



# SOAR!notes

Support Our Aging Religious

## Sharing My Story

By Maureen Brady

After I received a mailing from SOAR!, I immediately became a donor to this caring organization. As I read the letter, I was amazed at how SOAR! has supported hundreds of retired religious in just about every state.

In July 2024, I was delighted to get a mailing about a SOAR! grant received by the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in Indiana. This community is special to me because I had two great aunts who were members. When I attended college there, I often visited them. It was a blessing to learn about their religious life, see their devotion to the students, and be present to them in the last years of their life. Also, my five daughters and I were all educated by the Sisters of Providence at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College. What a joy to know that these wonderful religious women are being helped by generous SOAR! donors.

I continue to support SOAR! because I want to join the many donors who help aging religious have a more comfortable, dignified retirement after a lifetime of doing God's work and serving others. Because religious received little compensation for their work, they need our help now and it is a blessing and joy to provide some assistance. Thank God for loving and compassionate organizations like SOAR!



*Maureen and Patrick Brady raised their family in Saginaw, MI. Patrick retired from a career as a teacher and administrator, and Maureen, while and after raising their seven children, retired from a career as a hospital dietician. They are now enjoying their children, 31 grandchildren and 28 great grandchildren (with more to come). In July 2024, they celebrated their 66th wedding anniversary with family, friends and their beloved dog, Maggie.*



## From the desk of Sister Kathleen, IHM

Dear Friends of SOAR!

When I visited the Abbey of Regina Laudis in Bethlehem, Connecticut last year, I knew I was standing on holy ground. I get this serene feeling whenever I am welcomed into a community of religious women or men who benefit from grants provided by SOAR! While my visits are intended to better understand the projects funded by SOAR!, getting to know these holy women and men is a personal benefit for me.

Your donations to SOAR! do so much more than help a community purchase a generator, install a stair lift, or replace worn out recliners. Your participation in our mission makes a difference to individual Sisters, Priests, or Brothers and changes their daily lives for the better. You bring them hope!

In this issue you will read about the awards dinners held in New York and Washington, DC, this fall. Mother Dolores Hart, OSB, was one of our distinguished honorees. As she accepted the award, Mother Dolores concluded her remarks with these words, *“God bless you, SOAR!, your mission, and your wonderful, compassionate and generous donors.”* And I share her sentiments in offering my personal gratitude to you.

May the blessings of Christmas bring joy and peace to you and your family.

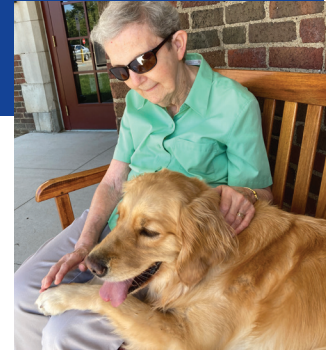
*S. Kathleen Lunsman, IHM*

## Pets With A Heart

Many congregations of religious women and men benefit from animal-assisted therapy. Interacting with animals can reduce stress and anxiety and improve a person’s overall well-being.

Sisters Pat Montini and Sharon Costello, who are Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden, Pennsylvania, began “Pets with Heart” over 12 years ago. Sister Pat, whose dog often accompanied her when visiting her mother in assisted living, noticed the difference that animal-human interactions made in the lives of the residents, and soon “Pets with Heart” began.

Along with Buster and Zoey, Sisters Pat and Sharon are a welcome sight for the Sisters in supportive living, as well as for those in the neighboring community. The initiative is integrated with the environmental, ecological, and social justice outreach embraced by the congregation. The dogs have visited people in hospitals, nursing homes, schools, and community centers.



Sister Sharon noted that while visiting with the Sisters, especially those with memory issues, the dog may be at the center, but the focus is on the wonderful conversations that are shared. “When I walk into a room with Buster, so many Sisters say, ‘You made my day!’”

The Sister of St. Joseph of Baden are committed to helping their dear neighbors. It’s through innovative programs like this that they can bring joy to the hearts of their older Sisters and to their local community.

Read more about our interview with the Sisters, Buster, and Zoey at [www.soar-usa.org/blog](http://www.soar-usa.org/blog) [www.stjoseph-baden.org/pets-with-heart/](http://www.stjoseph-baden.org/pets-with-heart/)



## You Bring Joy to the World!

Thanks to our donors, so many aging religious continue to actively participate in their communities as they age in place. Grants help purchase items such as medical equipment like wheelchairs, upgrade elevators, and install new boilers or air conditioning systems. The Catholic Sisters, Brothers, and Priests you help are grateful for you every day. Thank you for bringing them joy and peace of mind and heart!



You can say "thank you" to your aging religious all year long by becoming a *Faithful Friend* monthly donor. Visit [www.soar-usa.org/faithfulfriend](http://www.soar-usa.org/faithfulfriend)

Photo credits: Bruce Byers and Eddie Arrossi

## SOAR! Fall Events Celebrate Religious Life

This fall, friends of SOAR! gathered in New York and Washington, DC to honor some amazing individuals and share the mission of SOAR! To view more pictures, visit [www.facebook.com/soarusa](http://www.facebook.com/soarusa)



SOAR! Board member, Sister Patricia Chappell, SNDdeN, offer the opening prayer at the DC Gala.



2024 Yanitelli awardee Mother Dolores Hart, OSB was delighted to meet SOAR! Board Chair Kathleen Curran at the Abbey of Regina Laudis.



SOAR! President Sister Kathleen Lunsmann, IHM with Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton awardee Mario Paredes, K.G.C.H.S. at the New York dinner.



Left to Right: DC Gala St. Elizabeth Ann Seton awardees, Peter M. Leibold and Liz McCloskey; Sister Kathleen Lunsmann, IHM; St. Katharine Drexel awardee Kerry A. Robinson; and Good Samaritan awardee, James D. Bishop, Esq.

## A Gift to Benefit You and Aging Religious

Did you know that donating appreciated stock to SOAR! is an easy way to help aging religious *and* you? When you make a gift, you will receive an immediate tax deduction on the fair market value and avoid capital gains tax.

SOAR! is partnering with Stock Donator, an online resource that makes it easy to donate stock. To get started, visit [www.soar-usa.org/stock](http://www.soar-usa.org/stock) and click "Donate Stock to SOAR!" You can donate directly from the website or download a form to donate through your broker. A receipt will be generated for your taxes when your donation is complete.

For more information, contact Elizabeth Góral-Makowski at [emakowski@soar-usa.org](mailto:emakowski@soar-usa.org) or (202) 529-7627.

## In Grateful Memory

We remember in prayer our dear 2024 Legacy Society members who rest in God's eternal peace.

*Richard J. Barber*  
*Joseph C. Caccia*  
*John F. Coleman*  
*Alexander Gall*  
*Roger J. Holzman*  
*Genevieve A. Schechter*  
*Anthony D. Sproule*



## MyCatholicWill

If you don't already have a written estate plan, chances are you may have thought about it.

Did you know that SOAR! has partnered with *My Catholic Will*? You can create your will easily online for free. Visit [soar-usa.org/will](http://soar-usa.org/will) to start your will today and provide a legacy gift to SOAR!

Support Our Aging Religious is a 501(c)3 nonprofit dedicated to helping congregations of Catholic Sisters, Brothers and Priests care for their aging members.

## Stay Connected with SOAR!



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This newsletter communicates the mission and needs of SOAR! and expresses our gratitude to our donors.

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