

# THE DOREMAN CHRONICLES

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## Say CHEESE!

By Ken Wallace

I would like to share one of my memories, (well actually also Ed Bencar's memory too) at St. Joe's during what I believe was our sophomore year. We both had Mr. Gutbrod for the lecture part of biology and Brother Corrigan for the lab. In Mr. Gutbrod's class he required us to answer the study questions at the end of each chapter. The catch was they had to be typed and not only typed but there also had to be 2 copies. The original to be turned in to him and a carbon paper copy for our notes.

I remember going home and telling my folks what I needed and they dutifully went off and bought a portable typewriter as well as a portable metal desk to place it on. Needless to say I had never typed a word in my life or worked with carbon paper, so those assignments took a long time to complete. In all honesty though it was a good way to become immersed in the material.

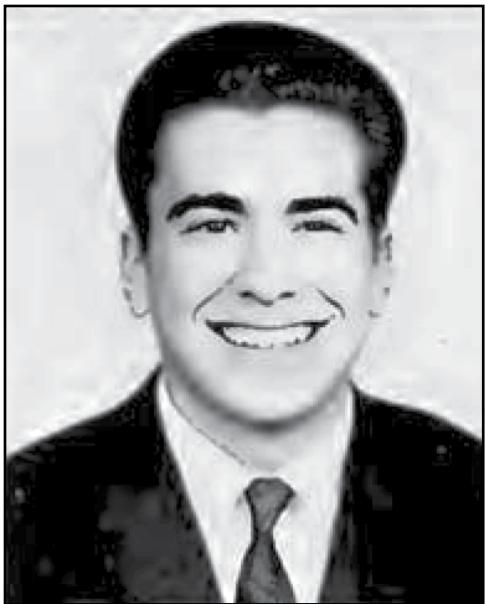
Mr. Gutbrod also had another requirement for his course. We had to do a project, write a paper on it and then present it to the class. I didn't mind the project or the paper. However, I didn't like the class presentation. I was deathly afraid of public speaking.

One of the nice things about doing the project was we were permitted to have a partner. Here's where Ed Bencar comes in. Ed and I went to Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Wickliffe. We've been best friends since the first grade and continue to be to this day. We decided for our project that we were going to mate a pair of white mice and study how they interacted with their offspring.

At the time there was a pet shop on East 185th Street not too far from St. Joe's. We went in there and talked to the owner. We told him about our project. He picked out 2 white mice supposedly a male and a female. We then bought the cage, a wheel for the cage and some food. The owner also said he would buy back the 2 original mice and any of their offspring after we completed the project. We both thought this was a good deal. After all what could happen?

I agreed to take the mice and keep them in my parent's basement from the remaining of that September until the end of December. Ed would take them from January through the conclusion of the





project which would be the end of April. We both were very diligent in raising them checking in twice daily to see if there were any offspring. Both for the sake of the project but also to see if we could turn this into a profit making business. Needless to say nothing happened. The only thing we could figure out is that they were the same gender. We came to that conclusion because there weren't any signs that they had cannibalized any offspring they might have produced.

Ed and I were freaking out, after all the project was to include baby mice and we didn't have any. I believe we talked to Mr. Gutbrod and he told us to write the paper on what we observed about their behavior, and so we each wrote our papers. Now the only thing we needed to do was take some pictures of the 2 mice. No problem again so we thought.

I received a call from Ed and he said: "Ken you need to get to my house quick I think the mice died during the night." I got there as quick as I could which was pretty fast because he lived the on the next street over from me. I also brought my camera.

When I arrived he showed me the mice. One was indeed dead. The other was close to it. We needed pictures. It was bad enough we had to change the project in the middle of it, but not having any pictures to go along with our already written reports. We figured we'd both flunk the project.

Then we had an idea. Why not pose the one who was almost dead in the cage wheel and put the two together for other pictures? After all these were snap shots and it's not like we needed movement so we did. We had a picture of a mouse in the wheel with the caption: "mouse playing on wheel." Ed spun the wheel with the near dead mouse in it and it actually looked real. I took the picture right before it fell out of the wheel. We had other various poses of them close together with a little ball or some other small object like an empty thread spool. The captions read: "mice playing." Finally, a picture of them together with a caption: "mice sleeping." We turned in our projects and each gave our presentations. I think Ed wound up with an A and I received a B. Over the years I would see Mr. Gutbrod from time to time at St. Jerome's at morning Mass and I'd stop to talk with him. He truly was a gentleman and a great man. I never mentioned the project. We were blessed to have so many excellent teachers who would go out of their way to help us if we just asked.

During our first orientation to sign up for classes our parents came with us and we met with a member of the faculty. The faculty member my parents and I met with was Tony Lekan. Many years later during my final year in the seminary I was assigned to St. Clarence parish in North Olmsted. Tony would be offering me his guidance once again as a member of my homiletic advisory board, as I transitioned from the Diaconate to the Priesthood.

After ordination I would run into a number of our former teachers doing volunteer work at parishes and one at a hospital actively living their faith. Yes, I am so blessed to be a St. Joseph High School Viking.