



THE SKIRMISHER

ST. JOHN'S MILITARY SCHOOL
Home of *The MULESKINNERS*



Vol. LXXXIX

No. 4

April 2001

The Board of Trustees, President, Faculty and the
113th Corps of Cadets
of St. John's Military School

request the honor of your presence during the
Commencement Activities

May 18 and 19
Two Thousand One

113th
Annual

Schedule of Activities

Friday, 18 May 2001

3:30 pm Reception, *Stevens Center*

4:30 pm Retreat Parade, *Teardrop*

6:30 pm Military Ball/Awards

Ceremony 2001

Salina Bicentennial Center

Saturday, 19 May 2001

7:50 am Flag raising Ceremony
(113 Flags)

8:00 am Continental Breakfast,
Stevens Center

10:30 am Educational Honors

Convocation &

8th Grade Graduation

Salina Bicentennial Center

12 Noon Foundation Luncheon

Salina Bicentennial Center

2:15 pm The Senior Eucharist,
Armstrong Chapel

3:15 pm Freedom Tree Ceremony

3:30 pm **COMMENCEMENT**

Perkins Field

7:00 pm Alumni Reception,
President's Home

Commencement 2001

President's Message

Capt. E. A.
McAlexander



We are mailing this edition of the Skirmisher somewhat earlier than usual this year so that everyone can plan for Commencement. I would like to use my column to make a special plea for all

old boys to attend if possible. For the past several years we have had a reunion weekend in the fall, and that is an excellent time for Alumni to visit with staff and faculty. It was never my intention that the fall event take the place of attendance at Commencement.

I think the "Handle Ceremony" is one of the most meaningful events that I have ever observed at a commence-

ment ceremony. The mix of old boys and graduating seniors, all renewing the bonds to the school and each other is the very best part of the weekend. The more participants we have the better the celebration. Please attend if possible. If we can help with arrangements for individuals or class reunions all you need do is ask. We are here to serve, and enjoy seeing all of the old boys who attend.

Guide to Dress for the One-Hundred Thirteenth Commencement Events

The appropriate dress for the Military Ball on Friday evening is a long or short formal gown for young ladies being escorted by Cadets. For parents and guests attending the Military Ball, it is suggested that gentlemen wear dark business suits or tuxedos and the ladies wear evening dresses. A summer dress uniform is proper for military guests. The appropriate dress for campus activities is daytime attire. For the Graduation Exercises on Saturday afternoon, 'Old Boys' participating in the Handle Ceremony are asked to wear coat and tie.

2001 Commencement Ceremonies Video

The Foundation – Your PTA will again make available for purchase a videotape highlighting the 2001 commencement weekend activities. This tape will be approximately 2 hours in length and include coverage clips of the Pass and Review, Military Awards Ceremony, Military Ball, Educational Awards Ceremony and Commencement. If you are interested in ordering a tape, please complete the following order form. Blank order forms will also be available at the Foundation's table in the registration area during commencement weekend.

Enclosed is a \$25.00 check payable to the St. John's Military School Foundation for the purchase of a 2001 Commencement Ceremonies Video.

Mail to: St. John's Military School, Attn: Julie Fischer, PO Box 827, Salina KS
67402-0827

Allow six to eight weeks for delivery.

2001 Commencement Ceremonies Video

Order Form

Name _____

Shipping Address _____

Attention Alumni

Commencement Weekend Information

Upon arriving on campus, guests are asked to register in Vanier Academic Center. Registration will include a packet of information for the weekend and nametags. Members of the Foundation and staff will be on hand to greet patrons and alumni.

Patrons will be able to purchase tickets for the Foundation Luncheon, at \$10 each, which will be held at the Bicentennial Center on Saturday, at noon. This will immediately follow the Academic Awards Ceremony. Senior cadets will be guests of the Foundation where they will become Honorary Members. Underclassmen will be returned to campus to prepare for the afternoon ceremonies

New this year.

Thanks to the Foundation, some finger food will be added to the refreshments served during the Commandant's Military Ball, which is scheduled for Friday evening at the Bicentennial Center.

While seniors and their guests are attending the Senior Eucharist in the Memorial Chapel, prior to Commencement Ceremonies, refreshments and videos will be shown in Stevens Center for those not attending chapel.

Commencement ceremonies are expected to be over before 5:30 p.m. so travel arrangements can be made beginning at that time.

We want to thank our patrons and students for a great year, and wish you all a great summer.



This year's Adventure Trip headed south as two vans full of cadets packed and departed campus at 0500 hours Sunday, March 4 and began the 14 plus hour trek to the tiny little town of Seadrift, Texas, camping overnight in Palmetto State Park.

The next morning the 14 cadets and 3 faculty sponsors met Bill Minor of Tide Guide Expeditions, and got their first view of the week's mode of transportation - eight custom-built ocean kayaks and the 10-passenger "Sea Cow", the guide's work boat. Once it was loaded with dry bags, sleeping bags, and students, the journey began with a 5-mile paddle through Espiritu Santo and San Antonio Bay. Immediately the guys were paddling alongside dolphins and enjoying the pristine beauty of Matagorda and Aransas Wildlife Refuges. The campsite, located on a narrow island called Shell Bar, was soon bustling with unpacking,

Survivor Island

March 4 through 9, 2001

by Mr. Scott Wiedeman

meal preparation, and scouting the remote surroundings. The cadets took their turn that week with cooking and cleaning, and even tried their hands at fishing, as Bill taught them how to throw and net bait fish and mullet. Poles were soon baited up and the around-the-clock fishing produced results, including a beautiful saltwater trout and an 8 lb. drum. After learning the skillful craft of cleaning fish, scraps were loaded into a trap, which would capture several sea crabs, all of which were enjoyed for supper.

The days of the week were quickly paddled away, including a two-mile trip across the lake to Matagorda Island, an afternoon of navigation and kayak races, and a chance for everyone to practice kayaking and explore the refuse. Marine and wildlife were ever-present - hermit crabs, oysters, jellyfish, pelicans, a protected nest site 50 yards from the camp, even a sighting of the endangered whooping crane. Evenings brought dolphins feeding in the tidal pass by the island as well as bioluminescent jellyfish brought in by the current.

Early Thursday morning brought rain and repacking, as half the group headed back in the kayaks through the channel of the Intercoastal Waterway,

(Continued on page 8)



“I must admit I didn’t think too highly of going on this trip when I heard of all the rules that were to be followed.

When we arrived it was quite an experience, because the four of us felt that we did not fit in at all. This wasn’t your average group of teens. This was an amazingly intelligent group of teens. During the cross fires we wouldn’t say much because we weren’t as aware of what was going on in the world as much as the others. We would only talk and argue with others on subjects such as Military, War, etc., the things we knew more about. After the first couple of days of sight-seeing and after getting to know others a little better, the trip turned out to be very enjoyable. Of course, the ladies of the classroom couldn’t resist the uniforms. We met some very interesting people with very, very, interesting views. If anyone were thinking of applying to go next year, I would highly recommend it.”

Presidential Classroom

March 4 through 9, 2001

by C/LTC Travis Mulder

The SJMS Foundation - your PTA, again sponsored the Presidential Classroom. The program brings student leaders to Washington, D.C. where they become acquainted with young people from all across the United States. They attend workshops on government in action and tour Washington, seeing national monuments and other points of interest.

The four candidates applying and chosen for this trip were Ben Anesi, Derek Frailey, Travis Mulder and Matt Webster.

“Just a minute, you say you’re going to take five teenage boys to Philadelphia, rent a van, drive on unfamiliar highways in a huge metropolitan area for six days and five nights and you’re the only sponsor?” Yes that’s correct. Well, “good luck”! My colleagues and family wondered about my decision, but the time just seemed right.

As we left campus early on the morning of February 22 we were filled with anticipation for what was ahead. The day unfolded without a hitch: depart campus 0600 hours, stop in Abilene for breakfast, continue on to Kansas City International Airport for a 1100 direct flight to Philadelphia, pick up the van near the airport and head to Devon, Pennsylvania to the Marriott Courtyard Hotel. Check in was quick and painless and we set off to explore the area for a restaurant and some relaxation.

Once back at the hotel we discussed the agenda for the next day. A restful night of slumber preceded our

Philadelphia 2001 Military School 35th Annual Band Festival

by Mrs. Wendy Stein

morning trip into Philadelphia. We stopped at the nearest Starbucks for breakfast and hit the highway for Philly. The weather was bitterly cold and by the time we parked and walked a few blocks we were more than ready for our first stop, the Liberty Museum. Inside we found friendly faces and warm temperatures. People in history who were famous for promotion human rights and freedom were showcased in exhibits of wonderful interactive displays, portraits and test. We spent almost an hour reading about people of all nationalities who have made the world a better place. The bottom floor of the museum held an extensive collection of Chuhuly glass pieces that were a thrill to see. Next stop, Liberty Plaza and the famous Liberty Bell. The cadets listened with interest to the National Park ranger who explained that no one knows how the Liberty Bell cracked and that we were visiting the site one day before the 140th anniversary of the last day that the bell had been rung. Independence Hall, directly east of the Liberty Bell, would be our last stop before lunch. So much to do and see!! Independence Hall is an inviting structure, the hushed tones of the people inside spoke to the reverence people feel when visiting a building with such historical significance. You could almost hear our founding fathers discussing

(Continued on page 9)





During this past school year, twenty cadets have earned the coveted Spartan Beret by passing the Spartan qualification test. To qualify as a Spartan, a cadet must be able to do 10 pull-ups, 60 curl-ups in sixty seconds, 60 pushups in sixty seconds, and run 6.2 miles in less than sixty minutes. To keep the beret, a cadet must pass all of his classes each quarter; not get any class I hooksheets; not violate the schools alcohol, drug, and tobacco policy; not have any involvement in any physical hazing whatsoever; and display integrity at all times.

Those cadets that earned the beret this year are: Mike Andrews, Ben Anesi, Brandon Blackmon, Rex Robichaux, Nick Dockery, Richard Derby, Jessen Eckert, Orlando Evitt, Daniel Han, Richard Hardy, Brendon Harris, Eric McBroom, Paul Palomo, William Pantera, Ben Walker, Garrett White, Daniel Wilcox, and Peter Wilcox.



Spartan Tryouts

Major George Stelljes

Major Stelljes and Lieutenant Hestrand enjoy working with the cadets very much during their activities such as: camping at Kanopolis Lake Park, negotiating the ropes course at St. Francis, and paintballing.



Every year St. John's plans a ski trip for the cadets. This year the ski trip was held at Monarch Ski Resort in Colorado. The trip lasted four days, with two for skiing and two for traveling. The school rented a charter bus for the event. Most of the cadets agreed that the skiing was better than last year, but the resort could have been better. The behavior of the cadets was good with no major problems.

The chaperones for the trip were SFC Jimerson and his family, and CSM Wang and his wife. In my opinion, the trip overall went very well.

Ski Trip Feb 23-25

C/ILT Jake Redd

Cadets participating were Hunter Allen, Ben Anesi, Steve Cambier, Alejandro Campomanes, Cory Carrizales, John Coelho, William Elston, Antonio Escandon, Gabriel Espinosa, Russell Gruber, Daniel Han, Tyler Harrington, Chris Hirsch, Nicholas Hughes, Curtis Hurwitz, Jason Jay, Chad Jimmerson, Kevin Kerns, Robert Korody, Kamil Kowalewicz, David Kriske, Joseph Manning, Blake McMurtrey, John Mitchell, Lee Pace, Chris Parizi, Jake Redd, Max Redd, Rex Robichaux, Zach Russell, Javier Smith, Peter Wilcox, Alex Winkel and John Zander.



Third Grading Period Honors are Announced

Congratulations to the
BLUE BERETS

Upper School:

Kareem Dockery

Eric McBroom

Richard Hardy

Middle School:

Phillip Luu

Robert Korody

John Coelho

ACADEMIC DEAN'S HONOR ROLL:

Making the Academic Dean's Honor Roll for the Third Grading Period from the Upper School are: Kareem Dockery 96.625, Eric McBroom 95.500, Richard Hardy, 95.125 and Derek Frailey 95.000. From the Middle School is Phillip Luu 96.857, Robert Korody 95.428, John Coelho 94.500 and Joachim 'J.R.' Reynolds 94.000.

HONOR ROLL:

From the Upper School are: Nicholas Hughes 93.250; Mark Romberg 93.125; Rex Robichaux 93.000; Nathan Wiltsie 92.375; Ryan North 92.250; Peter Wilcox 91.750; Andres Nieblas 91.625; Christopher Hirsch 91.500; Gabriel Espinosa 90.375; Cyrus Moini 90.000; Darren Portman 89.750; Bernardo Chico 89.500; Matthew Webster 89.333; Dana Blaus-Plissner 88.875; Adam Johnson 88.875; Tyler Olentine 88.750 and John Garrard 88.625.

From the Middle School are: Zachary Peralta 91.258; Richard Malugani 90.714; Corey Adams 89.857 and Fernando 'Felipe' Batalla 89.000.

*Our congratulations to these cadets for a
job well done.*

Special Orders

announcing Promotions for the 113th Corps of Cadets
since the last Skirmisher

SO 352-01 dated 3/01/01

John Coelho, Tyler Harrington, Stephen Hawley, Christopher Kile-Rud, Joseph Leavitt, Shawn McLoughlin, Ricky Smith, Boguslaw Topor and Nash Wennstedt to PFC; Ezra Howes and Zachary Peralta to CPL; Bradley Weber to SGT; Manuel Alvarez to MSG and Stephan Gleeson to WO2.

SO 353-01 dated 3/01/01

Robert Ripley to PFC.

SO 364-01 dated 3/08/01

Eric Burnett, Willian Pantera and Christopher Propst to PV1; Daniel Hargett and Matthew Stevens to PFC; Anthony Lucchesi, Adam Thompson and John Zander to CPL.

SO 365-01 dated 3/08/01

Casey Aguayo, Dino Bajramovic, Aaron Johnson, Reid Markus, Ryan Nahn and Steven Williams to PFC; Ryan Nordling to CPL; Fernando Fatalla and Jesse Montoya to SSG and Eric Winekl to MSG.

SO 383-01 dated 3/29/01

William Elston, John Green, Matthew Keener, Andres Nieblas, Carlos Herrmann and Jonathan Varbel to PFC; Scott Greunke, Thomas McKinnon, Christopher Parizi, Joachim Reynolds, Michael Rosacci and Javier Smith to CPL; Phillip Luu, Darren Portman and Gregory Romero to SGT; Christopher Hirsch, David Kriske and Nathan Wiltsie to SSG; Michael Speelman to SFC; Richard Martinez to MSG.

SO 384-01 dated 3/29/01

Sean Barbour, Sean Cooksey and Kevin Le to CPL; Stephen Cambier to SSF; Jessen Eckert to SFC; Benjamin Reier to PFC.

New Boys make Old Boy

SO 351-01 dated 3/01/01

Anthony Ballard and Joseph Strada to PV2.

SO 362-01 dated 3/07/01

Michael Emerson and Christopher Frasier to PV2 and Stanley Jacob to PFC.

SO 372-01 dated 3/13/01

John Bergman, Steven Hardy, Brett Jakubowski, Mauricio Jimenez-Canet, Andrew Kopel, Tyler Perlick and Ryan Steinwart to PV2.

SO 376-01 dated 3/27/01

Zachary Shannon to PV2.

Survivor Island

(Continued from page 3)

encountering 100-yd. barges along the way. The other half, though starting out in the Sea Cow, got the added bonus of finishing the 5-mile trek on foot through mosquitoes and knee-deep mud!

The week was indeed a success-filled adventure. Thank you, Parents, who

made this trip possible for your sons!

Sponsors: Sven Hestrand, Mike Haist and Scott Wiedeman

Cadets: Brandon Blackmon, Richard Derby, Nick Dockery, Derrick Foster, Daniel Han, James Klock, Anthony Lucchesi, Eric McBroom, Blake McMurtrey, Matthew Miller, Lucas Moore, Jake Redd, Rex Robichaux and Nathan Wiltsie.

Point 5 Club

Middle School Cadets earning membership in the point 5 club for 3rd quarter were Corey Adams, Felipe Batalla, Andy Cox, John Green, Chad Jimmerson, Robert Korody, Ronnie Luke, Phillip Luu, Michael Maynard, Ben Reier and J. R. Reynolds.

Rifle Team Update

by MSG Tony Blair, Instructor

The St. John's Rifle team competed against Leavenworth HS and Missouri Military Academy on Saturday, February 24. With 4 of 8 shooters on the ski and band trip, winning was questionable. However, Cadets Norton, Nordling, Walker and Batalla rose to the occasion and soundly beat both teams. As team captain, Norton scored a career high with a 544 half match, which averages out to be a 272 quarter match (which is normally shot in our weekly matches). St. John's shot a combined score of 1,941 points to MMA's 1,698 and Leavenworth's 1,693. This was sweet revenge since MMA beat us last year. Hopefully we will do it again next month when we travel to Kansas City to shoot in a tournament against MMA, Leavenworth and St. Louis University High School.

On March 8, the St. John's Rifle team defeated Manhattan for the second time this year, with a score of St. John's 1,009 and Manhattan 1,000. This was the last match prior to Spring Break.

Cadets will return from break with one more League match to fire. This match will be against Alma at Manhattan on the 29th of March. We also have two postal matches to fire on the 28th of March and the 2nd of April. After that we will finish the season by hosting the Kansas State Smallbore Rifle Championship on the 5th, 6th and 7th of April.

For those of you who have stopped by and shown your support, thank you. The boys and I, along with Joe Stewart, have greatly appreciated and enjoyed the time you have spent with us.

The SKIRMISHER

The Skirmisher is the official publication of SJMS and is published bi-monthly by the Media Club Cadets, with Mrs. Sheri Becker, Advisor.

St. John's Military School

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Salina, KS 67402-0827

Phone 785 823-7231

Band Trip *(continued from page 5)*

the Declaration of Independence and imagine the activity that must have permeated those hallowed halls.

Leaving the building, the sound of growling teenage boys' stomachs nearly drowned out the noises of the city. Yes, we were off to find Jim's Steaks on the corner of Fifth and South streets. As we parked and made our way into the steak house we could hardly wait until our turn to order. The aroma of the onions and steak was more than we could stand. With our steak sandwiches in hand we climbed to the upstairs dining room. From our lofty post we witnessed the biggest snowflakes we had ever seen, and they were coming down fast and furious.

We hurriedly ate our lunch and headed to the van, made a mad dash to the freeway and along with 2 million Philadelphian's, promptly hit the breaks and spent the next 2 and 1/2 hours inching our way back to the hotel. our sight-seeing plans cut short, but our spirits not dampened.

Finally reaching the hotel we made a trip to the K-Mart next door for things we left at school and supplies for the long evening in the hotel. The hot tub and the swimming pool became our focus. A movie and treats in Mrs. Stein's room allowed the lone sponsor to keep her boys safety within her watch.

Friday the 24th brought us to the "real" reason for the trip. Breakfast, registration, auditions for chairs and the beginning of the festival were the order of the day. The festival was held on the campus of the Valley Forge Military Academy and College. We discovered that the Stevens Center is really the Tajma Hall and the food is five star compared to the Valley Forge Mess Hall. A visit to the barracks later than afternoon made the cadets feel better about the St. John's campus. Those two facts alone, justified the trip. The next two days were spent rehearsing and practicing for the Sunday afternoon concert. The music was challenging and the band was massive. Jeremy Crenshaw (tenor saxophone), Joshua Crenshaw (bass clarinet), Cody Palmer (trumpet) and Thomas McKinnon (snare drum), thought they

had memorized the music by concert time. Daniel Wilcox participated in the drum major clinic and competition.

Following the concert, we headed to Havorford College to pick up Brian Vogler, SJMS class of 2000, for a return trip to Philly. The weather and traffic cooperated so that we could visit the Rodin museum. What a wonderful talent we witnessed, in the display of his sculpture, which is the largest collection outside Rodin's native France. Next stop South street for shopping and food. There were many sights to see, some shocking even for seasoned world travelers.

Old Boy Brian visited with the cadets about college life and the importance of being prepared for college by working hard in high school. We had a great dinner and returned Brian to his campus.

Our last evening was spent packing and loading the van for our early morning trip to the airport. We arrived at the airport without a hitch with a chance to have some breakfast and relax prior to our flight. As we pulled into the front gates of our beloved St. John's campus around 1700 hours that Monday evening, I had a smile on my face.

There was a gladness in my heart that we returned to the campus safely, and had a great time, but also I was content because all the pre-trip worries had been for naught. Yes, you can travel for six days and five nights with five teenage boys and have the time of your life. The cadets were a joy to be with and demonstrated all the skills that they have learned at St. John's and had brought to the school with them. They showcased the great energy and spirit that young men can possess, they treated me with respect and created a boatload of fond memories.

Thanks guys for a great trip and thanks to the patrons and parents for funding such a wonderful experience.

. . . classmates return for memorial service of Walter York

“Old Boy”

Class of 1944

Born 3/13/26, Salina, KS

Died 11/22/2000,

Las Vegas, NV

Columbarium Service, SJMS,

March 13, 2001

Walter York held the title of “cadet with the longest tenure” at St. John’s. The youngest of five children, and losing both parents at the age of 6, St. John’s became Walter’s home, where he lived and attended school for 11 years, 2nd thru 12th grade. The faculty, staff and cadets became his family.

In addition, his life was shaped by the Episcopal church, a big part of his St. John’s experience. Walter served in all the positions as an altar boy.

Following graduation he was immediately called into service for WWII. He entered infantry training at Fort Benning, GA. He received a nomination for entrance to West Point and attended Amherst University as preparatory school for his commission. Circumstances prevented him from receiving his final appointment.

He maintained life long friendships with many of the St. John’s cadets. These men were an important part of his life, and their love and support sustained him throughout his life and still continue to strengthen his family.

Family members in attendance at the memorial service were his wife, Virginia, his son Stephan, his sister Edith Sompayrao and nephew, Bob. Family members not in attendance were his daughter Lisa, two granddaughters, a niece and two cousins.



Denver Reunion - May 25-27

Final preparations are completed for the Denver reunion. The SJMS reunion will be held at the Denver Marriott Southeast, located at I-25/ Hampden Avenue. A block of rooms are being held at \$59 per night for "Old Boys" May 25-27. *The phone number for reservations are 1 800 228-9290.*

Weekend plans include a reception on Friday evening in Jackson's Hall (at the Marriott), a dinner on Saturday evening at "Dave & Busters" and a cookout on Sunday at one of the parks.

Twenty-eight commitments have been made to date, including former staff members LTC Paul Kellogg, COL Keith Duckers and 1SG Bill Bunting.

Classmates to contact for information: Jeff Baker - broncoman_81504@yahoo.com. Phone 970 242-3420W or 970 257-7178H. Chuck Vail - Chuckvaile@aol.com or phone 303 761-7012H. Neil Therrien - neal.therrien@portland.af.mil or phone 503 335-4573W or 503 661-8838.

York Services (continued)

Guests included "Old Boys" Alan 'Cub' Clem, Bill and Connie Bliss, Charles and Rachel Morrison, Bob 'Bones' and Ersula Snyder, Jim and Virginia Maynard, Robert Sperling, and Jack and Donna Vanier. Also, distinguished guests Keith and Liz Duckers (President Emeritus), Bob Kastner (former member of Board of Trustees), Tim Chapman (former SJMS Development Officer), and several members of the current SJMS staff.

"Old Boys" pictured below (from left): Charles Morrison '44, Jack Vanier (Atten 40-44), Robert Snyder '46, Alan Clem '46, Ralph Bliss '45, Robert Sperling '45 and James Manard '41.



**... Old Boys
Where are they now?**

Tom Sadler

"Old Boy" Class of '67

3280 Bayon Lane
Pensacola FL 32503-5875

Tom has been put back on the Skirmisher mailing and the "Old Boy" email directory. He writes that he has now retired from the mental health field. Previously, after receiving his bachelor's degree from the University of Texas at Austin, he went to work for the airline industry for 17 years. After 'seeing the world' he went on to graduate school where he received an M.S. in Psychology becoming a Marriage and Family therapist. He became an avid SCUBA diver a few years ago and writes that in between diving around on the Gulf Coast and joining a SCUBA club on 3 to 4 trips a year to different dive sites around the world, he volunteers his services to various organizations in town. His best friend is a SCUBA instructor and travel coordinator for the two largest dive shops in Pensacola, so Tom helps him sell dive trips because if he sells a number of spots on a trip he gets his trip free.

He says he has some great memories from St. John's and glad to hear it's still going strong!

Mark Richards

"Old Boy" Class of '93

Mark wants his classmates, not only members of the '93 class but anyone part of that year, to begin thinking about a 10-year reunion. He is working on addresses and wants to hear from you. His email address is markrichards@hotmail.com.

TAPS

John A. Hjorth

Overland Park KS
died February 4, 2001
"Old Boy" Class of '63

William Jobbins

Winchester KS
died March 23, 2001
"Old Boy" Class of '62

Chaplain's Chat

How do we know when it's Easter?

The Feast of the Resurrection of Christ is the greatest and oldest feast of the Christian Church. Like Christmas, it superceded an old pagan festival. Since many early Christians came to Christianity from pagan religions, they were used to celebrating their own pagan festivals at certain times of the year. Christian authorities, wanting to emphasize Christ's supremacy over pagan deities, set the great celebrations of Christmas and Easter at key times in the year to offset the pagan festival that would normally have been celebrated at that time and to encour-

age new Christians not to slip back into old ways. The name Easter is believed to have derived from a pagan name, Eostre, or Ishtar, a pagan fertility goddess, worshipped as the goddess of spring.

The date of Easter varies from year to year, thus making it what we call a movable feast as opposed to a fixed feast such as Christmas, which always falls on December 25, or All Saints' Day, which is always celebrated on November 1. The date of Easter is determined by the moon. It is always the first Sunday after the first full moon which occurs on or after the Vernal Equi-

nox, which is March 21. Therefore, Easter can never be earlier than March 22, no later than April 25. This year, of course, its on April 15.

Easter also has many ties with the Jewish celebration of Passover, which takes place close to the same time. Passover, however, always takes place on a fixed date, the 14th day of the Jewish month of Nisan. Because Jewish months follow the lunar calendar rather than the Gregorian calendar, Passover can sometimes occur during the Christian Holy Week or it can occur before or after.



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