

CrossRoads: Bulletin of the Passionist Alumni Association

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We Have Bios and We Need Your Help

GOOD NEWS: CREATING OUR ALUMNI "BIO BOOK"

Yes, an alumni "bio book" is going to be created on our website.

A little background ...

- For the first Alumni reunion in 2002, Mike Moll, Warrenton class of 1967, collected a significant number of hard copy alumni biographies.
- Over the years, Steve George, Warrenton class of 1965, created a robust website of all things Passionist, including biographies with pictures of close to 100 alumni.
- In preparation for the 2014 Alumni Reunion in Louisville, Bob Duffield, Warrenton class of 1971, gathered all of the above, over 150, formatted and dated them.

We are now getting very close to having these 150+ Alumni bios posted on the Passionist website.



Bob Duffield

The page is already password protected for exclusive use by our members. (Contact Jack Dermody, dermody@cox.net or Claire Smith, csmith@passionist.org for the password). Only Passionist Alumni will be able to access the bios, and all of them will be in pdf format. Bob Duffield has volunteered to be the site administrator.

At this time, we are offering several options to alumni:

- 1. submit a new bio for inclusion;
- 2. update your previously submitted bio; or
- 3. if you wish, we can remove your bio.

In addition, we plan to keep these bios current and indicate if a person is deceased. Want to check out your previously submitted bio? Check out bios and other files here.

New or updated bios can be sent to Bob Duffield either on hard copy or in electronic format. Bob can be reached by email at bdlinwood1@cox.net. Please contact Bob for his snail mail address to send hard copy items.

We will keep you apprised of this project's progress and developments here in the Passionist CrossRoads Alumni Bulletin.

News from the Passionist Alumni Council



Mike Owens Alumni Association Coordinator

2020 Priorities

The Alumni Council meets every other month using the Zoom video conference software.

A special thanks to Claire Smith for activating the Alumni Council page on the Province website. Click here passionist.org/alumni/... to see the members' pictures and brief biographies. You be the judge on whether or not the years have been good to us!

In January we set our major priorities for calendar year 2020. Following is a summary by committee.

Family Events (Carl Delage): We will be choosing a date and location for our 2021 reunion. Our members' input is essential to assist us with this decision. A member survey is being prepared and will be distributed soon.

Alumni Participation & Website Integration (Don Noltemeyer and Paul Schulte): Membership is key to our association's success. We will continue our recruiting initiatives, add a password-protected web page for current members, and continue our "Where's CP Waldo? (Lost Alumni)" initiative.

Lay Association (Mark Brockman and Carl Middleton): The team will be concluding their research and presenting their Lay Association recommendation to the Council.

Media / Communication Strategies (Jack Dermody): Two key initiatives are to develop a process to obtain updated biographies of our alumni and to recruit volunteers to help interview and write stories for upcoming bulletin issues. The two biographies in this issue of CrossRoads are examples of work we are encouraging.

Alumni Council & Committee Membership: We will establish a succession plan for Council membership and recruit volunteers to serve on sub-committees within the Council.

Deceased Alumni: We will also develop a notification process when we learn that an alum has passed, plus communicate existing information on our deceased alumni.

At first glance, this is an ambitious list of priorities. However, I continue to be amazed and occasionally overwhelmed by the commitment and energy of the Council members. As a result, I look forward to their accomplishments in 2020.

As always, if you have any questions, suggestions or comments, please email me at **mtowens2368@icloud.com**.

The Alumni Council Members

Ray Alonzo: Chair, Spiritual Formation

Mark Brockman: Co-Chair, Lay Association; Technology

Carl DeLage: Chair, Family Events

Jack Dermody: Chair, Communications: Website and Newsletter

Phil Jackson: Spiritual Formation

Terry McDevitt: Co-Chair, Administration/ Province Liaison

Carl Middleton: Co-Chair, Lay Association

Don Noltemeyer: Co-Chair, Alumni Profile and Recruitment

Mike Owens: Coordinator

Richard Padilla: Co-Chair, Administration/Province Liaison

Paul Schulte: Co-Chair, Alumni Profile and Recruitment

Fr. John Schork, CP: Province Liaison

Claire Smith: Communications

Passionist Milestones



Celebrating the 300-Year Jubilee at Mater Dolorosa Passionist Retreat Center in Sierra Madre, California

A BIG MILESTONE AMONG MANY MILESTONES FOR THE PASSIONISTS

We alumni members are big on milestone celebrations. We belonged to formation classes that today have morphed into multiple lifetimes of anniversaries. Vowed classmates have celebrated fifty-year jubilees as priests and brothers. The rest of us tirelessly recount adventures that happened during forty-, fifty-, and sixty-year spans.

It is the year 2020 and Holy Cross Province and the entire Passionist world is celebrating 300 years since twenty-six-year-old St. Paul of the Cross first wrote the Rule for the nascent Passionist congregation.

In honor of that 300-year timespan, the Passionists created an exquisite Icon that is traversing the entire world for a few years. Go to the <u>Province's Jubilee Website</u> to click around for that Icon's itinerary, as well as for background information on the daunting and inspiring endeavor.

Most Passionist venues in the U.S. will have already hosted the Icon by the time you read this, but you still have a chance to see it in Detroit from June 9-19 at the site of our last reunion: St. Paul of the Cross Passionist Retreat and Conference Center, 23333 Schoolcraft Ave., Detroit, MI 48223.

NOTE: Since this newsletter was published and due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the celebration in Detroit has been put on hold until further notice.

For you history buffs, the Passionists were first invited to the U.S. by a bishop in Pittsburgh in 1852, a full 132 years after the Rule was first written. They were four Italians who arrived speaking not a word of English. Quickly, however, they built a sizeable religious order. Remember that it was hard to be a Catholic in this country, the truth be told, since the very beginning of Colonial America. Here are a few links to describe those eras.

- For a bird's eye of Passionist history, including the U.S., in the Catholic Encyclopedia.
- For a historical perspective on Catholicism in 19th Century America.

Love in the Time of Coronavirus

The phrase "Love in the time of Coronavirus" is stolen from the novel *Love in the Time of Cholera* by Gabriel Garcia Márquez. Of course there is no intended comparison here with Garcia-Márquez's theme of lovesickness. But today, clearly, we are called to love our neighbor more than ever during the pandemic. We can also be sure that this nasty challenge--like all of them in the past--will end. There's a good chance we will remember the love we shared during "The Pandemic of 2020" more than the suffering, more than the self-isolation, more than the anxiety the news is producing.

We cannot meet face-to-face in most of our restaurants, halls, and churches (including Passionist ones), but we do have modern technology--like in this bulletin--to encourage one another and reach out to help.

Below are two links to join us in prayer:

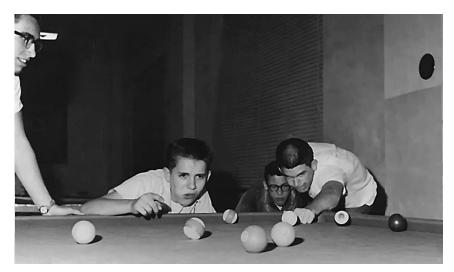
- 1. a two-minute prayer and blessing on **YouTube** from our own Fr. Cedric Pisegna CP
- 2. a Coronavirus prayer we shared at the last Alumni Council meeting: Coronavirus Prayer

Special Class Reunion in Louisville

The Bellarmine University class whose members include Mike Owens and Paul Schulte celebrates its 50th graduation anniversary from May 29-31. Tentative plans include a cookout on Saturday morning to which all Passionist alumni (especially those from the Louisville area, regardless of their formation class) are invited. Look for more information soon.

At this time, the reunion remains scheduled without change. If the University reschedules or cancels the reunion, we will notify you by email and text message regarding the cookout.

Meet Dan Geiger



In Warrenton c. 1961. L to R Ron Reneau, Dan Geiger, Jim Carey (shooting).

It was a hoot interviewing Dan Geiger on the Zoom platform in early March.

"The sad part about all the stories about me," he started out, "is that they're all true."

When were you at the Prep and what did you do in the years immediately afterwards?

"I spent two years at the Prep in Warrenton—sophomore and junior years," he said. "I was part of the Class of '63."

He returned to Montana for his senior year at a Catholic high school, then started college simply to beat the draft. He revealed nobody in his family had gone to college.

Later in '64, the draft board contacted him. He initially dealt with that by getting himself sent to a seminary in North Dakota. He persuaded the local bishop he still might have a vocation.

"I was always a kind of Eddie Haskell," he confessed, "very polite and persuasive to adults, but a total joker behind their backs."

The seminary was in the middle of nowhere, but it got him exempted again from the military. Ironically no sleeping space was left at the seminary, so he boarded at community college, went to community dances, and chased high school girls.

It turns out today that Dan is in the middle of writing a memoir about all this. It should be published in the next year or two. Geiger himself is of course the chief protagonist, but the story includes many interesting players—friends, girlfriends, and even a car.

It didn't take long for Dan to "lose his vocation" again, so he returned to Montana after one year.

The hard and dark sides of the Vietnam War rose quickly for Dan. One of his best buddies was killed in Nam, a loss that has haunted him all his life. He was officially drafted and supposed to go to Fort Lewis in Washington. With the killing of his best friend, however, he decided not to do the army; instead, he ended up in the National Guard. Before making the final decision, he had considered alternatives, even moving to Canada.

Meet Dan Geiger continued

Was religion only a ruse to avoid the draft, or was there more to it than that?

"Good question," he said. "I began to check out religions. I rejected most, even though each had some good points. Before graduate school, I went to Europe with my wife for two months, saw some eastern churches. When I travelled to Thailand, I ended up visiting a Wat with Buddhist monks. I thought the monks' lifestyle was too isolated, not involved in service to others."

So underneath his "gamesmanship" for manipulating the draft system with religion, it happens that Dan, all his life, has been a genuine seeker of spiritual truth. Although he quit going to church, he went looking for other religions, not joining any of them for a very long time. In college, he continued to take theology, as well as philosophy and business.

He studied Islam, Hinduism, and Sikhism. He visited over fifty countries. Whatever the religion, there were great tenets. It made no sense to Dan that only Christians were going to heaven. Many people in India had never even heard about Christianity. More and more it made no sense that one religion was "it."

"I ended up liking the spiritual teachings of so many religions, but not the dogma. Spiritual messages of the founders were pretty much the same. Soul. Spiritual life after this one. There is a God who is mystery that we don't understand."

For the last few decades, Dan has been associated with the Bahai faith whose principal tenets are the oneness of religion and world unity.

"When I discovered the principle of progressive revelation" he said "everything made perfect sense. The founders of all the world religions say the same thing Jesus said, 'I am the way, the life and the truth, you can only come to the Father through me.' So how can they all be right? Once I understood God sends Manifestations every thousand years or so to confirm spiritual truths and bring new social laws, it took the 'them and us' out of religion."

What was your career like?

"For twenty-five years, I've been involved in rehabilitation and counseling. I started out working with people with physical and mental disorders. That was for the State of Montana. I was a counsellor, then in administration, but I've always kept a caseload. In the early days we were emptying out institutions throughout the country. So dang interesting, especially keeping my hand in the caseloads.

"I have always been interested in hypnotherapy and went to school to learn how to do it. That's all I do now. I no longer focus on psychotherapy. Hyponsis works better. Regular counselling takes too long. Using psychotherapy, I'd see people twenty to forty times. With hypnosis, I see them only about five times. Hypnosis works really well."

Dan suggests checking out his website where it immediately becomes clear the same traditional stuff associated with psychotherapy—and more—he can treat under hypnosis. He has learned that maladies most often result from emotional impacts. The problems and disorders can be physical, neurological, mental, emotional, or centered around fears and phobias. Who would ever think of going to a hypnotist for maladies like the following? For allergies, fibromyalgia, high blood pressure, or migraines; for ADHD, bi-polar symptoms, guilt, or even writer's block; for preparation for death, or for a recent stroke?

Meet Dan Geiger continued

His complete list of disorders can be found on page 2 of **Dan's website**.

What about drug-addicted people?

"On medication, you are not who you are," he says. "In life we all start out as that perfect little being, created in the image of God. Life drags us away from it. Hypnotherapy helps us get back to our true selves."

Fully half of Dan's practice takes place on Skype or on the phone.

A stranger finding you on Facebook cannot help but wonder about your fascination with trips to Mongolia. Tell us about it.

"I've spent lots of time in Outer Mongolia. It started when I met a kid at the Bahai World Center in Haifa, Israel. He was a tall guy from Mongolia. His name is Hasa and we got to be good friends. I traveled to his country, did workshops and taught hypnotherapy. I kept going back. It's like I've got a big family there now and I have travelled all over the country. Mongolia is like Montana where you see maybe only two vehicles in a day."

Is English a workable language there?

"I always take a translator with me. Because of history, lots of Russian and Chinese language is available, of course. Lucky for me, English was taught there under Russians because they normally taught English in Russian schools. Mongolian, by the way, is a very difficult language to learn."

It has been scientifically proven that the indigenous peoples of America originally migrated from East Asia and Siberia. Mongolia is mentioned in that data. What have you learned about that?

"I do have an interesting anecdote for you. I met a brother in Mongolia who happened to be a shaman. He was a young and shy person. I visited him in his yurt. I noticed he positioned his medicine in the back on an altar, as did Crow medicine men in Montana. It turned out the medicine was identical to the medicine a Crow buddy of mine uses. Not only that, the shaman used a hawk's feather akin to a Crow's flickertail feather, together with a similar black scarf and red earth paint. When Mongolians come to Montana, they say the Crow people look like them."

Dan's story is astonishing because many thousands of years have passed since the original migration across the Bering land bridge that today is the Bering Strait.

Which Prepsters have you stayed in touch with since leaving Warrenton?

"Around the year 2000, I emailed the Passionists in Chicago. They gave me the name of a few people in an email group, so I connected with them. I found classmate Bob Durr and we've been close friends ever since. I attended the reunion in 2011, then the next one in 2014 where I met Minchen Lewis. Great reunions. "It's funny what I remember from Prep days. For example, when I went home after junior year, an upper-classman gave me five dollars to buy fireworks in Montana because they were illegal in Missouri. I didn't return for the senior year, so I still owe him five dollars. I'm trying to communicate with him now and wondering if I should return today's value of five dollars in 1962, or to go ahead and mail him some firecrackers. The value today, by the way, is \$43.60.

Meet Dan Geiger continued

"One of the benefits was a love of Latin. I ended up taking eight years of it and I still love to read the Latin engravings on walls and monuments all over Europe. "My memoir will contain a few chapters about the Prep. You'll have to wait for its publication to read about my visit there a few years ago and an attempt to rescue the altar stone."

What are you engaged in these days? Do you have a bucket list?

"Sure, I've got a bucket list. Front and center is this memoir I'm working on now. Along the way, I listen to a lot of Van Morrison and I've even written a song and some poetry. Skiing is my passion. I still love to travel. India is my favorite country for its people, diversity, and rich color—it's remarkable how differently people dress from village to village, for example. "Travel gives me the great opportunity to serve others—whether it's teaching, doing therapy, or working on small social and economic development projects."



Dan today

Meet Roland Kulla



Roland Kulla was asked to send us a bit of a bio about himself. He also sat for an interview.

If you go to his website at **RolandKulla.com**, you can absorb yourself in his acrylic paintings, pencil drawings, and prints. Roland let us know that his creative path to a career in fine art, however, was not a direct one.

Let's begin with some milestones. He came originally from St. Louis, Missouri. His time with the Passionists extended from 1961 to 1971: Warrenton 61-65, St. Paul 65-66, Louisville 66-70, and Chicago 70-71. His post-seminary career centered on social work in Cook County, Illinois from 1971 to 2000. Finally, from 2001 to the present, he has been a full time artist.

"I spent ten years in the seminary," he said, "before making a lateral career move into social work. This was my occupation for more than thirty years as a caseworker, administrator, researcher, teacher and consultant. When the Department of Child and Family Services hired me, I stayed with them for 17 or 18 years and ended up as regional administrator for Cook County, so I had half of what was going on in the State—not so much interacting with individuals, but pretty much serving as an administrator. My first job was working with kids who were stuck in mental hospitals. The job was to get them out of the mental hospitals. I was pretty successful at that." Some alumni have been overheard stating how excited—even dazzled—they can be after learning about a classmate's ultimate career, how "they turned out" after the seminary. So-and-so managed an Oscar Meyer packing plant for 40 years. So-and so today leads the world's scientific community on climate change. Roland Kulla has become an internationally recognized, gallery-sponsored artist.

Roland's career trajectory might not have been surprising for friends who paid attention to his activities as early as the Prep in Warrenton. Little did anyone know as a child he had already won the ear of an aunt who loved mixing and matching colors around her house. Roland remembers suggesting she paint the house offwhite so everything would go with it. When the senior class at Warrenton moved to the old college wing, Roland—along with his classmates—got to enjoy a private room for the first time. He painted his own walls peacock blue and hung his aunt's crystal chandelier and a stuffed pheasant.

Meet Roland Kulla continued

The artistic endeavors in Warrenton were only the beginning.

"One of the things I did in Louisville," he related, "was remodel the whole downstairs lobby, as well as the hallways and the staircases. It was my idea. They let me pick the furniture and go buy stuff and manage the whole thing. I reworked the hall colors and all the woodwork. That was the age of antiquing so we painted all the old dark wood and antiqued it and added wallpaper. The furniture we got was new and we installed carpet for the parlors, reworked the reception desk, and kind of set up a private dining room. Once you've already remodeled a monastery, everything else is kind of small potatoes. I did a lot of it myself, and I had volunteers to help. I don't know if any of that remodeling still exists because they eventually tore out the wings. I think they've reworked it several times."

Roland got off on the work in Louisville, of course, and enjoyed the free rein he was given. However, he and his classmates could be iconoclasts. "We had this statue of St. Gabriel," he said. "It was on the third floor of the monastery. Those who know the statue remember it had the pose with the crucifix. We were always accessorizing it. Sometimes we would add a kite, or sometimes balloons, and occasionally even cleaning equipment. I think there was another statue we took out behind the barn and smashed into pieces. We had a really ugly painting in the refectory that I cut out of the frame and hid up in the attic so nobody could find it. As far as I know, they never did."

At one point, Roland took charge of the library in Louisville. A treasure trove of books had arrived there from Cincinnati and they turned out to be volumes of philosophy—ancient, hundreds of years old. Included was a book in Latin, a 1490 history of the world. (When asked if the 1490 writer theorized whether the world was round or not, Roland did not recall.) In any case, the letters in the book were handilluminated. He was shocked when Fr. John Francis sent it out to be rebound. They chopped all the edges off and put it in a nice black binding. Among other treasures were some more incunabula (books printed with metal type before 1500). There were Greek texts…lots of them. All those gems had been sitting in the attic.

"Since I had the room right over the front door in Louisville," he said, "and there happened to be a small annex adjacent to it, I figured sitting in the attic was not good for these books, so I brought them all down and put them in the annex. I ended up with my own little private library of ancient books. Some years later everything was donated to the Newberry Library here in Chicago."



Roland Kulla back in the day

Roland's artistic pursuits were a constant theme during this during this period and moving forward. Still in college in Louisville, he joined the Kentucky Opera Association who was looking for people for their chorus. He did two operas with them. One was Mozart's The Magic Flute "which was absolutely fabulous and actually got me going on the opera thing," he said, "and we did Smetena's The Bartered Bride. I sang bass."

"When I got to Chicago, the local parish was putting on shows, so I signed up for that. The first show they did was The Music Man. One of the Servites played Harold Hill. I was in the barbershop quartet. I got to design the sets and costumes. And built them. That show had a lot of set changes. And we were doing it in this high school gym.

"It turned out the guy who organized the barbershop quartet also worked with the local University of Chicago Gilbert & Sullivan group. So I got into that and did ten years of it—singing in the chorus and designing sets.

"I transferred from Gilbert and Sullivan endeavors and became part of the Grant Park Chorus. We had this free Symphony classical concert series that had been running for 85 years in downtown Chicago. I sang with that chorus for maybe 10 years, which was really wonderful because it had all these amazing singers and conductors—a really professional orchestra."

Meet Roland Kulla continued

Roland's main pursuits eventually centered around architecture and art.

He purchased an 1890s Victorian house in Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood. It had six bedrooms, three stories, and a basement. He totally restored it.

"It was a big job because we had to strip all the woodwork and redo a bunch of stuff," he said. "I know they once had gas lights because the gas was still connected. That's just because the place had been originally owned by somebody who bought it in 1920 and who finally sold it to me. They had been renting it out as a boarding house for students. The mother was in a nursing home. Not a lot that had been changed in that place, so it was kind of fun. That was three houses ago."

The 1907 apartment he purchased and restored ended up winning an award and got featured in a couple of magazines.

With his appetite barely whet with restorations, he and a partner remodeled a three story, 90,000-square-foot warehouse. A big part of that was turning the second floor into large loft apartments.

Roland eventually tired of renting art studios, then dealing with changing owners, so he decided to buy his own place.

"I bought an old tavern in the Stockyards Districts in Chicago. The barroom is my studio and I live there. It occupied a double lot so it was like 50 feet wide instead of 25. And then about six years ago I bought a double lot next to my double lot, so I've got about an eighth of an acre. And I have assorted gardens, an orchard, and all that kind of stuff."

In a used bookstore one day, Roland found a book on Cistercian architecture. It not only appealed to his architectural and construction interests. It reminded him of the importance of the guest houses provided by monasteries everywhere. Hospitality was always a big monastic tradition. "And it's one tradition I wanted to maintain on my property. So if somebody wants to come, they are welcome."

As for visual arts, sketching and drawing led to watercolors in college. This continued as his principal medium until he took an eight-session course in oil painting in 1989. In 1996 acrylics were added to the mix. Since 2004, he has begun to explore print media—such as woodcuts, lithography, and dry point etchings.

In 1994 an artist saw one of his paintings and asked why he was not exhibiting. Something clicked. Until then, he had great difficulty in parting with his creations. He began to actively pursue an artistic career. In December 2002 the shift to painting full-time was complete.

If you click around his website at RolandKulla.com, you will enter a world of stunning colors, shapes and structures, most often around bridges.

"I am fascinated by the built environments," he explains. "I reflect on what the structures tell about their builders as well as their interaction with nature and the results of time. Since 1998 I've focused on the engineering ingenuity that created Chicago's many bridges. Structural elements are abstracted from their context and painted with a hard-edged realism on a scale that highlights the monumentality of the forms and the creativity necessary for their existence. In 2006 I began to branch out to other 'bridge' cities such as Boston, New York and Pittsburgh. In 2011, I added Berlin to this list. More, I'm sure, will follow.

Meet Roland Kulla continued

"I'm represented by a gallery in New York in Chelsea, the George Billis Gallery, the James Gallery in Pittsburgh, and I've got a gallery right here in Chicago. And people can always stop by the house. Looks like I'll have a solo show in 2020-21 in a local gallery in Indiana for maybe three months, though what I'm working on now is a show for Berlin and Rome for maybe this September. Meanwhile, I've got a lot of stuff up on my website so people can go have a look at stuff that way. The site is a little out of date, but there's plenty to look at there.

"Although people are not the direct subjects of my work, they are integral to it. The structures stand as proxy for human experience. I create places and moods that invite the viewer to enter into the work and form their own relationship to it. "In my gradual transition to becoming a full-time artist, I've discovered that the act of making the art, while personally rewarding, is only part of the creative process. Art is essentially about communicating, which means sharing my visions with others. This can't happen if I keep them to myself. I've also discovered that the more I share, the more I create. For these reasons, I am very pleased to have this opportunity to share my work with you."

Roland has not lost contact with folks from his formation years with the Passionists. "Ron Clancy," he points to, "was probably my best friend at the Prep. We have stayed in touch.

"A real nice guy was Fr. Michael Joseph who was the senior director at the Prep. I was able to go to his Jubilee and he was at one of the reunions in Louisville. I also went down there for his funeral. These reunions have given me a chance to reconnect with some people.

"I was at the latest reunion in Detroit. One of the reasons I wanted to go there was I wanted to say goodbye to Fr. Randal and also to see Fr. Peter because he was there."

Roland has many Facebook friends among the alumni (including this writer). His photos there showcase international friendships and get-togethers, gardens, food, and even an outdoor oven he constructed.

Roland plans to be in Louisville at the end of May 2020 for his 50th reunion (now being planned by Paul Schulte and Scott Woodward).

Your Privacy

Confidentiality and Privacy—We, the Passionist Alumni Council, value the privacy and confidentiality of all Alumni personal contact information provided to the Passionist Alumni Association. Your personal contact information will not be shared with any third parties outside of the Passionist Alumni Association. For the purposes of communicating with each Alumni member, the Passionist Alumni Council is utilizing a web-based communications platform called "Flocknote". All Passionist Alumni personal contact information utilized by Flocknote to communicate with you is safeguarded using secure data practices and policies.

See flocknote.com/privacy for further information.