

Joe and Jan Haug

Introduction

Joe's parents were Earl and Rita (Haug). Earl was a carpenter who started as a single guy but then got his own crew. Joe stated, "He did good work. He was well known in Saint Genevieve as a good carpenter." His mom stayed home and raised the seven children. Joe was the second oldest. Joe's dad passed away when he was 61. His mom then cooked at Valley High School.

Joe was born in Saint Genevieve, MO, and went to Valley High School. He got a degree in teaching from SEMO (South East Missouri State University). He started teaching at Notre Dame High School in Cape Girardeau. He loved teaching there and would have taught there forever. However, he got drafted into the Vietnam War. He was in Vietnam for a year in the Army artillery. He was in the service for two years.

When he came back, there was no longer a job for him at Notre Dame so he taught at Augustine Academy. It closed after his first year there. He spent two years in two different places until he started teaching at Saint Dominic, where he taught math for 41 years.

Jan's parents were Frank and Shirley Werner. Frank was a draftsman at Monsanto. Shirley was the descendant of the Werner family buried at Saint Peter Cemetery. She was a stay at home mom until the children were older. She was a cook at a school and then a bookkeeper at Notre Dame high school where Jan was teaching.

Jan was born in Saint Louis but moved to South County when she was five. She went to Saint Margaret of Tours Grade School and then to Notre Dame High School, which was attached to the Notre Dame Mother House.

She went to UMSL for 1 ½ years. That's when Monsignor Esswein asked Jan to teach a combined 3rd and 4th grade class for ½ year because a teacher was ill. Jan said, "I don't have a degree." Monsignor replied, "That's ok. Sisters will help you." The nuns helped with lesson plans and suggestions. Jan knew she wanted to teach and she's glad she did it. She then went to SLU and got a BS in Social Studies with a major in Geography.

Dr. John Conoyer taught Jan. He offered her a fellowship to get her masters' degree. He taught her and then she taught his son and grandsons.

Relatives

Jan was very excited that she just discovered that her ancestors, the Geisert and Weckermeyer families, have tombstones at the Saint Peter Cemetery on Eighth St. These are her mother's mother's grandparents, Armand and Franseca Geisert and Johann Weckermeyer. The youngest son of the Geisert's was Henry, and he was one of the first priests at Saint Peter. She found this out in the 100th anniversary book.

Joe's oldest sister is in Denver, a brother is in Bonne Terre, and a sister, who Joe described as "a good lady" passed away. He has a brother, Greg, in Jefferson City and a brother, Paul in Zell, MO. His sister, Barb, was born when he was a freshman in college.

Jan has two younger brothers who are now retired. Dan is in Texas and was an independent contractor. Ron worked in security in defense. He had many interesting jobs, including at Monsanto, where he traveled the world explaining Monsanto programs to people in other countries.

Getting Married

Joe only taught at Augustinian for two years, but they were significant. That's how he met Jan. Augustinian had teachers go to other schools and see what they were teaching. He chose to go to Notre Dame because he knew there was a single woman (Jan) there. Their mutual friend, Marty, introduced them.

Jan had just turned 25. Her Grandma passed away and Jan prayed, "Grandma, if there's someone out there for me, I'm 25. You might want to consider getting him here." Two weeks later, Jan met Joe.

Joe asked Jan to go to Saint Genevieve to meet his mom. Jan had prayed to Our Lady of Perpetual Help since she was ten. When Jan walked in Joe's mom's door, she saw a picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Help on the wall. She knew it was a good sign regarding marrying Joe. They both said that God has a plan. They've now been married 52 years. They got married at Saint Martin of Tours in Lemay on November 22, 1972.

Children

Both of their sons, Jeff and Andy, went to Saint Peter Grade School. They liked it here. They liked the teachers and friends. They did well and were very happy.

They both went to Saint Dominic where Joe was teaching. Jeff would say, "My friends want to know what will be on the math test?" Andy ignored Joe at school.

Joe was the cross country coach and was the coach for Jeff and Andy. He took both of the teams that they were on to state.

Joe said, "The family is surrounded by education." Jeff has a PhD and is now superintendent at Mehlville School District. His wife, Robin, is an administrator and is getting her PhD. Jeff and Robin have two grown children, Ben and Meghan. Andy is single and works as a janitor at Wright City School District in an elementary school. Joe stated, "Both boys get along well and take care of each other. They're good men. They do good work." Jan echoed this. She said, "They get along well. They take care of each other. We're very blessed with the two boys."

Their children are the reason they became parishioners at Saint Peter. The boys were part of the Saint Peter School Cooperation. Children attended Saint Peter for grade school and Saint Cletus for middle school. The Haug's passed Borromeo on their way to Saint Peter School. They ended up staying at Saint Peter parish.

Teaching

Joe and Jan moved to Saint Charles in 1974. It was half way between Joe's job at Saint Dominic and Jan's job at Notre Dame.

Joe taught math at Saint Dominic for 41 years. He said, "God gave me a job." Joe loved his job and enjoyed the kids. He liked being with them day in and out, even after 41 years. He enjoyed seeing them grow and accomplish things. He said, "Hopefully, I made a difference in their life."

Jan planned to stay home with the children until they were older. God had other plans. Father Javorich was an administrator at Duchesne. He was the parish priest when she was little at Saint Martin of Tours and a personal friend of her dad's. Father asked her to be a teacher but Jan had small kids that weren't even in grade school. Father said, "No, I need a teacher. Find someone to watch young one." God worked it out. The neighbor said that she would love to watch Andy.

Jan had five days to prepare; she started the day after Christmas break. She taught from January until the end of May. She liked teaching but there wasn't a permanent job available. The priest in charge said they had to hire a football coach. Jan jokingly said she could coach football. Jan ended up being called back to teach and stayed 31 years. She said, "There were really good teachers and really nice people that I wanted to be with."

She taught Social Studies, American History, and American Government at Duchesne. She created a course called Political Geography for Honors' Freshmen. The students took ½ year of Government and ½ year of Geography.

Were there conflicts with Joe teaching at Saint Dominic and Jan teaching at Duchesne, great rival schools? Joe and Jan were fine with it but people couldn't understand the situation. Joe and Jan have both had good friends from their schools.

House Fire

In 1983, Joe and Jan went out for dinner at Pizza Hut with their two boys, who were in 2nd grade and Kindergarten. When they drove home, their street was blocked off. They drove to another block and saw flames coming out of their house. They parked at a neighbor's house and ran up. The house had been struck by lightning in two places and burned down. The house was burned through the roof and subfloors. Nothing was saved.

The neighbors and Saint Peter were so generous. They gave the kids clothes so they wouldn't feel out of place at school the next day. Dave and Ann Stahlschmidt wanted to know what size clothing. Someone donated clothing and put \$300 in the pocket. People would pat them and put money in their pockets. Things appeared at their door, like a deep fryer, a dress, and toys. People at Saint Dominic gave money and miscellaneous, and also bought food. People at Duchesne bought a refrigerator for them.

Monsignor Peet was the pastor at Saint Peter. He and Father Haley came and asked what they could do to help. Both Joe and Jan described Saint Peter as one of the most generous parishes they had been

associated with. Most of all, the parish gave friendship. They asked Father, "How do we make them stop?" Father said, "They will stop when they want to."

Joe and Jan stayed at the Noah's Ark Hotel for two weeks. (It is now the Streets of Saint Charles.) Then they stayed at the old Saint Cletus rectory, which was on Duchesne, across from Duchesne High School. The new rectory had moved to Zumbehl. Father said he would prefer to have someone living in the rectory rather than having it vacant.

They stayed in the rectory from April to July. That was a very short time to rebuild their house but people were wonderful about helping them. People quit other jobs to help them. Joe and Jan rebuilt their house in the same place. Jan's dad drew up the house plans on sight and worked with the contractor. Joe and Jan answered hundreds of questions, such as, "What kind of front door?"

Joe and Jan stated that they just lost things. "Everyone was okay." (Joe and Jan didn't have any pets.) They experienced how good people are.

Breakfast Friends

One Sunday morning, Joe and Jan Haug went to Mass at 6:30 a.m. and then went to Gingham's on 94 afterwards for breakfast. Ken and Joanne Cordes were there and invited Joe and Jan to join them. There was a group of Saint Peter parishioners, including Cyril and Mary Ann Meyer, Bob and Kak Buse, and Dallas and Ruth Orf. Even though these parishioners were 25 years older than Joe and Jan, they took Joe and Jan in. They invited Joe and Jan to eat breakfast with them after Mass. This was the beginning of wonderful friendships.

Joe and Jan described the parishioners as the most interesting group of people. They had the best stories. Cyril Meyer had worked on the space program and knew all the astronauts by name and they knew him. He knew John Glenn. One person had been a semi pro baseball player, one was a city coroner, one lady worked on airplanes during World War II, and one was a mailman. They asked Joe and Jan what they did and they said they worked in the Appalachians.

Working in Appalachia

Frank Eck, a counselor at Saint Dominic, and Frank's wife, Pat, started the work in Appalachia in Drift, Kentucky, the poorest county in Kentucky. They got donations. Joe started helping and Jan helped

when the boys were older. Jan helped for 18 years and Joe helped a few more years. Joe was the bus driver and Jan organized the food. Joe and Frank got used furniture.

On Christmas vacation, people would take a tractor trailer of used furniture and \$5,000 worth of food. Forty kids would go on the trip. Joe drove the bus on windy, curvy mountain roads in the winter. It gets dark very quickly on mountain roads. There were three drivers; Frank drove a tractor trailer by himself.

People stayed in an old small church and slept on the floor. The breakfast friends gave donations. Cyril Meyer made crafts, such as bird houses.

In the summer, they spent one week repairing and painting houses. Fourteen kids from Saint Dominic and kids from Kentucky helped and did crafts together. On Friday, there was a carnival and kids had to bring a game. The Kentucky kids chose prizes, and nine out of ten times, the prizes were for their moms. The kids became pen pals.

At school before they left, there would be a meeting. Frank had a book telling why people were in Appalachia and how the people were. There was a meeting every evening in the summer in Appalachia to get the kids' reactions to what they had seen during the day. Joe said, "Our kids learned to help those in need."

Joe and Jan described one adult mentally challenged man that they helped. His name was Hatoe and he lived alone ever since his mom had passed. His house was decrepit. It had no central heating. He burned coal in the middle of the room, so there was a lot of coal dust everywhere. The bottom of his window screen was cut off so he could throw garbage out the window.

They helped him for a week. They fixed up his house, washed the curtains, and painted. When they left on Friday, they drove by all the houses they had worked on. Hatoe told them to wait. They waited and waited while Hatoe went somewhere. Hatoe came back with a young adult man with a guitar case. Hatoe said, "He's my friend and sings thank you for my house."

Saint Vincent dePaul

During the 1993 flood, Saint Vincent dePaul (SVDP) put out a big effort to get food, clothing, and bedding for people who were flooded. This was in the summer, when Joe and Jan were off school. They

worked with Ken Cordes, Jerry Crowe, and Cyril and Mary Ann Meyers. (Joe and Jan became good friends with the Meyers at breakfast.) They were all good workers.

Throughout the year, people call Saint Vincent dePaul for help with rent, electric and water bills, car repairs, etc. Nancy Netsch takes calls year round, and there is generally one call per day. SVDP members in the parish visit the people and decide how to help. (Saint Peter SVDP helps those people within Saint Peter's boundaries but coordinates with SVDP from surrounding parishes.) Sometimes people need bills paid right away. Sometimes SVDP refers people to other organizations, like the Saint Joachim and Ann Care Service or the 211 number.

Joe and Jan described it as "A lot of hard work by not too many people. It's difficult to go out and talk to people. It takes patience to help the poor. The ladies and men that do this are wonderful."

People don't realize that most of the food donations are during the food collection at Thanksgiving.

The SVDP used to have furniture and a refrigerated warehouse. They made a handicapped ramp for a parish member. Then they made three more. They worked with Thom Huellinghorst, Leo Geringer, and Cyril Meyer. Now people don't ask for handicapped ramps, probably because the SVDP isn't set up to do that anymore.

Christmas Basket Project

A major SVDP project is the Christmas basket project. It's been here for a very long time. Ken Cordes was in charge of SVDP and Ken and Jerry Crowe ran the Christmas basket project. Ken asked Joe and Jan if they could help with names, which they did for two or three years. Then Ken asked, "Now are you good enough to take over?" That's how Joe and Jan "got roped" into taking over the Christmas basket project.

It was very good to follow Ken's plan. Jan organizes the Christmas basket project. She makes sure there is enough food and volunteers.

Families call for help on the SVDP hotline and request to be part of the Christmas basket project. Specifically at Christmas, Jan calls the people back. She asks them what they are doing, where they live, how many people at that address, names, and ages of children. Post Covid, she just checks the address

to make sure the people live in the parish boundary. She refers the people to other parishes if the people live within those parish boundaries.

Sonia Willbrand makes the tags for the Jessie tree. Mary Boldt is in charge of the gift cards. The Sodality does the shopping and prepares the food for the families. The Saturday before Christmas, the parish center is set up as a shopping center. There are aisles like a grocery store: peanut butter, Pringles, macaroni and cheese, vegetables, meat products, etc. Volunteers deliver the food and gift cards to houses or apartments. The volunteers doing the deliveries get to see in person how nice and thankful the people are.

There are usually 100 volunteers who shop, box up food, bring out turkeys, and deliver groceries. Many volunteers show up every year. They're not necessarily part of the SVDP or Sodality.

There are usually 50 – 65 families per year wanting Christmas baskets. Often people can change their situation. SVDP doesn't help the same families every year; about 30 families are repeats.

Jan and Joe described this project as "fun and a hard thing to do. People that shop for families really enjoy it." They also stated that we have such generous people of the parish.

Cyril Meyer still worked at age 98 on this project. He helped out with pieces of papers with names on them.

Warming Center

Saint Peter is one of the organizations that provides a warming center for the homeless. Father Seper is the one that started it. When the temperature is 20 degrees or colder at night, the warming center opens. (This is air temperature, not wind chill.) Organizations are assigned two different weeks during the winter. Tim and Zoe Williams run the warming center at Saint Peter. Tim will send out an email telling volunteers if the center will be open; he even lets volunteers know if the center won't be open if the temperature is borderline.

The day of this interview, December 2, 2024, the Saint Peter warming center was open because the low was predicted to be 15 degrees. Joe and Jan had already received an email from Tim by 1:00 p.m. today telling them. Saint Peter is scheduled to have a warming center at the end of January if needed. There are many volunteers.

The overall warming center organization provides items to sleep overnight, like cots and bedding. Saint Peter people also provide something hot to eat and drink, and fruit and snacks. The Sodality provides sausage biscuits for breakfast. The homeless people are provided with a protein bar to take with them.

The people come about 4:00 or 5:00 and set up their cots. They must be gone by 7:00 a.m. Many warming centers are churches with schools so they need the homeless people to be off the premises by the start of school.

There are generally 12 – 19 people per night. On bitterly cold nights, they can have almost 30 people. (Saint Peter seems to always have one of the coldest nights of the year.) There's a mix of men and women, and sometimes a family. Sometimes there are dogs.

Homeless people are often hesitant to trust because they have gone to places and lost things. Their trust must be earned. The community suppers have helped to establish trust.

Community Suppers

Joe and Jan are not involved with this, but they described the monthly community suppers for the homeless. Generally, the newer people from SVDP are involved. Parishioners from Saint Francis in Portage help. Deacon Tim used to help.

Saint Peter provides a meal on the second Sunday of the month to the homeless of the community. The meal is at noon because it would be dark in the evening in winter. The tables have tablecloths and flowers; volunteers serve the dinner to the homeless, and volunteers also eat with them.

Mary Ann Mitchell has socks, underwear, coats, hats, and gloves available to the homeless during the winter months during these meals.

They never know how many will come. One time they made too many meatball sandwiches. This happened to be the same night as the diapers were being collected in the 1924 building. PJ Herrera went over and gave the extra meatball sandwiches to the volunteers, who happened to be teenagers. They really enjoyed them.

The diaper collection volunteers call themselves the Pooper Troopers. They are generally workers from the Crisis Nursery. Father Seper told Joe Haug that they could store the diapers in the 1924 building. A big delivery truck delivers the diapers. People make a chain up the stairs to put the diapers in the storeroom.

Saint Anne Sodality

Mary Ann Meyer, Cyril Meyer's wife, kept inviting Jan to the Sodality. Jan helped in the summer when she was off school, and she became more involved when she retired.

The Saint Anne Sodality does a lot for the parish. They buy new linens and vestments. They wash the linens from Mass. They used to give scholarships to eighth graders going to Catholic high schools, but now they give a donation to the Early Learning Center. They bought chairs for the parish center. They have worked with Deacon Larry, Father Seper, and Mary Lorenz to see what the parish needs.

The Sodality makes casseroles for the Saint Patrick Center. Even before the merger with Saint Charles Borromeo, they worked with them. About 15 ladies in the Saint Peter's Sodality help. They take the casseroles to Borromeo where a lady and her husband drive them to the Saint Patrick Center.

The Sodality helps with funeral luncheons. They don't provide food, but they can make it, set it out, serve it, and clean up. Jan said, "It is **so** much appreciated by the families".

They always have the annual Card Party, with attendance prizes and desserts. People can play whatever card game they want.

Rummage Sale

The big fundraiser for the Sodality is the rummage sale. It's an enormous amount of work, even with so many ladies and people working. Anyone can donate something to sell. The men, generally the husbands, help set up the tables, carry in stuff for the women to sort, and help carry out items for the customers. The men check that electronics work. Children and grandchildren help out. Joe and Jan's grandchildren, Ben and Meghan, have helped out for years, since second grade. Everyone knows them. They've also helped with the card party and fish fries. Joe and Jan are so proud of them.

It takes three days to set up and three days to sell. The parish center has different divisions for linens, appliances, clothes, boutique clothes, books, hardware, religious articles, etc.

The Sodality has used the profit from the rummage sale to buy new vestments or chairs. It's very successful.

Leftover stuff is donated to "Love Haiti" in Saint Charles. They take leftovers from the rummage sale and other places for their own garage sale. They use that money for Haiti. Haiti doesn't need coats but "Love Haiti" sends sewing machines, stoves, cookware, etc.

Jan stated, **"The Sodality is always around."**

General Volunteering

Joe and Jan grew up volunteering even before they knew each other. They were able to get more involved when they retired. They enjoy working together.

They were Eucharistic Ministers at their schools and then at church. Since they retired around 2012, they have organized Homebound Communion. They took this over from Thom Huellinghorst, "who did it forever." They worked with Jerry Crowe, Cyril Meyer, and Ken Cordes.

They're humble about their volunteering. Joe nonchalantly stated that he had been the Saint Vincent dePaul treasurer for nine years.

Joe said, "There's value in making contact with people, whether it's delivering Christmas baskets or making contact with the people that live in Appalachia. You can see how appreciative people are."

They have made so many good friends through the Sodality, SVDP, and with the parents of the kids in school. Jan said, "They are swell people. They are so generous, loving, and kind. We are lucky that we landed here."