

ST. AMBROSE ACADEMY

# THE AMBROSIAN

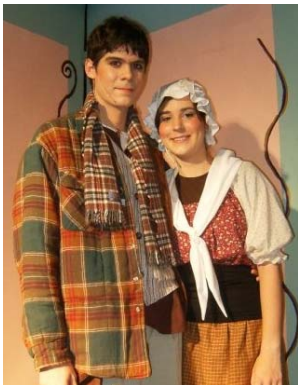
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WEB EDITION

## BUILDING CHARACTER ON AND OFF STAGE

After teaching music and drama at St. Ambrose for 4 years, Lisa Pantano has really begun to see the theater program thrive at SAA. Bringing years of experience to the students of St. Ambrose, Ms. Pantano has studied classical voice, piano, and drama at Carnegie-Mellon, Eastman School of Music, and Catholic University. She has performed lead and supporting roles in operas, operettas, dramas, recitals, and musical theatre productions throughout the United States, Canada, and Italy.



Senior High Students  
2008's *Into the Woods*

Starting with a simple after-school program in the 2005-06 school year, the school has now produced two musicals and is working on its first play this spring. Beginning with *Fiddler on the Roof*, the audience was wowed by

St. Ambrose Academy  
*presents...*  
**The Importance of Being EARNEST**  
June 5, 6, & 7  
**Fredric March Play Circle  
at Memorial Union**  
Cost: Adults \$8  
Students \$5  
*Tickets can be purchased at the  
door or by visiting  
www.ambroseacademy.org*

the lively music and talented acting. Following *Fiddler*, the school staged the more modern comical musical *Into the Woods*. This year's selection is *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde. "Wilde's wit and social commentary on class and society is textually brilliant!" expressed Pantano. "Movies today rely so much on action to engage the audience. This text really teaches the students about getting back to the fundamentals of theater." Beyond just memorizing lines, the 40 students participating in this year's production are learning textual analysis, character development, and how to interpret great literature.

Every play and musical is double-cast, giving all students a chance to participate

on stage. Even those on stage crew are incorporated into at least one scene. Although written as a play, a few musical performances and dances will be integrated in the show to highlight the various talents of students. "My philosophy is that you always have to present yourself in life. This is an outlet for shy kids to come alive," shared Lisa. "Part of SAA's mission is to bring Christ to the world. Music and drama help students go beyond themselves and approach others with the love of Christ."



Junior High Students  
2007's *Fiddler on the Roof*

One SAA 8th grader had no previous experience with theater but thoroughly enjoyed her role as the Evil Stepmother last year. "It's great to be able to goof around and have fun with your friends while acting out different roles," smiled the student. "It's cool to be with the whole school, too!"



## WISH LIST

- Computer Printer
- Burettes (lab equipment; \$75/piece)
- Outdoor Basketball Hoop
- School Bell System
- Athletic Equipment (all kinds) & Uniforms
- Audio Visual Carts
- Maps
- Artwork & Sculptures for the Environment

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## CATHOLIC PSYCHOLOGIST TACKLES BIG ISSUES WITH HUMOR

By Sarah H. Quinones

*"I was delighted with Dr. Guarendi's common sense approach to raising kids. As the principal at St. Ambrose, I see good, happy kids coming from homes where parents set rules and keep them. Dr. Ray has a winning approach."*

*- Principal Scott Schmiesing*

On March 1 the popular radio psychologist, Dr. Ray Guarendi, delivered a well-received talk called "Standing Strong as a Parent" to a sell-out crowd of over 300. St. Ambrose participated in the event as a sponsor. With humorous anecdotes of his own parenting experiences with his 10 adopted children, Dr. Ray left his audience doubled over in laughter much of the time, while still teaching the tough, no short-cuts philosophy of taking back proper authority as parents. The lenient, negotiating parenting style during recent decades

where kids are allowed to "be in charge" is unprecedented in human history, he said. He suggested that parents trust their instincts to teach, guide, and protect their children, which requires that children be obedient and respectful. He cited statistics that show possibly 50% of young adults are being diagnosed with mental illness such as depression. "What are we doing wrong as parents?" he implored. Weak parenting is usually about the lack of consistency and perseverance to enforce behavior expectations, he said. Too often he hears that being the "tough guy" is falling on the mother,



Dr. Ray Guarendi and St. Ambrose principal Scott Schmiesing

and he declared it's time for Dad to step up and be there when discipline issues arise. The talk left the audience encouraged and inspired to hold their children a higher standard that will bring a smile of admiration from society at large and their Father in heaven.

## FRIENDS & FUN EXTEND BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

*"What could be better than giving these kids an opportunity to socialize outside of school in wholesome activities?"*

*- parent Kathy Snyder*

New St. Ambrose parents Mike and Kathy Snyder were originally concerned about their daughter's social experiences. They were relieved to find that SAA had it all! "Our eighth grade daughter was concerned about attending such a small school. She had always attended large parochial schools that had active sports programs and school dances like prom," shared Kathy Snyder. Her fears have

subsided since participating in girls basketball, cross country, and attending the Fall Formal. "My husband and I were pleased because it was a family event. The kids got to dance and have their fun while the parents mingled. It was a win-win!"

Kathy has also stepped up to provide even more social events for SAA when she established the Social Club.

"What could be better than giving these kids an opportunity to socialize outside of school in wholesome activities?" Kathy smiled. Activities occur monthly and are open to the entire family. They have gone sledding at Elver Park, miniature golfing, and rock climbing at Boulder's Gym. Other upcoming events are bowling, laser tag, and a trip to Six Flags/Great America.



One St. Ambrose father takes his daughter around the dance floor

## FATHER DAUGHTER DANCE

St. Ambrose girls and their fathers kicked up their heels in a celebration of "father-daughter fun" at the Annual Father-Daughter Dance, sponsored by Holy Family Homeschoolers, Immaculate Heart Homeschoolers, and St. Ambrose Academy.

The father-daughter "date" event of the year took place at St. Mary Parish, Pine Bluff, and included jukebox bandstand DJ-led big-band style dancing, along with traditional favorites such as the chicken dance, sock-hop, waltzes, and more. The girls

were regaled with door prizes, refreshments, and many fun games with the girls and their fathers, such as the old-fashioned hula hoop. Father Rick Heilman emceed the event and provided a special blessing to the girls and their fathers.