



BRINGING GERMAN TO LIFE AT ST. MARY'S

Of all the possible categories of membership in the St. Mary's community, Debora McCreedy may belong to the most – she is an alumna, class of '79; a current parent; an alumni parent; and a faculty member. Small wonder that when people talk about St. Mary's, they invariably end up talking about Debora.

And rightfully so. Even before 'globalism' became part of our mandate, Debora expanded the world consciousness of St. Mary's students by introducing them to German with a fluency and authenticity born of the years she spent in Germany, assimilating and absorbing the language and culture.

After graduating from St. Mary's in 1979, Debora attended the University of Oregon and Oregon State. She spent a year abroad, studying French in Poitiers, France on a Rotary Study Abroad Scholarship. With one more year of classes required to finish her degree, she moved on to Hessen, Germany, where she taught English on a Fulbright Teaching Assistantship.

Afterwards, Debora stayed on in Germany, and focused on teaching English to adults. For almost three years, she taught professionals from the business world, as well as officers and GIs at several military bases in the southern region of Germany.

Near the end of 1986, Debora returned to Medford. By winter of '87, she had been hired by her high school alma mater to teach French and German. Shortly after her arrival, she and Alan McCreedy met at the copy machine, and the rest, as the saying goes, is history. A year and a half later, they were married. This June, they celebrated the graduation from St. Mary's of their son, Niko, and will reprise their roles as 'Senior' parents in 2009, with Anna, and again in 2011, with Lindsay.

In 1995, Debora engaged St. Mary's in the German American Partnership Program

(GAPP). GAPP facilitates exchange programs between American and German Schools.

Originally, Debora intended to seek out a school in southern Germany, where she had lived, studied and taught. But a friend, a new teacher at the Gymnasium in Ochsenhausen, alerted her to the fact that the Gymnasium was engaged in a parallel search for an American high school to partner with. And thus another thriving, long-lasting McCreedy match was made – Ochsenhausen and St. Mary's became exchange partners.



- continued page 2



Debora McCreedy - Bringing German To Life *(continued)*

The program has been an enormous success. Each and every year in the spring, twenty to twenty-four German 11th graders arrive at our door; while here in Medford, they live with host families from the St. Mary's community, attend classes with their American counterparts, and travel to local points of interest such as Crater Lake.

In alternating years, between fifteen and twenty St. Mary's students travel to Germany. They spend 9 days visiting at least four major cities in Europe – Vienna, Berlin, Munich, Potsdam and Prague have all welcomed our students. Then it's off to Ochsenhausen to live with host families

and attend Gymnasium for two weeks.

In addition to the cultural and linguistic benefits of the program, St. Mary's students return to the United States with a greater understanding of international relations, diplomacy and 'global manners', and deep and abiding friendships that enlarge their horizons and deepen their connection to the world outside our country's borders.

In addition to initiating and sustaining the Ochsenhausen program, Frau McCreedy has nurtured and grown St. Mary's German curriculum. From teaching just German I and II when she first arrived, Frau McCreedy has moved to overseeing and

teaching a program that offers German I, II, III, IV, V, and AP German. She is ably assisted by instructor Karin Watson, and will welcome a new, half-time instructor in the fall, to help meet the demand of the growing numbers of students enrolling in German courses.

It is St. Mary's mission to produce graduates who move productively, compassionately, and with intentional and purposeful steps through the world. Frau Debora McCreedy is such a graduate, and now plays a major role in continuing that mission with today's students.