



Saint Viator and Sacred Heart of Mary Alumni Gather at Arlington Park

June 23, 2010



Alumni and their families enjoy a day at the races. Pictured from left to right: Lynne Toomey Traci, Mary Claire Brady, Jonny Murphy, Carole Lorenz Christensen, Jane Broeren Lambesis and Peter Lambesis.

A relaxed day at Arlington Park was nearly rained out on Friday for alumni from Saint Viator and Sacred Heart of Mary high schools.

What started out as a carefree day, spent gathered under one of the track's marquee tents located just before the finish line, came to an abrupt halt as severe storms swept through the area.

With near-hurricane force winds, thunder and heavy rain amounts, the storm caused a 20-minute delay between the afternoon's third and fourth races.

However, alumni and their families carried on.

They moved their party into the clubhouse where they resumed their mingling and enjoying of the thoroughbred racing on the day's card.

This was the second annual day at the races, organized by the alumni committee for the two high schools, which merged in 1988.

"It's an informal way to gather with local alums," said Jim Murphy, alumni director. "We have other events that are more expensive, but this one is family friendly and accessible. It's more of a friend-raiser than anything else."

Early guests on hand concurred.

"I like going to the racetrack, and when you combine it with the chance to see other alums, it's great," said Lynne Toomey Traci of Palatine.

Her classmate from Sacred Heart of Mary, Jane Broeren Lambesis of Mount Prospect agreed.

"It's fun and gives us a chance to reconnect," Lambesis said.

Mary Claire Brady of Arlington Heights said she looks to support alumni events, and especially ones that take her to entertainment destinations like Arlington Park.

"It's almost better than a reunion," Brady said. "You run across alums from all the classes, and not just your own."

The alumni group knew it was their day when a horse in the second race was named, "Bristol Boy."

Saint Viator alum, Jim Bristol of Arlington Heights, is one of the group's most visible proponents, serving as announcer for the school's football and basketball games, and auctioneer at its fundraiser.

His wager on the horse failed to pay big dividends, but his investment in the alumni association, and by extension, Saint Viator High School, continues to serve him well.