GOLDEN STARS
Mary Star High Student Body President Ashia Arrington, Monsignor Patrick Gallagher, Rector Father Nicholas Tacito and Principal Rita Dever Lead the School in Celebrating the 50 Year Anniversary of the First Graduating Class

The Mary Star High Issue
Stars’ Grads Buzz on Fond Memories
Mary Star’s Great Teams and Athletes
The History of Mary Star High

A Press-Telegram Publication
LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Congratulations Mary Star High School!

This year marks the 50th Anniversary of Mary Star High’s first graduating class. The Class of ’54 featured 46 grads, who received their diplomas from Cardinal James Francis McIntyre.

In going around town and speaking with people that are associated with Mary Star, a few common themes emerge. First, the familial atmosphere of attending a small school created a camaraderie that stayed with grads for their entire lives. On page 14, various generations of Mary Star alum speak about their fondest high school memories.

Another aspect of going to a small school is always being the underdog. It is incredible how many Mary Star teams have amazing tales of David slaying Goliath on the field of sport. The granddaddy of those stories is the 1960 Stars’ football squad, which made an improbable run to the CIF championship game with the few remaining boys who hadn’t enrolled in the new all-boys Fermin Lasuen High School. Their story and the stories of other great Mary Star teams begin on page 34.

With great teams come great players. The hardest part of doing this issue was picking the all time best athletes to ever wear the blue and gold. A huge thank you to Mel Bobich for helping me develop a list of players to choose from and more thanks to Mike Marinkovich and Eddie Sullivan. Any complaints on athletes we chose (or didn’t choose) should be directed at them :) but to hedge my bets, I’m calling the list, “Ten of the Best Athletes” as opposed to being a definitive Top Ten.

The passion that Mary Star invokes in people associated with the school is quite evident in Mel Bobich’s family. Mel is proud of the fact that all seven of his children spent all 12 years of their elementary, middle school and high school years at Mary Star.

This issue would not have come together without the great assistance of the Mary Star High staff. Principal Rita Dever and Rector Father Nicholas Tacito have been my best...and of course, thank you to the advertisers whose support allowed us to do this special issue.

Unfortunately, one Mary Star graduate who was not around (at least on earth) to see this issue was Andy Vitalich. Vitalich, who I will always remember as Mr. V passed away this month after a battle with Parkinson’s Disease. I have said this before, but it bears repeating, there is no way that any sixth grade teacher could be better than the sixth grade teacher that Mr. V was to me and to legions of kids that had the fortune to attend Taper Avenue Elementary School. I went to Leland, White Point, Taper, Dodson, San Pedro High, Harbor College and USC, and my favorite year of school was 6th grade.

Mr. V and his partner in crime Mr. Richards (my second favorite teacher of all time) taught smart, challenging classes in a no-nonsense style that were still incredibly fun. Late for class? You got push-ups. Talking in class? I’m not kidding, a dodge ball bounced off your head. And we loved it.

As good as the classes were, it was the extracurricular activities that these men developed for the students that made school a joy. We had team sports during recess, lunch and after school that were as competitive as any league in town. Not a jock? Then maybe the 6th Grade Movie was your bag. Every year the 6th graders wrote a script that was usually adapted from a classic and made a film that starred all of the students from the class.

If there is a special place in heaven for ex-teachers, I am sure that Mr. V will be up there organizing some sort of athletic competition or watching his beloved Trojans (another school we share) play for another national championship in football next year.

While reminiscing on those old days, I have to also mention the sad passing of an era is coming with the closing of DiCarlo’s Bakery. I remember playing third base at Eastview Little League for the Yankees and drooling at the sweet aroma of bread coming over the outfield fence. In its place, residents of that area, for the last few years, have been getting the sour smell of gas emanating from the refinery just behind the Seven-Eleven store – and now the tasty wafts of bread being baked will not be around to offset that.

Eastview has existed for over 40 years because of the generosity of DiCarlo’s, who allowed the league to use land they owned for their two fields. Let’s hope that whoever buys that property has the good sense to let Eastview Little League keep their tradition of great baseball going. See page 60 for the latest crop of little leaguers playing at Eastview.

Until next month....

Sincerely,

Jack Baric

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Ashia Arrington, Monsignor Patrick Gallagher, Father Nicholas Tacito and Rita Dever
Photo by Deverill Weekes

The Mary Star High Golden Anniversary Issue
Night of A Thousand Stars

Always one of the most spectacular nights of the social season, this year the “Night of A Thousand Stars” benefit for Mary Star High School will take extravagance up another notch. This year’s event, “Hollywood Golden Ages,” a glamorous dinner, dance and auction will take place on the grand dame of ocean liners, the RMS Queen Mary in Long Beach.

“Night of a Thousand Stars” Chairperson Jennifer Whitley and Co-Chair, Linda D’Ambrosi expect nearly 500 guests, clad in black-tie and evening gowns, to climb aboard the ship and enjoy the festivities. As guests arrive they will be able to peruse the silent auction tables as they sip cocktails from the iced martini bar.

The silent auction is always a favorite at this event and this year it will include items such as a trip to Hawaii, Clipper box tickets, wine tasting, guest on the Oprah Winfrey Show, a beautiful diamond and ruby pendant, golfing on some of the most elite courses in the world, and two original paintings by artist Florence Strauss of the first Mary Star church, built in 1889. All proceeds from the auction and event promote academic achievement and extracurricular activities at Mary Star High.

As guests finish their drinks and auction bids, and their appetites begin to open up, they will proceed into the Grand Salon for a delicious sit down dinner. The evening will conclude with a return to the Hollywood Golden Ages as guests dance to the Don Ross Band’s big band tunes of yesteryear.

“The Night of A Thousand Stars” is on April 24 from 5 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. at the RMS Queen Mary in Long Beach. Tickets may be purchased by calling Pam at Mary Star High at 310-547-1138.

Mystery Book Party

Mystery writer John Shannon has finally returned home. The San Pedro native has written a highly acclaimed series of mystery novels that take his protagonist, private investigator Jack Liffey, to all points of Greater Los Angeles. Past novels have been set in East LA, and among Vietnamese American and Iranian American communities.

Shannon’s latest, Terminal Island, brings him and Liffey to their shared hometown of San Pedro where the P.I. is investigating a mysterious series of accidents. At each scene, Japanese playing cards are found with cryptic notes attached. The story touches on memories of the destruction of the Japanese American fishing village, which occurred on Terminal Island during WWII.

San Pedrans wishing to meet Shannon will have the opportunity at a party that the Friends of the San Pedro Library are hosting to launch Terminal Island. The event, from 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 18, will include light refreshments.

Bridging the Gap

A “who’s who” of Los Angeles political and law enforcement figures are Honorary Chairpersons for a fundraiser benefiting the Gang Alternatives Program (GAP). The chairperson line-up for the annual “Bridging the Gap” event include Los Angeles Mayor James Hahn, County Supervisor Don Knabe, Councilwoman Janice Hahn, Sheriff Lee Baca, and Chief of Police William Bratton.

GAP’s ability to coordinate such a list of local luminaries speaks volumes about the importance of its work. The vision of the 17-year-old non-profit organization is to eliminate gangs in the Harbor Area. Mitch Maricich, one of the original founders of GAP, was so passionate that this goal was absolutely achievable, that the organization named an award in his memory which will this year be presented at the fundraiser to Janice Hahn.

Janice Hahn was the board president of GAP in 1999-2000. In an article last year in San Pedro Magazine about GAP, Hahn said, “I was originally drawn to them through their graffiti removal program…. It was the first time in my mind that I felt something would work to keep kids out of gangs.”

GAP fights gang activity primarily in three ways: First, they provide safe alternatives to young people so that the kids have other options available to them and can say no to gangs. Second, GAP provides 10-week “Parent Projects,” where experts train parents of youth that are out of control. And third, GAP provides a graffiti removal program that cleans up approximately 140,000 square feet of graffiti each month throughout the Harbor Area and Watts.

At the “Bridge the Gap” event, LAUSD Board Member and Executive Director of the Boys & Girls Club of San Pedro, Mike Lansing will be the keynote speaker addressing gang issues and the impact that GAP has made in the community.

The “Bridge the Gap” dinner is on April 3 from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. at the Sheraton Los Angeles Harbor. Tickets are $100 or $925 for a table of ten. For tickets and more information on GAP, call their office at 310-519-7233.

GAP GANG ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM
Barbara Aresco Mancusi Class of ’54
I was the first Homecoming Queen. I think the teams voted on the Homecoming Queen and they announced it at the game. It was a complete surprise and then they had a dance afterwards. It was pretty much the same as now, except you couldn’t have any dresses off the shoulder, you had to be covered up.

At the time it just happened, but it seems like over the years it became more important. It was a lot of fun and it meant a lot.

Robert Bobich Class of ’89
What I remember most about Mary Star is the camaraderie and the familial atmosphere. Since it was such a small school, everybody stuck together and there was a small town atmosphere. There were so many different activities and in sports we were always the underdog because we were smaller. We were always working together and fighting together.

Specifically, the main things I remember are the projects that we worked on throughout the night. One incident jumps out when we were working on yearbook deadlines. We did an all-nighter and did whatever it took to get it done. Technically, we weren’t supposed to be there because it was after hours on a Sunday, but people were so dedicated to get the project completed that (laughs) we broke into the school to get it done on time. It was just a great atmosphere to work together with people that we grew up with in San Pedro.

Monica Dever Class of ’65
The lasting friendships. Even today, after so many years, I’m still friends with a lot of the people I went to school with. Even though they’ve gone on to different types of careers, we’re still in touch. And even though we may only see each other once every couple of years, the friendship is still there. That’s about the best thing about Mary Star, the close bond that we have with the kids we went to school with.

Yvette Palacios Class of ’81
The Homecoming dance in, I think it was my sophomore year, I lived out my rock and roll fantasy. I got up on stage with my two best friends Cathy Robles and Nadine Viramontes, now Viramontes Sestich, and we sang “Barracuda” (by Heart) with the band. We couldn’t remember the words; all we could remember was Barracuda. We would just hum along and then yell, ‘Barracuda!’ We stood up there for the whole song getting booed, but we didn’t care, we had the best time. And then we jumped off the stage. That’s a good memory.

Therese Fitzgerald Class of ’54
My fondest memory was meeting the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart who founded the school and they were so wonderful. I was kind of dragged kicking and screaming to Catholic school by my mother. This was the first year that the school opened. I came across this nun, Sister Mary James, who must have been mid-20s at the oldest. A lot of people remember her. She had big blue eyes and a big smile that was warmly welcoming, and I thought, ‘Ah, well maybe this won’t be so bad after all.’ And four years later it was the end of a wonderful experience.

Paul Biazevich Class of ’77
At first I was thinking about the whole experience of playing high school football and the camaraderie that you build with your teammates. But one story came out when I thought of the time that I played high school football. I only played one year, my sophomore year. I never played much. But one game I went in on an extra point attempt and I broke through the line and I was able to block the kick. Well, I was really excited and thinking this was great and was going to be my fifteen seconds of fame — not minutes, seconds – when I heard Tiger Reese on the PA system go, ‘Extra point attempt blocked by Tim Wrightman.’

At the time I didn’t think much of it, but later on Tim went on to an All American career at UCLA. He then went to the Chicago Bears and won a Super Bowl ring with them. And I couldn’t even get credit for blocking an extra point in a high school football game. It went to him. I thought that was a funny little story about a backup player who finally did something good, but couldn’t even get credit for that (laughs).
He was a great guy. A lifelong friend until he passed away recently. His influence and impact on a lot of kids is hard to quantify for so many years for thousands of people. Nick was such a wonderful individual that did so much good in San Pedro.

Nick was such a wonderful individual that did so much good in San Pedro. There are so many memories. It was such a great experience, but I think the real highlight was playing football for Nick Trani. We had one hell of a football team right from the beginning. I think we had 24 boys in the senior class so we didn’t have a lot to pick from, but there were good athletes.

Mary Hobus Arzuman Class of ’74
The auditorium played a major role in hosting some of my best high school memories. We used it for dances, the academic and sports banquets, the school plays, talent shows and chorus productions, color day assemblies, basketball and volleyball games, and the junior ring ceremony.

What I remember most are the school dances. They included local bands like Ambrosia or Cold Duck. We danced to live bands. I loved that. The dances were always in the auditorium. We had those color sheet flyers and we’d post them all over town that we were having a dance. There was a dress code and the boys had to wear a tie so we’d be passing ties out the auditorium window.

Ray Martin Class of ’54
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The Buzz continued

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Mike Ringelman Class of ’75
My fondest memories have to do with playing football. Two things stick out. Back in those days, Tiger Reese announced Mary Star home games. He paced up and down the sidelines with his microphone. One thing I always remembered is that in his own unique style he’d always announce the center’s name on every play. So it was, “Ringelman up over the ball, DiLeva calling signals.” So my name got called out forty times a game.

And the other thing was the very first Mary Star – San Pedro football game. We knew we were in for it because all of the kids I had grown up with in little league and Pop Warner, they were all going to Pedro. On the opening kickoff we had this onside kick play where we lined up on one hash mark and the guy kicked a big lofting ball. I hit this guy in the chest just as the ball came to him and he fumbled the ball and we recovered it. We marched down the field and I think we fumbled at the one-yard line, but that was the whole game for us — just that play. They went on to beat us 30-something to 6, but we showed them that we could play with them for at least the first quarter.

Rosemarie Mancini Ganoe Class of ’72
The thing I remember best was Color Day. It was our day out of school. We cruised around town and wherever you went, it was a big thing. The town really supported it. The senior Color Day was your biggest day and we got a lot of attention on that day.

The cars we cruised around in were all classics and the street was full with cars from ’48, ’52, ’54, and the car I was in was a ’57 Chevy. It was two-tone and we decorated it with flowers. We made the flowers out of Kleenex Tissues. We fluffed them for days, tied them to strings, which we kept attaching to our car until it was covered. Our sweaters matched the colors of the flowers on our cars. We also had record players inside of our glove compartments playing oldies.

Ralph DiLeva Class of ’60
I think just the interaction with all the other kids that went to Mary Star is what I remember most. Most of us were kids from Old World ethnic families, fishermen families and stuff like that. Many of the parents couldn’t even understand English. When I started school a lot of us didn’t speak English so we had to learn. We all dealt with that and still had a good time together.

Sports and school taught us all the basic stuff that we needed to get along and we all did pretty well. We had great sports activities. I think we only had football, basketball and baseball, but everyone kind of cheered for everybody else. We used to go down to the old Admiral Leigh gym for basketball practice. It was the old YMCA down on Palos Verdes Street. It was a big thing to go down there to play and practice because they had fiberglass backboards, which was new then. For us it was a big deal even though when you dribbled down the court, the ball would thump every once in a while because the floor had some soft spots.

Tony Gioiello Class of ’79
I played football at Mary Star for Joe Radisch. It was just a great experience working together under Joe at what you could call this machine, the football team. When you ran into that locker room they had a statement that said, “To say the word can’t is to admit defeat” — and that kind of sticks with you after four years.

Back then you didn’t appreciate that you were developing your character and a good work ethic — you only thought, ‘I’m getting my butt kicked everyday in practice.’ We had a lot of fun doing it, but looking back now, I developed a work ethic that I’ve taken with me ever since I left the high school in everything that I’ve done, whether it be putting everything into what I’m doing at work or at home with the family. I think it really just developed how I approached life.
Shawn Deeter Class of ’99
I just have great overall memories of the environment, of knowing everybody, and just hanging out with a bunch of friends that I’ve kept in contact with to this day. I still see them around. I played baseball at Mary Star. It was fun playing with all of my friends and the coaches were great. A couple of them went to Mary Star and graduated from there so I kind of already knew who they were. The trips to the away games on the buses were fun and made for good times.

Nick Uruburu Class of ’61
My fondest memory is the overall feeling that I came away with from being able to go to Mary Star. It was just such a family type of atmosphere and I made great friends there. The religious education meant a great deal to my family and me. I had the opportunity to participate in anything that I wanted to participate in because it was so small — it was just great. The nuns taught us and we had a really wonderful relationship with them. It was probably the most positive experience of my life.

Erma Albano Camello Class of ’71
Mary Star was a very small school and it was an all-girls high school, so everyone knew each other by their first name, which was really fun. The guys from Fermin Lasuen and San Pedro High School would cruise by and talk to everyone. We would chit chat and visit. We really enjoyed that.

We also had girls’ sports. Back then we only had volleyball and basketball. The games were great. We had tournaments and it was just a fun time. It was a different time, but a great time.

Chuck Taylor Class of ’55
I think my fondest memory would have to be the nuns. All the nuns taught us and they acted tough, but they had hearts of gold. The boys, we opened the door for them and we stood up when they came in the room. They taught us courtesy and respect.

It was fun having them teach us, even on the football team. After the games at Daniels Field, the football team would go over to them. There was an old pepper tree and we would gather under the pepper tree and sing our alma mater to the nuns. Win or lose, we would sing to them from under that tree.

Eddie Sullivan Class of ’75
Because we were the first male class to graduate from Mary Star after Fermin Lasuen closed, there was initially a 7-1 ratio of girls to guys so we had to learn to deal with a lot of that fun — and that’s it exactly what it was. It turned out to be a lot of fun and a lot of great friendships developed, even with females that were older than us, and that a lot of us still keep in touch with today, which is great.

And secondly would be the sports side of things. Because we were the first class, we were extremely small in numbers, but it was a very tough and strong group. A lot of guys went on to play in college, not just at the JC level, but at the university level. Mary Star really gave us an opportunity to make a lot of good friendships and to build a lot of good character.

From an academic standpoint, I can’t tell you that the nuns slapped me on the hand. I think we were somewhat catered to because we were the first male class. It wasn’t as disciplined as it is right now, but good things happened because we all did well in college and got good jobs.
Anna Marie Ponce De Leon Andrie Class of ‘81
Teacher
I don’t really have just one moment that stands out. I was a cheerleader so I had many magical moments at Mary Star. I’m the second of six kids that went here from 1977 to 1991, when my last brother graduated. I started teaching here in 1988-89 and my brother was still here. So I’ve never really left Mary Star and to narrow it down to a fondest memory is so hard, but I’d have to say the best memory of high school was my cheer squad and the athletic games. The whole experience has been my fondest memory and it’s still going. Mary Star is full of tradition and that’s why I’ve stayed here so long. I can truly say that Mary Star is my home away from home.

Christina Skacan Class of ‘82
Teacher
When I went to Mary Star it was very fun to go to school here. We had outstanding activities that were very aggressively organized by students. We had terrific sports and we had an extremely outgoing student council. In particular, we had a massive drama department that put on plays every spring for an audience in excess of 500 people.

However, what I think is superb is that today our school still has all those great activities, but we are academically more viable than we have ever been in the history of Mary Star High School. Our students today are better prepared to be good citizens in our community than at any time in the 50 years that we have been graduating students. We are much more college prep, we have a much more consistent curriculum that prepares students to survive and thrive in the real world.

Dino Andrie Class of ‘79
Football Coach
Looking back, I’d say my most memorable moment in high school was playing football. The overall football experience was very positive here as a player. The two years I played on the varsity we won two league championships in ’77 and ’78. In ’77 we went to the semifinals and we went to the quarterfinals in ’78. All of the fond memories that I have always include having something to do with friends and they have turned into lifelong friendships. Aside from a good education, those friendships are the biggest thing that I got out of Mary Star.

Rick Ibarra Class of ’89
Baseball Coach
I had a lot of fond memories at Mary Star. But I think the best thing is that my wife was a classmate of mine and we went on our first date while we were seniors at Mary Star. And that first date was our prom. That was in ’89 and in ’97 we got married.

The other memories that stand out are playing sports. I remember the Friday night walks down the alley when I played football and how quiet and intense that walk was from the locker room to Daniels Field to play football at night. Our gym was small, but it was jam packed when I played basketball here. And with baseball, there’s no greater place to be than our baseball field out on the cliffs (at Royal Palms). I spent time there as a player and now as a coach and there’s no better place to be after school.

Mike Marinkovich Class of ‘81
Athletic Director
I’ve spent the majority of my years either as a student or working here. The street I grew up on was with the families of Libby DiBernardo and Pete Costa and all of the kids went to Mary Star. You didn’t even think of these other schools because we all went to Mary Star and carpooled together. At one point in time, we had somebody on the block in 10 of the 12 classes at Mary Star from grade school to high school.

And now coming back as a teacher, the school has changed a little bit, but the community hasn’t changed that much. It’s nice now where I get to the age where I have a lot of students who I went to school with their parents. I coached the JV football team this year and one of the attractive things was that I had a bunch of kids whose dads played with either my brother or me. You feel a little bit more of a responsibility because of those connections, which is a nice thing.

Esther DiMeglio Marovich Class of ‘58
Accounts Receivable Clerk
One of the most memorable moments came when I got to crown the statue of the Blessed Mother in my senior year, which was a big deal back then. It was done every year in May. May is the month of Mary and Catholics honor her in May. On one of the Sundays all of the little kids would dress in their communion outfits and all the societies of the parish would have a big procession around the block, go in the church and have a ceremony. That’s where I crowned the Blessed Mother.
Fitzgerald, now a principal at Nativity Catholic School in Torrance, adds, “It became a very successful class.”

Martin is a prime example of the career success that the Class of ’54 enjoyed. Now retired, Martin was the Chairman and CEO of Coast Federal Bank, which had approximately 100 branches in California before Martin sold the company in 1998. Martin speaks highly of his alma mater’s ability to provide a full slate of activities right from the very beginning. “They had a whole spectrum of academic classes from chemistry down to the basics. And they had a full athletic program for boys and girls, everything from basketball, baseball and football to girl’s basketball and volleyball.”

The school was originally staffed with teachers and administrators who primarily came from the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary order. Fitzgerald recalls, “The first principal was Sister Nepomucen from Nova Scotia. She was amazing – tough as nails on the outside, but soft in the heart. She made sure all those boys graduated. She was shaking all their hands in the back of the auditorium (when they did).”

A nun that was a favorite teacher for many of the students was Sister Mary James, now Ruth Murray. “She had big blue eyes and a big smile that was warmly welcoming,” recalls Fitzgerald. Murray fondly remembers her time as a teacher at Mary Star. “I realize now how fortunate I was as a young teacher to have the kind of students that I did. They were affectionate, loving and loyal and it was a joy walking into the classroom everyday.”

“Just being in the first class made high school more special,” observes Ray Martin, Mary Star High’s first student body president. Martin’s classmate, Therese Fitzgerald concurs, “It was a lot of fun because we were the top dogs all the way through.”

“The first principal was Sister Nepomucen from Nova Scotia. She was amazing – tough as nails on the outside, but soft in the heart.

Therese Fitzgerald

Speak to any number of Mary Star students or graduates, and the camaraderie and familial atmosphere that comes with going to this small school will inevitably come up – and it has always been that way. Barbara Aresco Mancusi, the school’s first homecoming queen, who graduated in 1954 with Martin and Fitzgerald, explains, “We had a small class and so we were very close. I made very good friends at Mary Star.”

Aside from developing stronger friendships, many students point out that another benefit they receive, due to the small size of the school, is the extra attention that the Mary Star faculty gives to them. Current student body president, Ashia Arrington jokes, “Sometimes you think, ‘Why are they (the faculty) always there?’ But it’s better than them not caring at all. It’s only for our safety and our protection and they want us to do well.”

The Mary Star staff prides itself on the special care that they give to their students, which includes an emphasis on the Catholic faith. Mary Star High Rector, Father Nicholas Tacito explains, “I think it’s appealing to parents that students interact here with priests who care about their souls and in trying to get the students to heaven.”
Mary Star Pastor, Monsignor Patrick Gallagher comments on the importance that the school places on giving its students a more full understanding of the Catholic faith. “We give them an overall holistic view of their education — not only are they trained academically and mentally, but also from a religious and faith point of view. It's important for developing the full potential of every student that comes here.”

Mary Star first opened its doors to elementary school students in 1914. The construction of the school was supervised by Mary Star Pastor, Father Patrick McGrath and was staffed by the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In 1921, Mary Star purchased the land between Cabrillo and Meyler streets, where the current parish sits, and in 1923, a new building was completed to house the elementary school.

Monsignor George Scott was assigned to Mary Star as its pastor in 1946. “Monsignor was sent down here to an area where no priest wanted to come. It was like the outpost of the archdiocese,” explains Sam Palmer. Palmer, a marketing executive in the telecommunications industry, was the chairman of the Mary Star Fiesta for 20 years, beginning in 1962, and worked closely with Scott over many of those years. He adds, “But Monsignor was such a dynamic individual and such a hard worker that whatever he wanted, he wanted to do it right.”

And what Scott wanted the most was to build a new church and high school on the property where the elementary school was situated. “Mary Star High School was a dream realized by Monsignor Scott,” says Martin. Palmer agrees, “Monsignor Scott had a grand, glorious idea of what he wanted to do. He looked at this ground and he said, ‘This is where I want to build my high school and I want to build my church.’ So we started raising money.”

Just like Monsignor Scott, Mary Star’s current pastor, Monsignor Gallagher has a vision to create a new campus to serve students in San Pedro. “It was a series of events that I think are providential,” claims Gallagher about how the original plans came about to build the new campus on the old Navy Housing property in Northern San Pedro.

Gallagher explains that the new priests from the Norbertine order had just arrived to Mary Star and were looking for housing when the old Navy Housing property became available. And, on almost the exact same day, the superintendent of schools from the archdiocese was at Mary Star working on how to make the school better. Gallagher explains, “Although we didn’t think it would be possible for us, we applied for the Navy Housing land and the local community was very enthusiastic that we receive it.”

However, Gallagher hasn’t always had the full support of the archdiocese in his efforts.
Although Mary Star is one of the largest Catholic parishes west of the Mississippi River, Gallagher understands why Cardinal Roger Mahony, the archbishop of Los Angeles has been reticent to offer his full support. He says, “The archbishop has to have a broader vision. He maybe cannot be building a new school out here in the suburbs while at the same time trying very desperately to keep schools in the inner city open.”

And so, although they didn’t have the full support of the archdiocese, Mary Star forged ahead and launched plans to build the new campus. Almost 10 years after they began the campaign, Mary Star recently announced that they had cleared the final hurdle in the long process. They hope to have a groundbreaking in August of this year and to open the campus in the fall of 2005. The new campus will be for the high school only, while elementary and middle school students will continue to go to school at Mary Star’s current facilities adjacent to the church.

The new campus will allow Mary Star to expand enrollment from 465 high school students to 600. Mary Star currently has a waiting list of about 35 people per class year and 150 total for the high school. “We try and offer students on the waiting list a spot when it opens up, but usually by then they’ve found another school and don’t want to transfer. It’s horrible to have to turn these kids away,” says Dever.

Mary Star’s waiting list contrasts the popular perception that people are running from the Catholic Church as a result of the scandal brought on by some of their priests. Dever says, “I think that people recognize the Church versus the behavior of individuals and I think that people still believe in the Church and the value of a Catholic education. They know who we are and they love having the fathers here. Gallagher adds, “When you look at the scandals we’ve had throughout the Church, it’s horrible, but at the same time where people know their priests, they feel very comfortable.”

The growth that Mary Star hopes to experience in the near future is opposite of the reality that the school faced in the late ‘50s. The Sepulveda family had donated property on Western Avenue to the Catholic Church that the archdiocese felt would make an excellent place for a new high school that would serve Catholic students from throughout the South Bay area. Palmer explains, “They figured that it was necessary for a school of that size to be here. The population started to grow greatly in San Pedro and since most of the people here were Catholics, they thought it would be the ideal place for a major high school.”

Monsignor Scott had other ideas. He refused to give up his high school and he made a compromise with the archdiocese. “He told the cardinal that he could have Fermin Lasuen as long as it was a boys’ school only and that he could keep his girls’ high school,” says Palmer.

Monsignor Scott was able to stand his ground and keep Mary Star High from closing because he wielded huge influence in local Catholic Church politics. In fact, when Scott dreamed of moving Mary Star from its location on 9th and Centre to build the new church, he had a personal audience with Pope Pius XII in Rome to discuss the issue. Scott derived much of his power from his father, Joe Scott, a prominent attorney and big time operator in the Republican Party who was viewed by many as the right hand man to Cardinal McIntyre. “Whenever Monsignor Scott didn’t want to do something, he called his dad,” recalls Palmer.

In 1959, Fermin Lasuen opened its doors to 120 boys. In addition to the girls, who would remain at Mary Star, the boys who had already begun high school were allowed to complete their studies and graduate from there. With the number of boys dwindling, the stage was set for the most storied football season in Mary Star history.

Nick Trani, who had coached the first Mary Star football team, returned to coach a group of 27 boys — among the 61 boys left on campus. The

To achieve what we had achieved as such a small group, it was just a great feeling.

Nick Uruburu

Father Norbert Wood, the former Mary Star priest and principal that brought priests from the Norbertine order to teach at the school.
team made an unlikely run to the CIF championship game against San Luis Obisbo, where they were beaten 13-6. Along the way, the Stars knocked off Brea Olinda in the semifinals, a team that had beaten them the previous year. Nick Uruburu, the Stars quarterback that season, recalls, “There was a tremendous sense of satisfaction, especially when you had beaten the odds that were so stacked against you. To achieve what we had achieved as such a small group, it was just a great feeling.”

The team made such an impact on the community that Trani actually wrote Thin Ice on the Gridiron, a book about the season that many Mary Star grads still possess to this day. Uruburu says about Trani, “Several of us had known him as young, young boys when we were at the Boys Club. We had known him all of our lives and plus, he had known all of our parents. He was such a great man and he was probably the finest football mind I have ever come across.”

With a split student body, both Fermin Lasuen and Mary Star suffered from financial difficulties and Fermin ultimately closed in 1971. Mary Star suffered a blow in the late ‘60s when most of the nuns in the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart order resigned.

In 1965, the Catholic Church issued the Second Vatican Council, which began to liberalize some of its old policies. The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart and Cardinal McIntyre, the archbishop of Los Angeles, couldn’t agree on the pace of the new reforms and, in 1968, approximately 550 of the local 600 Sisters of the Immaculate Heart left and formed their own community. “We had so many nuns here that we were able to do things with the school. All of the nuns had master’s degrees and so they were well educated and well trained. The expense of having to pay for so many new teachers drained us,” explains Palmer.

Mary Star’s fortunes started to turn for the better in 1971 after Fermin Lasuen closed and the first class of boys returned to Mary Star. The high school’s enrollment quickly shot up from 150 to over 300 students. “The boys came back and filled up the school. With a greater attendance came more tuitions and more money and everything seemed to turn up,” says Palmer. Mary Star athletic booster president Mike Ringelman was a member of the first class of boys to return to the school. He fondly recalls, “Being the first group of boys that came back to the school, we were the big men on campus for four years. We didn’t have the big guys beating us down. We were the big guys.”

Although Mary Star’s financial situation had improved with the influx of new students, the school still had a tight budget. Dever, who was a classmate with Ringelman in the Class of ’75, recalls, “It was a very difficult time in Catholic education to find qualified teachers to fill those spots. So, academically, at the time, it wasn’t as challenging as we are now. I don’t think that we had the resources to hire qualified teachers. We were going from the sisters, who took a very small religious stipend, to having to pay a full salary. It was a very difficult time.”
Dever is especially proud that Mary Star has been able to improve the quality of the academic curriculum at the school. She says, “In the nine years that I have been at Mary Star, we have added 14 honors AP courses where students can prepare for college level work, but also can earn high school and college credit concurrently. We have worked very hard to hire a qualified staff. Our SAT scores are increasing each year and I think the numbers speak for themselves, every year we’re sending students to really good colleges.”

Dever is given high praise by many people associated with Mary Star in getting the school on a better academic track. Palmer states, “Rita is probably one of the best principals that we’ve had in a long time. She does a very good job.”

Father Norbert Wood recruited Dever to return as the principal to her alma mater. Wood, a member of the Norbertine order, came to Mary Star from Mater Dei in 1991 and his arrival is often cited as a turning point for the school. “He was a dynamic individual who could charm your socks off. He became Honorary Mayor of San Pedro and did all the things that you’re supposed to do when you are doing PR,” says Palmer.

Soon after Wood arrived, an additional five Norbertines came to Mary Star and joined the school as teachers. The Norbertines are impossible to miss with their long flowing white robes. Their presence is often positively credited for bringing a Catholic atmosphere back to the school. Palmer explains, “The parents said, ‘Gee, there’s a Catholic school with some religion back in it.’ And they were happy with it.” Dever adds, “I think that they definitely make a strong statement about the Catholic identity in the school.”

The familial atmosphere, where everybody knows everybody and often their families too, is often cited as one of the best things about Mary Star. Tacito, who himself is a Norbertine priest, believes that a Catholic education is a natural extension of the family atmosphere that the school fosters. He says, “Oftentimes the spiritual life is neglected in a student. We like to see ourselves as reinforcement to what families teach at home.”

It is the emphasis on family and lifelong friendships that almost everyone points to when speaking about their experiences at Mary Star. Fitzgerald mentions that it has remained consistent from the time she graduated in the original Class of ’54, all the way to the present 50 years later. She says, “To be honest with you, except for the absence of the Immaculate Heart nuns, the school’s very much the same. It’s very familial and warm where you form lifelong friendships. I think that’s a tribute to the Norbertine fathers and to Rita Dever. I can call Rita and ask, ‘How’s so and so doing?’ She knows who they are, what they’re doing, what activities they’re in, where they’re excelling, if they’re having any problems. She doesn’t have to say, ‘Just a minute, let me check the records.’”

As Arrington and her Class of 2004 start Mary Star High down the road toward the next 50 years, she is asked what message she would like to give to the community and to her fellow grads. She says, “We all came to this school as individuals and we’re leaving as a family with all the experience and skills that we’ve learned and with our faith strengthened by Mary Star. Hopefully we will be able to apply that to our lives and make this world a better place.”
team supporters convinced Monsignor George Scott to play another season.

Nick Trani, who had coached the Stars when the school first opened in 1951, returned to coach the 1960 team. He thought so much about the squad that he ended up writing a book about the season called, *Thin Ice on the Gridiron*. Trani’s players clearly loved and respected him. Ray Martin, Mary Star’s first student body president, claims that many boys transferred from San Pedro to Mary Star after they found out that Trani would be the head football coach of the new school. He says, “I think the real highlight (of high school) was playing football for Nick Trani. Nick was such a wonderful individual that did so much good in San Pedro. He was a great guy. Uruburu concurs, “Nick was such a great man and he was probably the finest football mind I have ever come across.”

The Stars marched all the way to the CIF final, until San Luis Obisbo stopped them 13-6. Uruburu recalls, “We just ran out of bodies. Two of our best athletes Joe Bleymaier and Skip Zuanich (who later played at Air Force and Cal Poly respectively) were both injured and we had another guy get injured during the game, so we just ran out of bodies.”

Chapter 24 in *Thin Ice on the Gridiron* is titled, “Sweet Revenge.” Although they lost in the final, the semifinal against Brea Olinda is a game that everyone associated with that Mary Star team will always remember. Aside from being a big playoff game, there was also the factor of revenge because Brea had been the only team to beat the Stars the previous season. “We took that loss really hard because it was the only game we had lost that season. That game was what we pointed for,” says Uruburu.

With time running out, the Stars were trailing 14-13 with the ball on the Brea Olinda four-yard line and it was fourth down. A fake hand off to Vince Mattera (who later played at Notre Dame) brought half the Brea defense crashing into him and Bleymaier streaked untouched into the end zone with the winning touchdown. “There was a tremendous sense of satisfaction, especially when you had beaten the odds that were so stacked against you. To achieve what we had achieved as such a small group, it was just a great feeling,” concludes Uruburu.

The most storied team in the history of Mary Star sports almost didn’t even get a chance to play. With the opening of Fermin Lasuen as an all-boys school, Mary Star shut down its football program and wasn’t planning on playing the 1960 season. However, a group of persistent
At the time, all the girls’ teams competed in the same division, regardless of size. “The little schools had to play against the big schools so it was extraordinary that we went that far,” says Janet Tomich.

Tomich went on to play at Harbor College and Long Beach State and teammate Liz Ludwig Simone later went on to star for the USC Trojans, where she established several school records. Tomich credits their coach, Sandy Simich with preparing them to play a higher brand of basketball. Tomich explains, “She was ahead of her time. She taught us to play like the guys instead of girls, which was pretty advanced for that era.”

Mary Star also placed 3rd in the Saint Anthony’s Tournament that season, at the time the most prestigious girls’ tournament in Southern California. Tomich recalls what made the team special. “We had the blue collar work ethic. We weren’t big. We were small and scrappy and we out hustled everybody.”

Mary Star Football CIF Semifinalists

The Big Band
1977 Football CIF Semifinalists

The Grand Slam
1989 Baseball Santa Fe League Champs

The 1989 baseball team won the league title, but was bounced from the second round of the CIF playoffs. Although the team won an amazing 16 games in a row and set a record for most wins in a season with 19 (which has since been broken), a single play from that year stands out as one of the most exciting moments in the history of Mary Star sports.

The Stars were pitted in a league game against local rival Miraleste, which added to the game’s drama because many of the players from the opposing squads knew each other. In the bottom half of the last inning, with the Stars trailing by a run, George Pisano stepped to the plate with two outs and the bases loaded.

“I was just thinking hit the ball hard between the lines and something good will happen,” recalls Pisano. On the very first pitch, the Miraleste pitcher threw a fastball down the middle of the plate that Pisano knocked over the fence for the only game-winning walk-off grand slam home run in Mary Star history. “It was pretty dramatic,” says Rick Ibarra, Mary Star’s current baseball coach and Pisano’s 1989 teammate.

“I didn’t see the ball fly over the fence. I was just running as hard as I could and the first base coach said, ‘It’s gone,’ and I broke into my home run trot and pumped my fist,” exclaims Pisano. One local paper compared his fist pumping to Kirk Gibson after he hit his famous 1988 World Series home run for the Dodgers against the Oakland A’s. “I remember getting mobbed at the plate,” says Pisano with a laugh. “It was a good time.”

Defense Wins Championships
1994 Football CIF Semifinalists

The 1994 Stars overcame their small numbers to post 11 football wins, the most in the school’s history. Dino Andrie, who was in his first season as head coach that year, says, “It was the smallest team I’ve ever coached. We had only 22 players and one got hurt in the first game of the season so we played the entire year with 21 guys.”

The Stars made it to the semifinals on the strength of their defense, something which pleases Andrie to this day. He says, “I was proud of that team because we were really good on defense and you win championships with defense.” The Stars defenders only gave up 103 points that year in 13 games. In the semifinal game they played Orange Lutheran, a team that averaged over 37 points a game, and shut them out in regulation, but lost 7-6 in overtime.

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Aside from the semifinal defeat, the game that stands out for Andrie the most from that season was Mary Star’s 27-7 quarterfinal victory on the road against Ontario Christian. “We just physically pounded on them and after the first quarter they just threw in the towel,” recalls Andrie.

Nail Biting Victory
1998 Girls Volleyball CIF Finalists

The 1998 Mary Star girls volleyball team finished undefeated during the season at 15-0 and won the first three games of the playoffs before losing in the final to Pasadena Poly. “The season was absolutely amazing,” recalls Sarah Gascon. “We were pretty young with only two seniors on the team.”

Although they made it to the finals, Gascon claims that the Stars’ quarterfinal game against Chadwick was the best game of the run. The match went the full five games, with each game decided by two points. “That’s the best volleyball game Mary Star ever played while I was there. Everybody was biting his or her nails. You live for games like that,” says Gascon.

The Stars’ luck ran out in the final against Pasadena Poly, a perennial volleyball powerhouse in the CIF. Gascon, who just completed a record setting volleyball career at Southeastern Louisiana University, still hasn’t quite gotten over losing. “Even though I’m a college athlete, sometimes I still cry because I was so upset that we lost.”

Total Team Effort
2002 Baseball CIF Finalists

Mary Star coach Rick Ibarra has been with the Stars’ baseball program as a player or coach since 1985 and as far as he can tell, the 2002 squad is the best baseball team in the school’s history. “We had a really tough schedule. At one point in the year we played the Number 7 team in the country, and we lost 3-2. We played some really good teams and we won 23 games,” observes Ibarra.

2002 Mary Star Baseball Squad

The 23 victories is a Mary Star baseball record for the most wins in a season. Ibarra is clearly proud of his participation in record setting baseball seasons for Mary Star. He says, “I was a player on the 1989 team that broke the original record. I was an assistant coach on the 1995 team who broke the record that we set in 1989, and in 2002 I was the head coach for the team that broke that record again.”

Amazingly, Mary Star only had 12 players on the 2002 varsity squad, which reached the CIF finals. Ibarra attributes a total team effort with the success that the team enjoyed. “The thing that made that team so great was that each game somebody else stepped up and got the job done. It wasn’t just one guy that stood out and was the hero every game. It was somebody different every game. We only had twelve guys on the team and all twelve of them played a big role.”

Pure High School Basketball
2004 Boys Basketball CIF Semifinalists

The only Mary Star boys’ basketball team that anyone at the school can recall making it to the CIF semifinals, the 2004 squad was the culmination of four years of hard work and fulfilled a promise that Coach Andy Furuto made to his bosses at the school. He explains, “This is my fourth year here and when I was hired I told the administration that it would take at least four years to build a foundation for a program, to put in my system, and to integrate the school’s philosophy, as well. This is my first senior class and that’s what makes it kind of special because they bought into our program from the beginning.”

Although Mary Star marched all the way to the semifinals, the game that most stands out for Furuto was Mary Star’s 68-64 road victory against Woodcrest Christian in the second round of the playoffs. “I’ve been around basketball a long time and it was one of the best high school basketball games I’ve seen in a long time — from how hard both teams played, to the will to win that you could see on both teams. We were very fortunate to come out with a win and I’ve never seen our kids as jubilant as they were after that victory. It was very special. It was just pure high school basketball. I think that the purity of the game has been lost with some of these schools that bring in players. Mary Star does it the right way with the kids that are here and want to be here.”

2004 Mary Star Boys Basketball Team
If a Baker’s Dozen equals 13 then what do you call 11 in a Top Ten List? Picking an all time list of greatest athletes is so impossible that we are calling our list, “Ten of the Greatest Athletes in Mary Star History.” And even that was too tough so we made it eleven and also included a list of honorable mention athletes. In addition, in the short period that Fermin Lasuen was open, the school had an extraordinary bunch of athletes and so we’ve added a “Fermin Five” to our list.

Cynthia Pereira Atencio Class of ’80
Cindy Pereira Atencio is only one of three Mary Star athletes, along with Sandy Simich and Tim Wrightman, to have her retired jersey in the trophy case at Mary Star. One of the most dynamic girls basketball players ever in San Pedro, Pereira went on to Santa Clara University where a knee injury ended her college playing career, but she later coached at Loyola Marymount as an assistant from 1986-1990. At Mary Star, Pereira made the All-CIF basketball team for three years and a variety of All-League honors in volleyball and softball.

Joe Lovitto Class of ’68
At Fermin, Joe Lovitto starred in football and baseball. In 1969, the Washington Senators made him their No. 1 draft pick, second overall in the entire draft. He became a starter for the Texas Rangers in the American League and in 1976 he was traded to the New York Mets. However, injuries plagued Lovitto throughout his career and he retired shortly thereafter.

Tim Wrightman Class of ’78
In 1978, tight end and defensive back Tim Wrightman was selected as the best high school football player in Southern California and named to the Prep High School All-American team. He went on to become a unanimous All-American at UCLA.

Wrightman was selected by the Chicago Blitz as the first overall pick in the United States Football League draft. He was later the first string tight end on the Chicago Bears 1985 Super Bowl championship team.

Sandy Simich Class of ’63
Considered by many to be the godmother of girls’ sports at Mary Star, Sandy Simich was a three time all first league selection on a Stars volleyball squad that captured three consecutive championships in the old Catholic School League of Los Angeles. In basketball, Simich was a two-time All-League selection and played on two Stars teams that won the Saint Anthony’s Tournament, the most prestigious girls basketball tournament in Southern California. As a coach, many of Simich’s Mary Star players earned basketball, volleyball and softball scholarships to major universities and her basketball teams made the playoffs in 26 of the 28 seasons she coached.

Jeff Pedersen Class of ’69
Jeff Pedersen earned nine varsity letters and was a standout in baseball. He was drafted by the Chicago Cubs, but elected to attend USC. He became the first player in NCAA history to start on three National Collegiate Championship teams and represented USC in the Pan-American games.

Vince Mannino Class of ’65
A high scoring basketball star, All-CIF player, Vince Mannino led the CIF in scoring and set the single-game record of 72 points. Mannino played four years at USC, once scoring 45 points against UCLA.

Bob Gross Class of ’71
After graduating from Fermin, Bobby Gross went on to star at Long Beach State where, in 1975, he was named the conference’s Most Valuable Player and honorable mention All-American. He was drafted by the Portland Trailblazers of the NBA and played for them from 1976-1982. He was the starting forward in 1977 when the Blazers won the NBA Championship.

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Super Stars

Vince Mattera Class of ’61

Vince Mattera was a bruising fullback who was one the leaders of the 1960 Mary Star miracle football team that made the CIF finals. Mattera made the All-Southern California Football team and played for Notre Dame from 1961 to 1965.

Elizabeth Ludwig Simone Class of ’76

One of the best all-time female athletes from San Pedro, Liz Ludwig Simone was named to the All-CIF team in basketball. After graduating, Ludwig was a three-year starter for the USC lady basketball team and established several season and career scoring records for the Trojans.

Mike Doktorczyk Class of ’84

After graduating from Mary Star, Mike Doktorczyk played college basketball at UC Irvine where in 1989 as a senior he led the team in scoring and rebounding. Doktorczyk, who holds the UCI season and career record for 3-point field goal percentage, was the first overall pick in the 1989 CBA draft. In addition, Mike’s brother Rob was his teammate at both Mary Star and UCI.

Mary Ann Mardesich Class of ’80

Mary Ann Mardesich made the All-League team in volleyball, basketball and softball. Mardesich led the basketball team with 700 rebounds in her career, but it was volleyball that earned her a four-year scholarship to Loyola Marymount University where she was a four-year starter.

Dominic Trutanich Class of ’75

In 1974, Mary Star hoopster Dominic Trutanich’s 31.3 points a game made him the second leading scorer in the CIF and the following year he was named to the All-CIF team. After graduating from Mary Star, Trutanich received a basketball scholarship to Boise State where he played for one season before transferring to USC and joining the Trojans as a walk-on.

Sarah Gascon Class of 2000

Sarah Gascon earned All-CIF honors in three sports; basketball, volleyball and softball at Mary Star and enjoyed a sensational career in volleyball and softball at Southeastern Louisiana University. In 2003, she established the Division 1 NCAA single-season volleyball records for digs (786) and digs per game (6.66). She earned the league’s Defensive Player of the Week award a record nine consecutive weeks. Gascon finished her career as the third-leading player in digs (2,109) in NCAA history and her career 4.76 digs per game average is fourth-best all-time. Gascon also played third base for the Southeastern Louisiana softball team and has made the All-Southland Conference team for three seasons.

Joe Bleymaier Class of ’61

Joe Bleymaier scored the winning touchdown that propelled the 1960 Mary Star Cinderella football team into the CIF finals. A two-year All-League selection in football, Bleymaier played freshman football at Air Force and seemed ready to assume the starting role for the varsity squad when a knee injury ended his career.

ALL-TIME MARY STAR HONORABLE MENTION ATHLETES

The following athletes (and the college where they continued to play sports) are our honorable mentions as some of the best athletes of all time at Mary Star.

- Skip Zuanich Football, Class of 61 Cal Poly
- Gus Hobus Football, Class of 75 Washington St.
- John Cvitanich Football, Class of 61 Washington
- David Clinton Football, Class of 81 UCLA
- Melanie Jones Girls Volleyball, Class of 84 UC Riverside
- Marie Dobrenz Girls Volleyball, Class of 03 College of Charleston
The striking Virgin Mary with her outstretched arms high a top Mary Star of the Sea’s parish is a familiar sight to many San Pedrants.

As San Pedro changed and grew, so did Mary Star. The rise of the local fishing industry attracted thousands of Italians and Croatians, who brought their strong Catholic roots with them. “Mary Star had a great impact on our community, not only economically, but socially. The fishing fleet and the canneries were originally staffed by Italians, Croatians, and Hispanics, predominantly all Catholics and the majority of them were parishioners,” said Mel Bobich, a native San Pedran and long-time member of Mary Star. With this influx of immigrants, Mary Star responded by offering services in four languages, English, Italian, Croatian and Spanish. (This tradition, which began in the 1940’s, continues to this day.)

Mary Star also contributed to one of the city’s most popular civic events. Monsignor George Scott was one of the original committee members on the annual Fisherman’s Fiesta, which began in 1946-47. Every year over 25,000 people flocked to see a 100-boat parade. A Cardinal would bless the ships. Response to the festival was so overwhelming that KTLA TV covered the proceedings live.

San Pedro Trivia

Getting a date straight in San Pedro seems to be an increasingly difficult thing to do. Last month, we asked for the date of the first Fisherman’s Fiesta. The most popular answer is that it informally began in 1946 and officially did in 1947. However, there are indications that it may have begun in 1935 or 1938. As always, the Trivia Box is generous in marking papers correct when there are discrepancies (don’t you wish your teachers were this lenient?).

King Tom and Queen Sandy Radmilovich continue to rock on at the top of the court. Once again joining them as princes and princesses are the brother team of Mike “Vitty” Vitalich and his brother, Greg, Don Matulich, John Gillhuly, Nick “Bura” Mariani, and Bura’s sister, Arlene Mariani Kielbasa.

Here are Last Month’s questions and answers...

Q: What Fermin Lasuen grad played 14 seasons of pro football for the Buffalo Bills and Denver Broncos?

Mike and Greg Vitalich answer: Haven Moses graduated from Fermin Lasuen and went to Harbor College. He was discovered by John Madden and then went to San Diego State. He went on to play for 14 seasons in the NFL.

Q: Prior to 1901, what was the street name of Pacific Avenue?

Arlene Mariani Kielbasa answers: Prior to 1901 Pacific Avenue was called West Street, due to the fact that it was the western most street of the town and on March 5th, 1901, West Street was renamed Pacific Avenue.

Q: What year was the first Fisherman’s Fiesta?

Nick “Bura” Mariani answers: In 1946, the Fisherman Fiesta had its beginning as a water outing at the end of the war. The fishermen celebrated by decorating boats and sailing to Catalina or up and down the coast. The idea caught on and in 1947, the Fisherman Fiesta was first celebrated. My sister, Sonja Mariani Porter, was Skipperette in 1953 aboard the Coral Sea; Skipper Tony Barcott will be 90 years old, July 17, 2004.

The following are this month’s questions. E-mail your answers to jack.baric@presstelegram.com and we will list the name of anyone correctly guessing all three. The due date for answers is April 12.

Q: In 1909, two Japanese cruisers were the first ships from Asia to come into port here. What were their names?

Q: What year did residents of Rattlesnake Island (now Terminal Island) unsuccessfully petition to join San Pedro?

Q: The First Baptist Church of San Pedro is Cultural Historical Monument #505. What year was it built and/or dedicated?