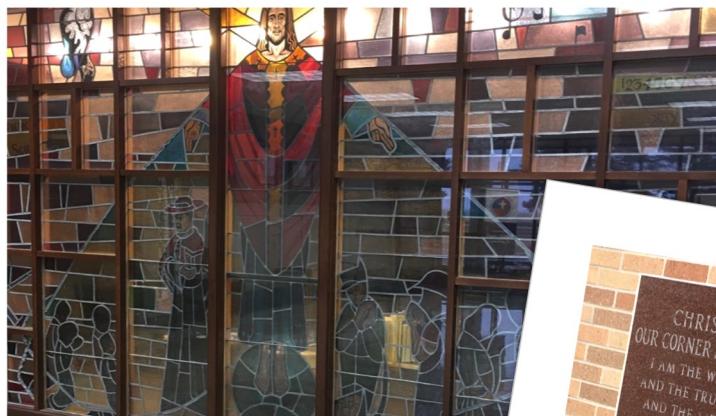
Save the date:

- Meet ALL the Comets Weekend August 21 & 22
- Golf Outing- Friday, Sept. 18 Rain Date Oct. 2nd
- Ladies Night Out- Southern Roots & Cowboy Boots Saturday, Sept. 26.
- Open House- Sunday, Nov. 15th (tentative)
- Men's Event at Newman - Sunday, January 24, 2021
- NHS Presents: Derby Days – Saturday, Feb. 27, 2021

Newman News

SPRING 2020: DIGITAL EDITION

#NewmanStrong



With Christ our Cornerstone and rooted in our Catholic faith, Newman Central Catholic High School fosters spiritual development, academic excellence, responsibility to self, and service to others.



*"He will make
sure that I
always have
everything I
need with
plenty left over
to share with
others." - 2
Corinthians 9:8*



How has Covid-19 affected you?

The 4th quarter of the 2019-2020 school year was met with a lot of uncertainty. Through it all, our teachers and students prevailed. They were able to embrace the opportunity to teach and learn in different ways. In

the next couple of pages you will find some thoughts of the teachers and students as well as some photos of how the 2019-2020 school year looked very different.



Note from the Dean of Students

During these trying times I would like to highlight some of the amazing things some of our teachers accomplished having to adapt to distance learning for their students. We really have a great faculty here who valued their time to make sure there still was a learning process going on no matter what other schools were doing. They also contacted the students and parents about issues they may have had in regards to homework etc. For instance, Mr. Accardi held a dissection project from his garage with

the ability for his students to interject questions and answers while the project was proceeding. He also presented a project of ice treatments and lower extremity tests for injuries in his Athletic Training class. In his drivers Ed class he instructed through Google classroom so all of his students could stay on the level he needed while learning such important and essential assignments in their lives.

Mrs. Verdick also did very impressive distance learning projects by having 4 guest speakers with talk and answer periods for her students to help grasp the knowledge at hand. She also

had a virtual tour of the Chief Medical Examiner's Office of the state of Maryland including the autopsy room. WOW! These are just a few examples of how our teachers adapted to make sure our students were still learning and not just passing by. They accepted the challenge of not having the usual teaching process and went to this distance learning process and kept our students engaged. I applaud our entire staff for their efforts.

GREAT JOB !

Mike Papoccia,
Dean of Students
Athletic Director

My Senior Year

by Clare Sanders

When August 2019 rolled around, all I could think about was graduation. Finally. I wanted to fast forward to the end. The moment where I walked across that stage and grabbed my diploma. On May 1st, we were all supposed to wear our college gear for Decision Day. I couldn't wait for my last prom, dancing the night away with all of my classmates to bowling until our eyes felt heavy. I wanted that moment where I walked those halls for the last time as a student. Those final months with my classmates where we watched each other grow into adults. I wanted to say goodbye.

Now today is May 15th: my last day. Instead of shutting my locker and walking the halls for a final time, I'm leaving Google Classrooms and closing my computer. The stage for graduation is closed. The dance floor for prom collects dust. The only time I see my classmates' faces is over Google Meets. There was no "last hurrah". We didn't go out with a "bang". We went out with a whisper of what should have been.

Yet, I refuse to look back on my high school career with only regret and sadness for the last few months. It was so much more than that, we were so much more than that. Someone once told me, "It's not the final moment that matters, it's all the moments that led up to it." Our class has had four years together, these final moments are not our undoing.

We laughed together, creating chaos in the classroom. We cried together when we lost people who were part of our family. We won and lost games fighting for the blue and white. We danced together until there were bruises on our feet. We grew up together, seeing all the dark and light parts of each other. We lived with each other. For the last four years, 185 days a year, we lived and breathed the same air as our classmates. It's hard to accept that we are

saying goodbye in this way, but we choose how we look back. We can look back on our time at Newman as a blessing and cherish our memories, or we can throw ourselves a pity party.

The amazing part about Newman is that we don't stop belonging to the family after graduation, we merely switch roles. To all my fellow seniors, congratulations, we made it. We are adults, and we should be proud of ourselves and everything we have accomplished together. Time for the next chapters of our lives.



Teacher Perspective

March 13, 2020 brought forth an announcement that we would be closing school buildings and initiating remote learning for a few weeks. Those few weeks turned into the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. Throughout this unprecedented time we remain #NewmanStrong.

Our teachers began remote learning on Monday, March 16th, without losing a beat! We distributed IT equipment to those in need for required learning as we kept in communication with families and students via email, our website and social media. Teachers met each Monday via Google Meet to track progress and get important updates.

Celebrating our successes in this transitional way of teaching and learning does not make up for the daily face to face contact with students that makes our worlds go 'round.

When asked, Science teacher, Mrs. Beth Verdick, writes about remote learning, "It was a great opportunity to Google Meet with people in the fields of science which I hope to be able to do again when we are back in school." She also indicated that the main downside of remote learning is how rough it was to be able to get work in from some students, understanding their frustration of not having the chances to ask questions when working on their homework, missing out on hands on learning opportunities and the challenging ways of having to do assessments to ensure the students know the content.

Math teacher, Mrs. Melissa Rhodes submitted the following: "Wow, this last quarter was surely a crazy one! I was elated to see all of my students' faces and videos for the first time after we went on quarantine.

We found many apps to use to drop each other videos and communicate our prayer requests. Many of my students reached out to me with questions which had us screen sharing and taking quizzes together. Maybe not their definition of fun, but I sure enjoyed my one-on-one time with them.. My biggest take away as a teacher was how much I need to be with my students to feel like I have accomplished something. Teaching is my passion, and it sure is not the same when done virtually. We survived and made the best of it. Although I will spend time preparing for all possibilities in the fall, I am praying it arrives with me in a classroom setting welcoming in my new students!



Mrs. Verdick



Mrs. Rhodes

PRACTICE

TRAIN

TEACH

LEAD

In the Blink of an Eye by Jaxson Schabacker

High School is four years long on a calendar. 1,460 days worth of ideas and memories. There is no word to sum up these four years: there may not even be a phrase or parable. I believe there is only one way to explain what high school is. Experience.

My high school career was trimmed a bit slim. I thought this break would be good. It was to an extent. It was nice to be able to take a step back from the craziness of high school. I was able to be ill-advised and hang out with friends, take days off, and figure out a little bit about myself. Although, as the break drags on, I realize what I've forgotten. I've forgotten what it means to be a kid. I've got two months before adulthood hits. I was able to take a look at my life is right now. I've just recently committed to play college football, I'm working through the enrollment process, and I will be fully enrolled and ready to go to Benedictine University in the fall. I realized something further though. I just made the decision that will frame the rest of my life from my bedroom, alone. I was not announcing to my parents, they were at work. I was not announcing to my friends, they were at home. I was not surrounded by the ones I loved. Instead, because of our current national situation, I was alone.

I'd be lying if I said I wasn't saddened by my situation. I can't shake the hand of my future head coach. I couldn't see

the look on my mom's face as she realizes her child is becoming an independent adult. I didn't have the satisfaction of being surrounded by those that are important to me. This virus has ruined many things for many people, but all the great stories have bumps in the road. Some people felt this bump harder than others. I feel for all of the spring athletes. They don't have the opportunities of displaying their skills to impress colleges. They don't get one last season. They don't get one last chance. Their careers have been crippled by something out of their control, and that has to be one of the hardest things to overcome.

The class of 2020 has been through a lot and achieved greatness. We've collectively won two state titles, fourth in the state, sectional and regional champions in many sports and many years, and had some undefeated seasons. We also threw two dances, raised a lot of money, and brought a good name to Newman while doing it. We can't mope around like all of high school was a waste because the home stretch got bogged down by outside influences. We have to remember who we are, what we've done, and what we have yet to do. We all remember what freshman year was like. We didn't have a clue what we were doing. We figured it out though.

We pulled ourselves together through hardships and heartaches. We rolled with the punches and did what had to be done. What I'm trying to say is that this is nothing. E-learning? We've had to teach ourselves before. Isolation? We've always had times where we needed some distance. Sleep? Who's that? We've seen all of this before. We're just seeing it differently now.

As I write this paper at 4 a.m., I'm a couple hours away from having to open up the classroom and go through a B Day. Adversity breeds growth, and we've grown through these short four years because we've done it together. Mr. Somers always said eventually we'd come together as a unit and we could get through anything in our way. This is just another bump in the road in the long, winding road that was high school. We didn't have much time to take it all in because it was gone in the blink of an eye.



Prayer Garden



A Beautiful way to honor your loved one.

Since our founding by Monsignor J. Burns, hundreds of devoted alumni and benefactors of the Newman Family have given generously to Newman.

We recognize Newman's generous givers and thank them for their faithful and selfless donations.

To demonstrate our appreciation and to preserve your family's legacy, we invite you to be a part of the Newman Prayer Garden.

This beautiful garden is located on the front lawn circle of the school. To be a part of Newman's Prayer Garden, you may purchase a grey granite paver, a red paver or boulder. These items may be for Baptisms, Anniversaries, Birthdays, Christmas gifts, Graduations, In Honor of, Memorials and/or Celebration.

[Find more information](#)

and an order form on the [Prayer Garden](#) page on our website.



Never lose an opportunity of seeing anything beautiful, for beauty is God's handwriting." - Ralph Waldo Emerson



Spring Sports Cancelled

With the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic our student athletes and coaches lost out on their spring season. Many of the students continued to practice and work out on their own and really took great pride in keeping in top shape. You may view a short video tribute to our spring athletes by visiting the Quick Links tab on our website. The video is named Spring 2020 Sports.



Track Coach Mr. Accardi says it best when he tells his athletes that "you can't let your career be based on one race, one meet, one season. As you know the true race is always with yourself. If you have learned one thing from me, it is that the true 'win' in life is pushing yourself harder and farther than you thought you could and that God will give you strength to finish any 'race' if you just believe."

2019 State Football Champions

In Case You Missed It, The 2019 Comets Football Team brought home some hardware. At the time of publishing the Fall 2019 Newman News the team was heading to the semifinal game facing Fieldcrest on November 23rd.

The team prevailed and moved on to the State Championship game where they faced the Nashville Hornets with a 35-14 win.

Congratulations, to Coach K on his first state title as

head coach and the entire Blue Machine and coaching staff!

#GoComets

#RollOnBlueMachine

#NewmanStrong



Newman Comets Winter Sports

There was plenty of excitement during our winter sports and activities season! For our seniors this was their last high school athletic season. The entry of Covid-19 into our lives changed everything for a lot of students and families. As

for the underclassmen, organized sporting events and practices will more than likely look very different going forward. Something that stands out about the Athletic Program at Newman Central Catholic is the life lessons provided by our

coaches. It is an amazing accomplishment to bring home hardware but just like life, the journey is the most important part. Please enjoy the following highlights provided by our coaching staff .

Wrestling



The Comets Wrestling Team had an amazing year. Two of the gentlemen advanced to State. Senior, Kyle Tunink, and Sophomore, Will Rude. Will traveled to the State tournament as an alternate and when one of the competitors didn't make weight he was able to grapple. Kyle Tunink brought home the IHSA Class 1A Championship in the 152#

weight class. Passion and dedication pays off!

At the time of this publication the team was in the process of planning an awards ceremony on Google Meets. Coach Dieterle is looking forward to sharing some special recognition with the team at that time. Congratulations to all of



**Sending off
Kyle to the
State
Tournament.**



**2020 State
Wrestling
Champion ,
Kyle Tunink
and his
parents
Karin and
Mike.**

Girls Basketball

Coach Salvatori submitted the following recap about the Lady Comets 2019-2020 Basketball Season.

"The girls basketball program had the best basketball season in 11 years!! Last year we went 18-12 while this year we achieved our goals and bettered that record. We had an overall record of 20-9 and a conference record of 11-1, winning our Conference Champion-



ship. This was accomplished with only 8 varsity players who worked extra hard in practice and in games. The 20 game season and winning conference hasn't happened since the 2008-2009 basketball season.

Coach Deb and I are very proud of the girls' accomplishments and will miss coaching them!"

The following players were recognized with awards as follows:

MVP - Triple winners:

Alejandra Padilla

Josie Rank

Macaire Brown

Defensive Award:

Bella Trancoso

Hustle Award:

Brynlee Hermeyer

6th Person Award:

Skylar Savage

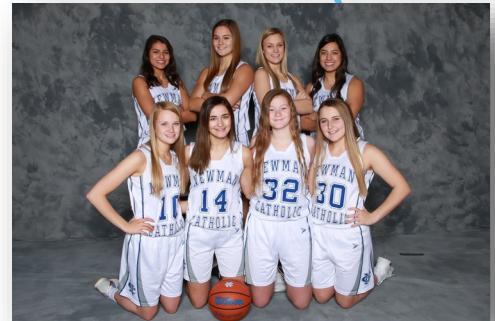
3-point Shooter Award:

Jordan Morthland

Team Player Award:

Jordan Johnson

In addition to being voted MVP, Alejandra, Josie and Macaire were voted 1st Team All-Conference with Macaire being a unanimous choice.



Boys Basketball

The Boys Basketball team was 28-6 this year! Boy, oh boy, were they fun to watch. They finished in the 2A Sweet 16. The team won the Erie Warkins Christmas Tournament and their 7th Regional Championship in the last 9 years. In addition, the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association awarded Coach Ray Sharp the 2A Coach of the Year.

Notable successes are



listed below.

Devon House was 1st Team AP All-State in 2A and 1st Team IBCA All-State.

Marcus Williams was Sauk Valley Media Player of the Year and 1st Team All Area as well as Special Mention IBCA All-State.

Devon was also 1st Team Sauk Valley Media All Area Team.

Devon and Marcus were Special Mention All-State in Champaign News-Gazette and were 1st Team Unanimous All-Conference.

Jake Ackman was Honorable Mention All-Conference.

Honorable Mention Sauk Valley Media All Area Team: Connor McBride, Jake Ackman, Luke Jungerman and Andrew Velasquez.

2019-2020 Comets Awards:

Most Improved:

Luke Jungerman

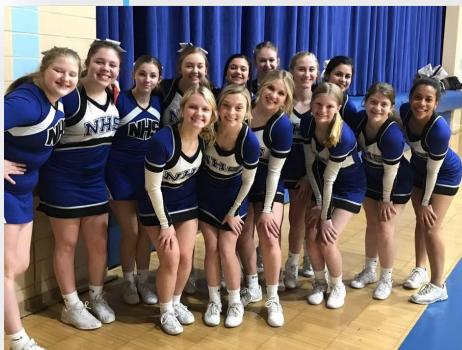
Hustle Award: Marcus Williams

Defense Award: Connor McBride

In addition to being the team **MVP** and **Rebound Award** winner, Devon House set the school career scoring record with 1972 points.



Basketball Cheer



Coach Annette Velasquez submits that the Cheer season was great! There was a small group that was really good. They performed a halftime dance routine at every home game. In addition the 2 senior captains, Mattea Bianchi and Sierra Williams, sang the National Anthem at each home game. In post season they really got the student section cheering and dancing with them. It was a fun and exciting season. The award winners voted by the cheer team are:

Fresh/Soph

Spirit Award– Ashley Wierman

Most Improved- Sarah Murray

MVP- Jojo Yeager

Varsity

Spirit Award- Sierra Williams

Most Improved– Riley Dunn

MVP/Rock– Mattea Bianchi

Best Dancer– Jojo Yeager

Coach Annette sends a special thank-you to Amber Bianchi for helping her coach the last few years and accolades for a Great Job to the cheerleaders! “Stay home and healthy. Can’t wait to see you soon.”, she writes to the cheer team.



Scholastic Bowl



The Scholastic Bowl team finished up their season just as we were shutting down the school building due to the onset of Covid-19 concerns. On the Varsity Level, coached by Mr. Gary Frank, the tournament record was 6-6. Senior, John Simpson was named to All-Conference First Team finishing the season #3 in the conference with 41 successful toss-ups. Junior, Jack Bontjes was named to All-Conference Second Team with a record of 20 successful toss-ups.

The Fresh/Soph team coached by Mrs. Tricia Vorhees had one returning sophomore and 6 new freshman members. While an end of year team celebration was unable to come to fruition, the coaches look forward to getting back to the buzzers in the fall!



Academic Hall of Fame

The Hall of Fame honors former students of Newman Central Catholic High School who have achieved outstanding academic success during their high school career and afterwards. All inductees are committed to the mission and ideals of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church. They are also dedicated to lifelong learning, serve their parish and community, have supported Newman and its Mission and provide examples of success and inspiration to our current students.

Criteria for induction into the Newman Central Catholic High School Academic Hall of Fame include:

- * Graduated from Newman Central Catholic High School in 2010 or earlier
- * Graduated from Newman Central Catholic High School with a

- cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher
- * Graduated from a four year college with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher
- * Completed an advanced degree

- * Achieved honors and/or international recognition for career accomplishments
- * Is an active member of a Catholic Parish; a letter from the pastor of the parish attesting to this is required

If the accomplishments of a nominated individual are so unique, special and distinctive, any of the previous criteria may be waived by the Hall of Fame Committee.

The next induction is scheduled for January 2021. The deadline for the January 2021 induction is September 1, 2020. Nominations are welcome at any time.

You may click below to fill out a [nomination form](#) for the Newman Central Catholic High School Academic Hall of Fame.



(Master's or PhD.) or received meritorious commendation for unique contribution(s) to their vocation(s)

Congratulations, Mrs. Hannan

Mrs. Bobbie Hannan has announced her retirement. Mrs. Hannan became certified by the Diocese of Rockford to teach Theology. She joined the Newman faculty in 2001 and taught Theology Level 2 and Level 4. As Department Head, she was the Director of Spiritual Retreats and enjoyed her role as "Mother of Kairos" for seventeen years. Mrs. Hannan serves on the School Improvement Team and served as co-faculty advisor for prom.

Mrs. Hannan is also active in



Bobbie Hannan retires after 18 years with Newman. She is looking forward to spending time with her new granddaughter.

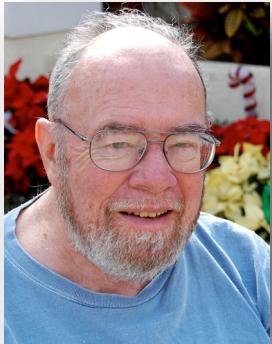
her parish including representing the Sterling Deanery on Bishop Malloy's Pastoral Council in Rockford. She has been an Extraordinary Minister and Lector for many years and has previously served on the Sacred Heart Church's Pastoral Council. She is part of the Church's ministry in bringing communion to Parkway Nursing Home on Sunday mornings.

It is with much gratitude for her dedication to the Newman Community that we wish her a blessed retirement.

This section of Newman News contains notes by Class. Please submit notes and information about reunions, anniversaries, births, career moves, retirements and any information you would like to share with our Newman Family! You may find a Class Notes form on our website.
<http://www.newmancchs.org/alumni/classnotes.cfm>

1944

Theresa (Miller) Klocke, 94, passed away on April 12, 2020 at CGH Medical Center in Sterling. She is survived by her children, **Frank Klocke, Jr. '68, Marybeth Leffelman, '71 and Christopher Klocke, '78.**

1950

Dr. David J. Rock passed away on August 8, 2019 in Orlando Florida.

William H. (Bill) Wahl passed away on January, 31, 2020 at his home in Seattle, Washington.

1953

Edward V. Rios passed away February 16, 2020 in Peoria, Illinois. He and his high school sweetheart, **Ann Mekeel Rios**, celebrated 65 years of marriage on February 24, 2019.

1957

Kathie Ann Manion Walto passed away on March 2, 2020 in Billings, MT of complications of Parkinson's Disease. She was preceded in death by her husband, Larry Walton (Class of 1958). She leaves her husband Reid Hagen and children Steve (Andrea), Mike(Lori), Margo Adolf (Travis), stepchildren, Mark Hagen(Bev), Bernadette Steffan (Craig), 11 grandchildren and 1 great grandchild.

**1964**

Charles Wageneckt, died April 8, 2020. A resident of DeKalb, Illinois, Charles died while vacationing in Myrtle Beach, SC. Charles is survived by his wife and 4 children.

1966

Michael H. Fiorini, passed away on February 25th, 2020 in Forest Park, Illinois.

1968

Mary L. Doyle, of Rockford, passed away Friday, December 27, 2019.

1969

The Class of 1969 held their 50 Year Reunion Friday July 26th and Saturday July 27th, 2019. They were the largest graduating class with 144 members. Sixty-three classmates, many spouses and a few friends of the class gathered Friday night at Champs. Russ Hall gave the benediction, remembering the 24 classmates who have passed away including Jerry Celletti who was killed in Vietnam. John Dawson said the Blessing before meals and Mrs. Rita Heeren, former 2nd grade teacher at St. Mary's Sterling stopped by to say hello. Jim Olson emceed the Trivia Contest which included questions like, "who has played golf in all 50 states? What four guys received varsity Ns their freshman year? Who has manatees and dolphins playing in her front yard? Whose dad owned Blackhawk Lanes? Who has a thoroughbred racehorse? And Who has his own radio show? Saturday night Greg and Sue (Blackburn '70) Thome hosted a cook-out. Greg Wahl and Dave Bieser provided the entertainment with their guitars. John Dawson spoke about his Newman experiences as a student, parent and alum and challenged the class to raise \$10,000 for a class scholarship. That goal has been met! Mary Jo Dace Gilmore started a Facebook page: Class of 1969. Classmates can check that and the Newman website for updates about our scholarship and news about the birthday party planned for the summer of 2020!

Class Notes

1969

Russell W. Hall died suddenly, Sunday, November 17, 2019 at Tucson Medical Center. In addition to graduating from Newman he was a 1973 graduate of St. Ambrose University.

1970

The class of 1970 has scheduled their **50 year reunion** for September 5th, Labor Day weekend, 2020. Contact Mary Papoccia at Papoccia8@hotmail.com with ideas.

1974

John T. Beien, 64, of Sterling died unexpectedly on Sunday, October, 20, 2019

1976

Randy & Jean (Rose) Schutt will celebrate their 35th wedding anniversary on August 17, 2020. They are the parents of **Jonathon '05 and Jacob '08**, both of Rock Falls.

1994

Daniel McCue received his Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Leadership from Spaulding University, Louisville, Kentucky in December 2019. in early 2020, Dan played a critical role in creating PPE for local health care workers in the Louisville area.

1998

Courtney Hill is engaged to married to Kevin Moench in April 2020 in Scottsdale, AZ.

University. She will begin Medical School in July at Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences.

2004

Nick Mahan received his Bachelor's Degree in Legal Studies from Bellevue University on January 25, 2020

2007

Megan (Summers) Larson and her husband, Zach, welcomed a son, Bryce Edward Larson, on March 17, 2020. He is welcomed home by Kaylee (11) and Easton (5).

2009

Caitlin (Summers) Seeley and her husband, Mike, welcomed a daughter, Eleanor Rose, on February 14, 2020. She is welcomed home by her brother, Landon (3).

2017

Megan Carney has graduated Magna Cum Laude with her degree in Medical Biology from Missouri Southern State

*In loving memory...*

Arthur J. Johnson, 94, of Sterling, died peacefully April 7, 2020 at his home, surrounded by his loving family. Art was a devoted Catholic and member of St. Mary's Catholic Church, Sterling. He was a long-standing member of the Rock Falls Rotary Club, a United Way Board member, A Rock Falls Chamber member and served on many other local boards. He was a philanthropist who contributed to numerous local organizations, school, sporting teams and community events. Newman Central Catholic has been touched by his generosity and we are eternally grateful. Art has touched many lives and leaves behind many people to treasure his memory including his daughter, **Kathy Peugh, '69**.

Doris Marie Cox, 88, of Sterling died peacefully on Friday, January 17, 2020. Doris served our community as a teacher at Newman Central Catholic High School, St. Mary's Sterling and St. Andrews.

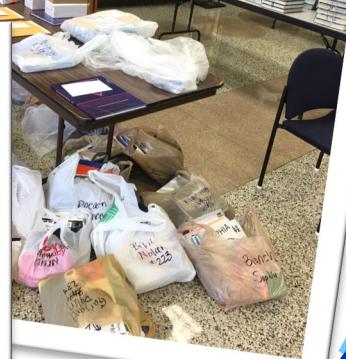
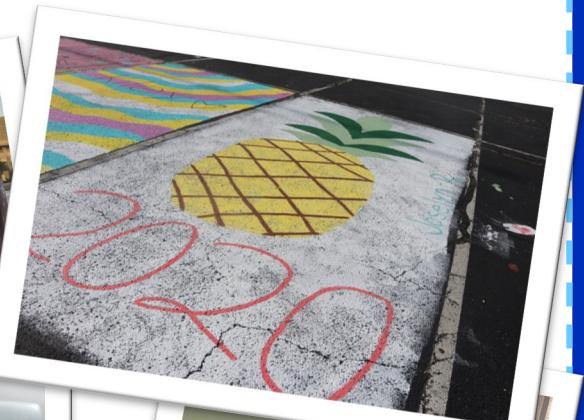




It's been a different year...



...quite possibly the year we needed.





Congratulations Class of 2020.

Class of 2020 Awards and Highlights

Spring 2020 Sports Recognition

National Decision Day 2020

Honor your Class of 2020 graduate and support Newman Central Catholic High School with a brick in the Prayer Garden. You may access the order form on our website and by [clicking here](#).





Thank you for supporting Newman Central Catholic High School



With Christ our Cornerstone and rooted in our Catholic faith, Newman Central Catholic High School fosters spiritual development, academic excellence, responsibility to self and service to others.

Many thanks and blessings to the philanthropic Newman family and private donors who have enabled us to assist families who have been financially affected by the Covid-19 crisis with tuition and lunch balances.

Your generosity is greatly appreciated and has made a difference that shall not go unnoticed.

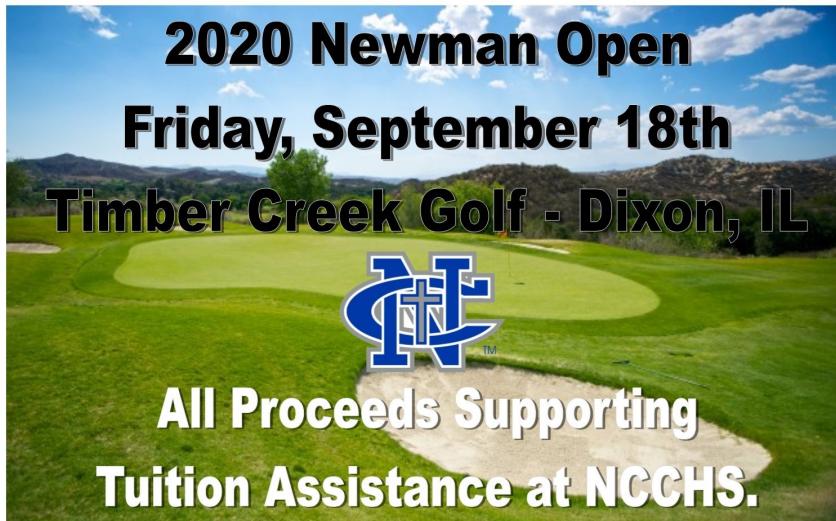
Newman Central Catholic High School



[Click Here](#) to donate online or mail your donation to:

Newman Central Catholic High School
1101 W. 23rd Street
Sterling IL 61081

SAVE THE DATE!



Additional Information To Follow

Tax Deductible Gifting available online or by mail.

Donate [online](#) at www.newmancchs.org by clicking on the "[Giving/Payments](#)" tab in the upper right corner.

When mailing your donation please include this form:

Please accept my tax deductible gift of \$_____ Check here to remain anonymous.

Check #_____ payable to Newman Central Catholic High School (NCCHS)

One Time Charge: I authorize Newman to charge via credit card the full amount of my donation.

Automatic Monthly gift Pledge: I authorize Newman to charge my credit card \$_____ per month from ____ / ____ to ____ / ____.

Credit Card Number: _____ Exp. Date _____ CVV# _____

Name on Card (please print) _____ Signature (required) _____

Name: _____ Graduation Year: _____ E-mail: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____