

From the desk of
Peggy Darmstadt Smith '65
Office of Institutional Advancement

November, 2007

Dear Friend,

When Mary Ann opened her newspaper that morning, her jaw actually dropped open! She was astonished by the news.

There it was, in black and white. Her alma mater Our Lady of the Elms, is in the midst of a *renaissance!*

Multi-million dollar donations to rebuild and expand the theater, commons, parking and gym... a sharp increase in students... a fresh curriculum for women as leaders... a new library... updated technology... After years of bad rumors, the Elms wasn't closing at all - it was finally back on track!

Mary Ann was thrilled, but that excitement soon gave way to a touch of shame. She was embarrassed for not acting sooner, but her heart swelled with new-found resolve. She put the paper away, grabbed her purse and was out the door. She'd never done anything like this before. After twenty-some years, she was inspired to make things right... at last.

PRESERVING THE TRADITION

I'll fill you in about Mary Ann and others like her in a moment. But before I do, I wanted to be straight with you about something - and it's vital to the Elms community at this time.

You know that every year, we send you a letter asking for your support of the school. (Obviously, this year is no exception!) Now, you may think that, thanks to the generosity of a few families, you're off the hook this year. After all, those few million dollars should cover just about everything, right?

Wrong. The money in the publicized gifts is *exclusively for construction and renovation*. You can visit www.TheElms.org for more details. Fact is, the day-to-day needs of the girls remain strong.

Tuition covers only 80% of the costs for educating each Elms girl. That missing 20% is vital to ensure the quality of an Elms education. That 20%, or about \$XXX per student, pays for things like technology, teachers, special programs, books, and more.
(over, please)

No doubt about it... education is expensive. By keeping tuition accessible to middle-income families, the Elms operates at a loss each year. Even with those big gifts for construction, we still need extra help to ensure the success of all our girls.

The great news is that an easy donation of just **\$X** from all those who have never given before would help us quickly surpass our goals! It's easy to do, and it feels so good. Just ask people like Mary Ann.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Like so many alums, Mary Ann was inspired to finally make a difference. Sure, she didn't have millions to give, but she recognized the difference that even a small contribution can make. That day, she wrote her first-ever check to the school. It felt so good to give, that she wished she had done it sooner.

Now it's your turn. Keep up the momentum, and reconnect with your alma mater. Come and see us, or make a simple contribution that will help our students get what they need to achieve. Now, you may feel tapped out, but even a few dollars can make a huge difference. By giving today, you'll help the women leaders of tomorrow receive the best education possible. Plus, your heart will smile, knowing that you contributed to helping so many exceptional young women as you express your generosity.

Go ahead... grab your purse and make it happen now. There's never been a better time to be a part of the excitement that is Our Lady of the Elms. We thank you for your prayers... and for your generosity!

Many blessings,

Peggy Darmstadt Smith, Class of 1965
Proud parent of Emily, Class of 2004
Annual Appeal Coordinator

PS: Our timeline for giving is shorter than ever this year! To make it easy for you, go ahead and put your gift amount on the enclosed reply card. We can bill you at your convenience. And if you contribute now, you avoid our phone-a-thon calls in December!

PSS: Did you know that you can give anonymously - or give in honor of one of your favorite classmates or teachers? Well, you can! Use the enclosed card, or you can call me to make special arrangements at (330)836-9384, ext. 1255.