
St. Helen hosts Open House on Sunday, January 30



St. Helen Catholic School plans to open new classrooms in August 2011 to accommodate growing enrollment demand. Parents looking to preregister their children in preschool and kindergarten, or who are exploring transfer options for older students, are invited to attend our annual community Open House on **Sunday, January 30, from 10 a.m. to noon**. A Scholastic Book Fair will be held during the open house to generate funds for classroom libraries and provide an opportunity to fill teachers' wish lists for books.

St. Helen offers full-day preschool for 3- to 5-year-olds. Our challenging K-8 curriculum integrates art, foreign language, health education, music, physical education and religion. St. Helen provides affordable 7 a.m. before-care and 3-6 p.m. after-care and a generous sibling tuition plan plus tuition scholarships for families who qualify. Click [here](#) to view printer-friendly information sheets ("St. Helen Overview 2011" and "St. Helen Early Childhood Overview 2011"). For more information or to arrange a school tour, please call principal **Marianne Johnson** at 773-486-1055.

New smart boards keep students engaged



Thanks to funding from the Chicago Community Trust in collaboration with the Big Shoulders Fund, St. Helen students are now using electronic blackboards—known as smart boards—in the school's computer lab and two classrooms. Among other applications, the fifth-graders have used their board as interactive map of the United States to learn geography, and have also used it to draw pictures to help solve word problems and show different algorithms for division in math class. The fourth-graders have used their board for grammar and writing:

They type sentences and paragraphs and then project them so that they can see their work and make corrections as individuals and as a class.

“It has been a very motivating experience for students,” says **Ms. Borsilli**. “They all jump out of their seats raising their hands to get picked to come to the board to show the answer. The possibilities are endless!” **Sr. Mary Kay** agrees. “The smart board is a wonderful tool to help our students remain focused and involved in their learning,” she says.

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Go Knights!

Forty St. Helen students in grades 5 through 8 are playing on basketball teams in the North Center Parochial League and the Big 10 League this season. The Athletic Committee is pleased to welcome two new coaches: **Patrick Dillon**, a Big Shoulders Fund Auxiliary Board member who is coaching the fifth-grade boys, and **Natalia Krol**, who graduated from St. Helen in 2005 and is coaching the sixth-grade girls.



All of the teams are playing home games in St. Helen's gym this Saturday, **January 29**. Come on out and cheer the Knights on! **9 a.m.** Fifth-grade boys vs. Northside Catholic Academy. **11 a.m.** Sixth-grade girls vs. Northside Catholic Academy. **Noon.** Sixth-grade boys vs. St. St. Clement. **1 p.m.** Eighth-grade boys vs. Northside Catholic Academy.

Main entrance goes euro



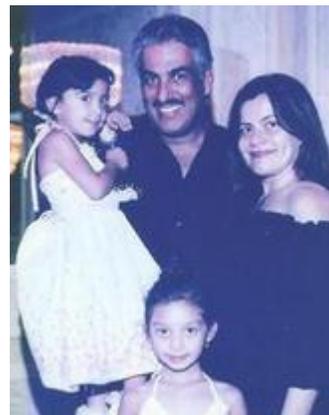
If life were more like preschool, the entrance of St. Helen School might be a European vacation. After spending several recent weeks learning about Greek and Italian culture, preschoolers are showcasing some of their creative work in the school's main corridor for all to enjoy. Ms. Pena's students focused on Greece and had some fun with togas and Greek mythology, while Ms. Michelle's students focused on Italy and painted their own version of the Sistine Chapel ceiling as a way to tie Italian heritage to the Catholic religion.

"I taught the children about how Michelangelo painted the ceiling as a visual interpretation of what heaven might be like," says **Michelle Gamauf**. "Then I asked them to imagine heaven for themselves and to paint all of the things that God has made. They did a wonderful job painting celestial objects, clouds, trees, angels, people and animals. It was a fun way to open the children's minds to the world outside of their own."

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Featured volunteers: Joe and Betsy Velez

The grandparents of a recent St. Helen graduate as well as of two current students, **Joe and Betsy Velez** have been volunteering at the school for more than a decade. In addition to working in the ticket booth at the annual St. Helen Festival, they are stalwarts of the Christmas Arts and Crafts Fair: decorating the gym, selling handmade items, assembling and donating deluxe gift baskets for the silent auction—and even donning a Santa Claus costume for some of the earliest fairs—among many other activities. The couple also hosts and underwrites a teacher-appreciation lunch each year.



“St. Helen’s teachers work so hard, and their doors are always open if you have questions or need their help with anything,” Betsy says. “We want to give something back to them, and we also want to set a good example for our granddaughters. Parents cannot always be there themselves, so we’re glad we can provide the family presence we think is so important.”

e-Newsletter Subscription Information

The St. Helen School e-Newsletter is sent approximately bimonthly (September-June) to nearly more than 600 members of the St. Helen community: parents, parishioners, alumni, and neighbors. Click [here](#) to view past issues. To ensure receipt of our e-newsletter and bypass spam filters, please add info@sthelenchicago.org to your address book. To remove your name from the list, please use the *One-Click Unsubscribe* link below.

2347 W. Augusta Blvd.

773-486-1055

www.sthelenchicago.org