

Joe & Barb Krier '74

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This passage was written and presented when Joe and Barb Krier were posthumously awarded the Bishop Chatard Achievement Award in 2006.

Wow, what an honor it is to be up here talking about our lifelong friends, Joe and Barb. It was a bit of a challenge to find the words to describe the kind of people that Joe and Barb were and what they meant to all of us. The words passionate, determined, kind, selfless, energetic, adventuresome, family-oriented, loyal, faith-filled, fun-loving, friends for life all come to mind but still do not come close to describing the essence of Joe and Barb Krier. Many people here have their own memories of Joe and Barb. This is Barb and Joe from the friends' perspective.

We feel certain the Joe and Barb would be so happy about this award, not for what it says about them, but for what it says about the Bishop Chatard family. It's amazing how each of the other honorees lives have touched and been touched by Joe and Barb through the years. Debby McCalley is one of Barb's closest friends from the class of 74; Bill Michaelis coached Joe in CYO sports at Christ the King many years ago. Mr. McNally, Mrs. Henry and Mr. Sutton all were here as Joe and Barb's kids, Theresa, Drew and Matt went through Chatard as were Magee and Casey Land's kids. That is what makes this Bishop Chatard community so special...the way that our lives are interwoven and through the foundation of friendship and faith that Bishop Chatard cultivates we each leave here determined to make the world a better place with the gifts that God has given us.

Of course, Barb and Joe's lives started long before they attended and met (right here in the cafeteria) at Chatard. Barb was the fourth of six kids born to Lynn and Jim Redding. Barb always spoke fondly of her growing-up years...sailing with her Dad, baking and gardening with her mom. She treasured the summers that they spent together up at Lake Geneva in a little cottage that her grandfather built himself. Barb's creativity, kindness, friendliness, sense of adventure and optimism all were nurtured in the loving Redding home. Barb often talked of the example that her Mom set by keeping in close contact with friends through the years...friends from childhood, high school and adulthood. It was a legacy that Barb lived up to in her life, making lasting friendship a priority. Barb loved her family so much. In later years, there was never a time that we were together that she didn't fill me in on what her sisters and brother, nieces and nephews were up to. Barb was especially pleased, when after many years of separation, she was instrumental in reuniting her brother Jay with his kids and the rest of the family.

Joe was one of eleven kids growing up in the Krier home just down Kessler Blvd. He was right in the middle with 5 older and 5 younger siblings. Bill and Betty Krier showered their

kids with love, a sense of tradition and were wonderful examples of service to the community and the church. You can imagine though, what life was like with eleven kids! Jim can remember being there for birthday dinners and when the candles went out, the biscuits started flying. Grandma Tillie got beaned on more than one occasion. Joe's upbringing and foundation in the Krier home taught him determination, a strong work ethic, selfless giving and a positive, fun-loving attitude. Joe shared with us recently that he remembered his Dad coming home a little discouraged about trying to make ends meet. He remembered his Mom saying, "But Bill, just look at all we do have, we have love." Joe, too, always filled us in on what his brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews had going on. He was especially proud of the fact that all but one of his siblings was still in town and he loved that they saw each other on a regular basis.

Barb went to St. Matthew for grade school with Ron, Tom, and Tom. They remember her as being the girl who was friends with everyone and always put others first. Even then she had that big smile and never said anything negative about anyone. Joe attended Christ the King with Jim and John Kennedy. They remember Joe being his own person even back then. When everyone else would walk to school in the winter with their boots on, Joe would lace up his skates and skate on in! Jim remembers Joe's determination in football when he and Scott Fields would run the double reverse. They would get their signals confused, run into each other in the backfield and knock each other down. Joe would just get back up, dust himself off and try again!

As we said, it was right here in the Chatard cafeteria, 35 years ago, that Joe and Barb were introduced...the rest, as they say, is history. Of course, they each pursued their own interests and developed their own friendships through their years at BCHS. We remember Joe being very determined to graduate from Chatard, even though the \$200 per year tuition was very steep! He worked as a student janitor after school to help pay tuition and of course struck up a friendship with Rufus the school janitor. Their friendship became a little rocky when Joe "borrowed" Rufus's VW bug, crammed 15 kids into it, and took us for a ride around the parking lot. Joe was also determined to learn how to play the guitar. Jim recalls sitting with him in his room for hours while he taught himself chords on the little black K guitar that Celeste had given him. Ron remembers Joe's resolve senior year when he decided to join the track team. The pole vault became an event that year in high school track and Joe decided that was the event for him. He taught himself how to approach the bar and when he sailed over it, landed in a pit filled with old hard sponges Rufus had donated! He set the school record that year at 6 feet. Unfortunately, that was 6 inches lower than Jeff Wotke's high jump record.

During high school, Barb was busy blazing her own path. She had already developed her passion for art and design and she was the only girl in the mechanical drawing and drafting classes here at Chatard taught by Mr. Noble. She loved creating and I can remember being with her in her room at the Redding house as she worked on her miniature doll house, hand-crafting all the furniture, rugs, drapes, and other accessories. She would collect all kinds of odds and ends that she would end up using in the doll house in some way. Barb was such a thoughtful friend. I can remember the first time we went snow skiing together. Barb had skied quite a bit and when everyone left me on the bunny hill, she was the one who

stayed and taught me. She then took me up the chair lift to the big hill and said, "Here, Sherry, I'll go ahead of you and you just follow me down." She slowly snow plowed down the hill with me in her tracks...I will never forget her patience and kindness.

It was Christmas of 1973 that Barb hosted our first Christmas dinner at her family's home on Radnor. We were all encouraged to bring gag gifts and it was a tradition that continued for the next 34 years! The tradition continued because of Joe and Barb's determination, kindness, and devotion to friendship. Qualities that were all rooted in their families and nurtured through their years at Bishop Chatard.

After we graduated, we all went our separate ways, but the Christmas party kept us all connected. As each couple married and started our own families, the party was sometimes the only time all year we would come together. Joe and Barb always made it special with homemade ornaments, delicious food and, of course, Christmas Carols led by Joe on the guitar. Oh yeah, and the gag gifts...the all-time favorite was the Whoopee cushion. The last several years became theme parties with costumes and we even invited the kids! Cindy remembers the year Joe and Barb decided to have an island theme and Barb in her creative way designed an invitation with shells and items from the island. The problem was when she got to the Post Office to send them to us; they were leaking white sand onto the counter. It was only months after 9/11 and sweet, smiling Barb almost got thrown into the slammer!

Joe and Barb worked very hard in their professional careers. There were many sacrifices and some setbacks in the early years, but the determination, passion, work ethic, and enthusiasm that they had honed through the years helped them to persevere and succeed. Barb was a very talented and thoughtful kitchen designer who didn't just design a room for a family but created a space where they could come together as a family in their own unique way. Joe was an equally talented car salesman and businessman who wasn't afraid to take a risk. He always treated everyone with respect and honesty. Barb and Joe were very trusting, always seeing the best in people. Patty and Tom remember when Joe and Barb had an interested car buyer come to their house. They should have been suspicious when he was dropped off in a taxi. But they invited him in, Barb baked him cookies, and they sent him off to test drive the car. The only problem was he didn't bring it back! They did recover it weeks later.

When Joe and Barb were able to buy their own little piece of Paradise on North Captiva, they were so excited. They were excited not just for themselves but for what it meant for their kids, their families, and their friends. They poured themselves into the culture and customs of island life, of course, making friends there too. As a group we enjoyed many fun times there with Joe and Barb as the perfect hosts. Barb gave the girls art lessons. Cathy and Celeste recall her patience and encouraging words as she helped us discover our creative sides. Dave remembers the fun the guys had when Joe took them all out fishing. One of Joe and Barb's traditions was watching the sunset each evening hoping to see the elusive green flash. It is a special memory that we will always treasure, sitting there as a group watching God's beauty and majesty with wonderful, caring, and giving friends.

Barb and Joe were passionate people, but the thing that they were most passionate about was their vocation as parents. They took the job seriously and poured themselves into it. They modeled Christian service for their kids. Joe through his work at the Cathedral Soup kitchen, Barb as Eucharistic minister for shut-ins. As a couple they worked with engaged couples at St. Pius, helping to prepare them for the challenges of married life. They were a great team and each other's biggest fan. Barb loved to tell the story about Joe coaching the boys' little league teams. While the opposing coach was figuring out the lineup, Joe was setting up the griddle to flip pancakes for his team. As an accomplished pilot, Joe was able to offer Angel flights to patients needing treatment in other cities. Barb was always the one to offer to help whether it was Theresa's summer camp or football victory vittles or post season wrestling parties...wherever she was needed and whatever she could do to make a difference. Joe volunteered tirelessly at the K of C where he proudly showed us his grandfather's picture on the wall. Barb was a dinner angel for her dear friend Debby McCalley. When Debby mentioned to Barb in passing how cold she always felt and how great it would be to have a fireplace, Barb went to work behind the scenes contacting the people to make it happen and surprising Debby with a fireplace on her birthday! Barb and Joe each strived to make a difference in people's lives every day whether it was with a smile, a kind word or even a joke. They were thankful for their gifts and generous in sharing them but never in a flashy or boastful way.

Their kids were the joys of their life. Jim and I were blessed to be able to spend some time in Florida with Joe and Barb this past November for Jim's birthday. When they talked about their kids, you could see the pride and the love in their eyes. They reminisced about family vacations and family traditions. They were so proud of the young woman and men that Theresa, Drew, and Matt have become and the way that each of them is making a difference in the lives that they touch each day. They were proud of the way the kids have grown and learned from mistakes and how they are also making family, friendship, and faith priorities.

Barb and Joe lived life to the fullest. Or as Tom Mattingly would say, "They were living the dream". One of Joe's favorite songs, *What a Wonderful World*, describes how they saw the world. We are so thankful for their example and their friendship the last 40 plus years. We are thankful, too, to the Bishop Chatard teachers, staff, administration, and community for recognizing the way that Joe and Barb Krier kindly and humbly gave back to this wonderful world, touching one person at a time and truly making a difference.