



## PRINCIPAL CORNER

by Principal Patrick Fox

The St. Michael Catholic School Family is off to another great school year. 2011-12 marks the fourth year of our annual fall "Service Marathon" where students, staff and parents participate in service projects around the school, parish and greater community. I'm exceptionally proud of our students love of service to others, a life skill that will reap incredible rewards for others and themselves!

Welcome to over 60 Little Angels Preschoolers. Welcome back over 450 K-8 students, 27 teachers and 19 support staff! A special welcome to our two new teachers Chrissie TenEyck and Nathan Dean!

The future of Catholic Schools is bright. Visit [www.archspm.org](http://www.archspm.org) to learn about the Archbishop's vision for 'Reinvesting In Our Catholic Schools.' St. Michael Parish has certainly made our school a priority since the School Sisters of Notre Dame began our school in 1959. With your help and prayers, we will continue to build upon their strong foundation. God bless.



# ST. MICHAEL CATHOLIC SCHOOL Blues News

FALL 2011

## Welcome New Teachers

by Jenny Engels, Parent to one child at St. Michael and two Alumni

We are very excited to welcome two new teachers to St. Michael Catholic School this year. Mr. Dean will be teaching 6th-8th grade Spanish and 6th & 7th grade Religion. He grew up in New Richmond, Wisconsin and then moved to New Hampshire for his high school years. He attended college at Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio where he studied Spanish and German. He has taught 9th-12th grade Spanish and German in both Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and Arizona. He loves to travel. He played both high school and college basketball and has also coached high school basketball. Mrs. TenEyck will be teaching 3rd grade. She grew up in Shakopee and went to college at St. Cloud State University. For the past three years she has been teaching 3rd and 4th grade combined at Our Lady of the Prairie in Belle Plaine. She is married and has a one year old daughter. She loves volleyball and is currently coaching 6th grade volleyball here at St. Michael's. Welcome Mr. Dean and Mrs. TenEyck!



New teachers: Chrissie TenEyck 3rd Grade and Nathan Dean Spanish Teacher

## St. Michael School Advisory Board

by Karen Sher, Parent to two children at St. Michael and St. Michael School Advisory Board Chair

Are you familiar with the St. Michael Catholic School Advisory Board (SAB)? The SAB is established by the Church of St. Michael to assist the Principal and Pastor in the governance of the school. The SAB is made up of Father Tom, Mr. Fox, Mrs. Maxwell, a parish council liaison, and 8 members chosen through the process of spiritual discernment. During a typical SAB meeting, various topics are discussed



School Board members: Bottom row: left to right - Stephanie Glenzinski, Joe O'Connor, Blair Guyer, Karen Sher Back Row: left to right - Michelle Imholte, Christine Hockman, Diane Glaser, Jean Schroeder and Parish Council Liaison Jim Anderson

including budget, staffing, school grounds, curriculum, current/prior events, policies, etc. The meetings are "open" except when the SAB chair calls for an Executive Meeting. If someone outside of the board is interested in addressing the SAB and has followed the proper steps outlined on the St. Michael Catholic School website to do so, the SAB chair will invite them to the SAB meeting for all board members to hear. At this time, the board does not discuss the topic with the guest, but will follow up in a timely manner. The School Advisory Board meets at 6:00pm at the school on the second Thursday of the month except in July and unless otherwise noted due to school calendar conflicts. All School Advisory Board meeting dates, minutes, agendas, and by-laws are posted on the St. Michael Catholic School website at [www.saintmpl.org](http://www.saintmpl.org) under the "Families" tab.

## ALUMNI FEATURE

### Ben Beuch

As "back to school" commercials and ads arrive, I look back at St. Michael. This may not be the happiest time for kids and sometimes me, but I miss starting school at St. Michael. It blows me away how I am already going to be a junior in high school and it felt like just yesterday that I was graduating from St. Michael. It also makes me realize that a lot of who I am today, and what I have achieved is thanks to St. Mike's. I think one thing that St. Mike's helped me with today is to make smart class choices in high school. St. Michael may have had some rigorous classes, but it put me in a great spot in high school, wanting to take advanced classes to better challenge myself. I still remember Mrs. Prchal making us remember a grammar song and singing it to the class, or Mrs. Struheck and Mrs. Kuboushek's spelling tests. These may sound like little things, but I still use much of what I was taught today for high school. I also believe St. Michael gave me opportunities that I may not have gotten in a larger school. I played on a basketball team with guys that I was very close with. I know that, as a team, were successful because as teammates we bonded and were closer than other teams. St. Michael also helped to make me a very independent person. I am driving and I am working at Village Market earning money for college and other things. I am also participating in Track and Field for Prior Lake, golfing in my spare time and still hanging out with many of my St. Mike's friends. So, as back to school time begins, I look back and remember, but also miss St. Michael, and advise the current students to enjoy it and cherish it.



## S P O R T S

### Volleyball and Golf Club in Full Swing

by Chad Wentzel, St. Michael Phy Ed Teacher

Fall sports at St. Michael include volleyball and golf club. The volleyball teams includes 5th-8th grade. They will be participating in the SSYO again this year and we are hoping to continue our proud tradition of doing well and improving throughout the season. Volleyball camps ran from August 8th-11th for 7th and 8th grade and August 15th-18th for 5th and 6th grade. These camps helped the students prepare for the fall season. Games will start the first week of school. We are also offering Intramural volleyball again this year. This includes 3rd and 4th grade girls. The program is run by Gretchen Breyen and will start early in the school year. Golf will be run by Cleary Lake and will begin in September and run for six consecutive weeks on Mondays and Wednesdays.



8th Grade girls attending the summer volleyball camp. Top left to right: Brianna Steigauf, Kate Graham, Allison Keller, Sarah Spanier, Maddie Juell, Ava Hall Bottom left to right: Leah Kelm, McKenzie Reis, Jessica Krosnowski, Morgan Metcalfe, Abby Jansen, Maria Vallez (Grace Meidl and Mara Fossum not shown)



## C O M M U N I T Y



by Peg Sibbet, Parent to one child at St. Michael School



6th Grade Students and Music Teacher Brian Lenz and parent chaperone Kim Benedict doing yard work for a resident in the community during the Service Marathon

### Service Marathon

The start of the school year also marks the kick-off for the annual service marathon for our students. The theme for the 2011 marathon is Helping Hands. The kick-off is scheduled to take place at a pep fest on Thursday, September 8th. The Marathon will take place on Friday, September 30th.

The annual marathon is one of our two large fundraisers and the largest student-led fundraiser for our school. The goal is to raise \$35,000 to be used for general operations. Our school depends on fundraisers to supplement tuition. Each student is asked to raise \$35 toward the overall school goal and each student achieving this goal will receive a drawstring bag with the marathon logo. Students bringing in \$75 or more will receive a water bottle with the marathon logo. The two homeroom classes bringing in the most pledges per student will be awarded with a classroom pizza party! This is always a huge hit with our students!

In keeping with our theme of Helping Hands, each grade will be assigned a specific service project. Some of the projects include: cleaning our church, assembling Birthday Kits for the food shelf, packaging meals at Feed My Starving Children, packing supplies for Chimbote, and assembling Activity Kits for patients at Children's Hospitals. The students look forward to sharing their time, talent, and treasure and showing their school spirit through their participation in the annual Service Marathon! Please support our students as they offer their Helping Hands!

# St. Michael Feast Day Sept 29th by Father Tom Sieg

“Michael” is a Hebrew word that is usually translated: “Who Is Like God?” It is understood that one of Michael’s principal roles is to oppose any person or thing that would try to take God’s place in our lives. In the Book of Revelation (12:7-9), we are told how “Michael and his angels battled against the dragon.” It has been traditionally accepted that the “dragon” (or Satan) sought to have a place equal to or greater than God. Thus, Michael is first honored as one who does battle against evil and he is often pictured in the clothing of a Roman soldier.

Michael is also considered to be an intercessor between God and the Church. There is a tradition that associates Michael with the angel described in Revelation 8:3-4. There we read: “Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a gold censer. He was given a great quantity of incense to offer, along with the prayers of the holy ones, on the gold altar that was before the throne. The smoke of the incense along with the prayers of the holy ones went up before God from the hand of the angel.” In many images of St. Michael, he is clothed with the vestments of a deacon. From the days of the early church, deacons were seen as persons who interceded between the bishop and the people. It is also the deacon who offers incense during Mass.

A third and later role attributed to Michael is that of one who safely leads the souls of the dead to their home in heaven. It would appear that this tradition flowed from his roles as protector and intercessor.

**ACADEMIC**

## Junior Naturalist Spotted at St. Michael School

*by Ryan Trapp, Club Participant/St. Michael 7th Grader and Suzanne Trapp, Naturalist Advisor/Parent/Volunteer*

**Question:**

What do birds, snowshoes and recycling have in common?

**Answer:**

Twenty St. Michaels Jr. Naturalists in grades 4 through 7. Last year a new after school activity was created called Junior Naturalists. The club meets once a week in Mr. Erdman’s room from 2:15-3:45. Every week students do a new indoor or outdoor activity to learn more about nature and the environment. Last year Jr. Naturalists went snowshoe hiking and bird watching at McColl Pond, learned how to make plaster track casts, and explored the St. Michael Nature



*Junior Naturalists: Ellie Muelken, Claire Houle, Molly Hoghaug, Ryan Trapp, and Georgia Muelken*

Area for signs of wildlife. They created a set of winter bingo cards that teachers can use with their students in the St. Michael Nature Area. This year Jr. Naturalists will be in charge of the school-wide recycling program. Watch the club bulletin board outside the library to see what they’re up to or check Mr. Erdman’s website for new information about the environment and what new signs of life they saw. If you have any new ideas on what the club can do this year or if you would like to join, please contact Mrs. Hofer or Mr. Erdman. Sessions begin September 30, so please hurry. Cost is just \$25 and includes a t-shirt.



*Junior Naturalists: Oliver Tan and Logan Edwards inspecting their finds*

## TEACHER FEATURE

### Becky Strupeck

This quarter we feature Mrs. Becky Strupeck who teaches eighth grade Religion, English, Literature, and Strategies. She holds the title of the teacher with the most experience (36 years) at St. Michael. Mrs. Strupeck has always enjoyed school, whether it was playing school, going to school, or teaching school. She grew up in Stearns County, the middle child of ten. After spending all of her education in Catholic schools, she was more than comfortable accepting a teaching position when Sister Marian called to offer her a job in 1973. The subjects she teaches now, Reading and Religion, have always been very important to Mrs. Strupeck. Her parents, teachers, and community fostered her Catholic faith and she has always loved to read. (As a young girl she would sneak into her bedroom closet to read after lights out). She enjoys teaching because of the variety that each day brings. Through the years she has learned to respect students’ differences and to listen, listen, listen! Mrs. Strupeck attended the College of St. Benedict, getting an early start on college while taking classes as a junior and senior at St. Benedict’s High School. She majored in Elementary Education with a minor and FLES endorsement in French. Her Middle School licensure was earned from St. Thomas and her Master’s Degree in Education from St. Mary’s. Outside of school, Mrs. Strupeck enjoys reading, cooking, playing bridge, cribbage, scrabble, biking and spending time with her husband Tony, daughters, Sarah (married to Travis) and Jennie (engaged to Robert). She and Tony have one grandson, Dillon, who is the light of their lives. Her favorite bible verse is

◆ “Be still, and know that I am here.”  
Psalm 46:10

# Students Visit Guatemala

**Visiting former exchange students teaches students first hand about another culture.**

*by Former Host Students and St. Michael Alumna Hannah Meidl, Jenna Preslicka, and Leah Preslicka*

I was blessed with the opportunity of hosting a foreign exchange student from Guatemala about three years ago as an eighth grader. Over the eleven weeks that Daniela was here, we got to know each other very well and had many unforgettable memories. This summer I was given the chance to go to Guatemala to visit Daniela and her family. When I arrived, her family was there to greet me with open arms. It was like I was walking into my own home. Daniela and her family took me around Guatemala,



*Hannah's exchange student from 2009, Daniela Aycinena and Hannah Meidl in a cafe in Antigua, which is an ancient city built in the 1500s*



*Jenna's exchange student from 2006, Ximena Polano & Jenna Preslicka by the popular lake "Lake Amatitlan," which is surrounded by volcanoes*



*Leah Preslicka & her exchange student from 2009 Adriana Estrada standing on a volcano*



*Evan Preslicka, St. Michael 8th Grader and his exchange student in 2010 Diego Fernandez. They are standing on the ancient Mayan ruins in Tikal*

showing me the contrasts that are apparent in the country and making me realize that I should be thankful for the many gifts that I have. I got to view the beautiful nature and the amazing culture of Guatemala. While in Guatemala, I was able to get to know Daniela and her family even better. I made many new friendships with Daniela's friends, and saw the beauty that Guatemala has to offer. I had a trip of a lifetime and I know, not only do I have a home here in Minnesota, but I also have a home in Guatemala filled with a family that loves me like their own daughter and that I love like my own family. I went into this whole experience just hoping that while she was here for eleven weeks that we would just get along. Not only did we get along very well, but we were able to form a friendship that will last forever. I did not only gain a friend from this experience, but I gained a sister. - Hannah Meidl

After welcoming three students from Guatemala into our home, it was our dream to travel down to Guatemala to see them. When Christmas rolled around and we opened up the airplane tickets, things started to unfold. On June 14th, we boarded a plane to Guatemala. Meeting the families of Ximena, Adriana, and Diego, who had come to be a part of our family, was the best part of the trip. We spent time with each of them. For only spending two weeks in Guatemala, we experienced so much of the country. Our trip included exploring Mayan ruins, jumping off a waterfall, spending time on the black-sand beaches of the Pacific coastline, bargaining in the local markets of the beautiful, ancient city of Antigua, climbing the base of a volcano, visiting a Guatemalan school, learning about a whole new culture, and spending time with families who will forever welcome us as part of their family! We couldn't have asked for a better trip with all the wonderful memories we made, we are now awaiting the day when it will happen again. - Jenna and Leah Preslicka

If you think you might like to host a student in the future, please contact, Heidi Preslicka [heidi@prelickastudio.com](mailto:heidi@prelickastudio.com). You will put you on a list to be considered in future years. Congratulations to this year's host students Will Tinguely and Grace Meidl. Their students names are Ignacio Penagos and Maria Renee Vasquez. We look forward to their arrival at school on September 26th.

## VOLUNTEER CORNER

### Shannon Glynn

*by Shannon Glynn, parent to three children at St. Michael*

St. Michael Catholic School provides a great community for our school families. Throughout the year there are numerous ways for parents to volunteer and get involved within this community. Have you ever attended the Gala Dinner or Wine Tasting events? These events take place because of volunteers. There are individuals or groups who are coordinators of these events and other people who offer an hour of their time. All are important and necessary to make St. Michael the very best school and community for our students and families. These volunteers are truly a blessing.

Everyday there are parents within the St. Michael School community working for the betterment of our school. Whether they are supervising on the playground, reading with a kindergartener or chaperoning a field trip, each and every one of these volunteers is important and makes our school a great place. To date, we have half of our school families committed to volunteering in some way for the 2011-12 school year. Volunteering at St. Michael gives back to our school and enriches the community. At the same, it provides a service-to-others example for our children.

One playground volunteer commented how much she enjoys seeing her children during recess. Another mentioned she enjoys being involved because of the people she meets while volunteering. However you choose to volunteer and get involved, you will benefit and help make the St. Michael School Community a better place.