

The Zurfluh Family

I'm always amazed at how the complexity of life is often simplified through single events or interactions. I often tell stories of the small events that impact students in very profound ways. 2010 will be remembered by events of similar nature in our lives this year – small and punctuated, but very significant when looking back on them.

For my 50th birthday this year, the family connected me with a personal trainer and then provided the necessary encouragement and support to achieve my fitness goals. I'm blessed to have a wonderful master, Shane at Innovative Fitness in Fircrest. While his modesty will not allow him to admit it, he has likely saved my life through both diet advice and guided exercise that shaved off 40 pounds and recovered many long forgotten muscles (including a hamstring that I haven't used since High School). In many ways, he is an artist that is sculpting healthy living out of neglected flesh. I owe him, and my family, deepest gratitude for their accomplishments.



Our reconnection with Mount Cross Lutheran (and Pastor Dave) and some special time with my mother, brother, sister, and our extended family have yielded a peaceful life that enhanced our ability to accomplish much in recent months. Our collaboration with old friends and colleagues from earlier days has been wonderful on all fronts. Interestingly, Erin is currently attending school in the same classroom where I taught some 15+ years ago. I've had the opportunity to substitute as both teacher and principal at Sunset Primary and it is amazing to walk the halls again connecting with new generations of students in a place that I knew so well.

A group of individuals that constituted my cohort at Seattle University provided many of my memories during our first year at home. We plodded through significant insights during our Superintendent program together under the careful guidance of our master, Richard McCullough. My mentor, Patti Banks, Superintendent in University Place School District, granted me a special gift in helping me to complete this lofty goal, but also inspired access to potential as yet untapped on my horizon. The Argosy University folks kept me focused on my doctoral work and, though the dissertation work continues, the comprehensive exams provided a satisfying waypoint of accomplishment in July.

The most significant event, though, was our recent adoption of a new "family" in Moscow, Russia, where we will officially land in July when I take the reins of the Anglo-American School of Moscow as its Director. This will be a wonderful new adventure with talented new friends that are already standing ready to greet us at their doorstep. We are all enthusiastic and optimistic about this new home and, while woolen clothing was necessarily stacked beneath the Christmas tree this year, we are proud to be part of pursuing another age of excellence at this longstanding institution.

While I'm sure I've left out many other instances of good fortune from the year gone by, it's nice to highlight a few moments and give you a sense of what we think about during this in-between time after Christmas and before the dawn of the New Year. We count ourselves fortunate that we have so many friends and acquaintances scattered around the world, truly privileged to experience love and human-kindness sans the boundaries of latitude or longitude. Our fervent hope is to continue breaking down barriers one language and culture at a time, as all good ambassadors should. Please know that you always have a home ready to welcome you in Moscow should you find your path near our door. May this message find you equally blessed and hopeful for a new year filled with possibility and potential.

Jon

"Extremely Busy" can be used to describe the year of 2010. I started my program to extend my teaching credential from Early Childhood to Early Elementary with Western Governors University at the beginning of the year. I managed to finish in one year a series of classes that normally takes two years to complete. I still have many hoops to jump through, but my goal is to take it one step at a time and finish in 2012. I continue to be supportive of my two wonderful children: soccer practices, games, tournaments, gymnastics, piano, Boy Scouts, Chinese lessons, math club, volunteering, etc. Many times I wish for just a few extra hours in a day to tackle those unfinished projects. Despite our hectic schedule, we managed to squeeze in some fun. A trip to Washington D.C. and driving a Snowmobile have given us great memories of both adventure and family. I hope that the season finds friends and family well. Our earnest best wishes are with you all!!

Emily



2010 was a great year! In early April, we went to Washington, D. C. We went to the Smithsonian Museums, saw the White House, and explored the capital. When we got to the Natural History Museum, we saw a 5-D movie about the ocean that was very exciting. We also went to the Cherry Blossom festival. When we got near the Lincoln Memorial there was a fountain, so Jaisen and I bought ice cream and dipped our toes in the cool water. Perfect on a hot day! During the summer, we visited many parks with our cousins. We went to Olympia, Vancouver, B.C. and camping at Belfair State Park. It was a good summer because we had lots of fun and plenty of time to enjoy the outdoors.



In September, I started my last year at Sunset Primary. You get more opportunities to do what you love in 4th grade. For example, I'm in math club and working on decimals and multiplication. We also have Teams (for 4th grade only ☺) such as Environment Team, Spirit Team, Prevention Team, and Sportsmanship Team. I chose the Spirit Team because my best friend is on it and it gives me an opportunity to welcome new students and a chance to make the school a better place.



I kept busy with softball and soccer again this year. Last year I started gymnastics and had my first competition in November. I also got braces in October to give me more space for my new teeth to grow.

It's Christmas now and I recently came back from Leavenworth, WA where I spent time with my two cousins. It was really fun because I got to test out my new snowboard that I got right before we left. Mostly the only thing we did was eat amazing food, do lots of sledding, play in the backyard at our rental house, and honestly have fun and spend time with family. I only liked the three days that we stayed because the last day the snow started melting and turning black. And did I mention the two bruises I got on my backside from falling on my snowboard?!

Next year we are going to Moscow, Russia! I am really excited because there's going to be an amazing school where I will have an opportunity to learn another language. And I can't wait to see all of the snow!

Hope you have a great 2011!

Erin



2010 was a great year! It was tremendous fun, from soccer to school and everything in between.

I started 7th grade this year and have many of my friends in class. It's been a great year so far. I'm trying to get straight "A's" this term and I am very close with only one B+ and hoping that I can bring that up in the three weeks remaining. We recently had our 7th grade winter band concert and I think we did great! I'm still playing percussion including bells, snare drum, and bass drum.

Soccer season was great -- outdoor was fun, and I hope indoor will be even better. In fact, I was a guest player for a team in an indoor tournament on December 22nd. We took 3rd! I'm also looking forward to lacrosse again in the spring. My first year on the pitch last spring was an amazing experience and I hope to stick with it. I think my dad is going to help coach again, too.

Earlier in the year, we also went on a trip to Washington D.C. We visited the capitol, all the Smithsonian museums, and all the memorials. It was the best!! I also enjoyed scouting this year. I advanced to Second Class Scout and went to summer camp. At the camp, I earned a few badges and climbed up to an amazing rock garden.

Enough about sports, school, and scouts. The big news is I am moving to Russia sometime in July this coming year, and while I'm going to miss all of my friends here a lot, I'm also kind of excited about Russia.

We also just got back from Leavenworth, Washington on the 21st. It was so fun and was a wonderful part of the end of our year! We rented a house with my cousins' family and it had a HUGE backyard. We made a sledding hill with a ramp and it was the best thing ever. We also used snowboards and went snowmobiling!



Overall, I really enjoyed 2010, and can't wait for 2011! I hope it will be even better. Hope you had a fantastic Christmas!

Jaisen