

Press Clippings 8/11-13/2018

---Daily Herald--- 8/11/18

U-46 families receive backpacks filled with school supplies

SUBMITTED BY MELISA THORSEN



Wendy Smith is very grateful to receive a backpack for her daughter, Bethany, who attends Abbott Middle School. Courtesy of Melissa Thorsen

More than 100 free backpacks were given to Elgin Area School District U-46 families at the inaugural Elgin McDonald's school supply backpack giveaway event held Thursday, Aug. 9.

This McDonald's owned and operated by the Bear family since 1967 strongly supports education and has over 50 years of giving back in Elgin.

Backpacks were not the only freebie at this event. The Bear family also handed out coupons for a free hamburger and cheeseburger, fun times activity books for the kids, and smile stickers.

Owner and operator David Bear couldn't have been happier with the night's events. "We are proud of the role we have maintained in Elgin over the years, and we are happy to see the community come together for this back to school event," Bear said. "It's just how the end of summer should be."

The Bear Family Restaurants location where the event was held at 1480 Larkin Ave. is accessible to all Elgin families.

The local schools were thrilled to have the Bear Family host this event. Wendy Smith, whose daughter attends Abbott Middle School, said she is very grateful for the kindness David Bear has shown by giving away backpacks filled with school supplies to the local U-46 families.

The Bear family looks forward to working with many of the Elgin schools this year as they continue to host their beloved McTeacher's Nights.

This event was hosted by the Bear Family Restaurants and owner/operator David Bear. Like them on [Facebook](#) or visit bearfamilyrestaurants.com.

For information about events provided by the Elgin McDonald's, contact Julie Travers, community relations director, at julie.travers@comcast.net.

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District 158 devoting more resources to aid neediest students

BY MADHU KRISHNAMURTHY

Huntley Community School District 158 is launching a [dual language program](#) in elementary grades and devoting more resources to students with the most need, officials said.

Starting next week, 20 pre-kindergartners, 84 kindergartners and 42 first-graders will be taught in dual language classrooms at Chesak (Lake in the Hills), Leggee (Huntley) and Mackeben (Algonquin) elementary schools. Additional grades will be added each year until full implementation of the program through fifth grade.

The district's English Language Learner population is near 10 percent and the number of bilingual students is increasing, officials said.

Dual language classrooms will be split between native Spanish speakers and English-speaking students.

The district is using the 80:20 learning model **Elgin Area School District U-46** has had for many years. Eighty percent of classroom instruction is in Spanish and 20 percent in English. As students move up in grades, English instruction increases by 10 percentage points per grade until both languages reach parity by third grade.

"We've had great response from parents, teachers. ... This is really exciting," said Erika Schlichter, assistant superintendent for learning and innovation. "We spent this past year as a planning year."

Rocio Del Castillo, director of curriculum for bilingual programs, is overseeing the dual language program and also is embracing a new role focusing on educational equity, inclusion and diversity.

Another area where officials are targeting resources is social-emotional learning, which will be led by Sarah Wolf, who will help develop new curriculum. Officials said both roles were restructured from existing positions.

"In some districts people might see these as separate programs. We are really seeing this as an overarching umbrella and expanded continuum of services to students and families," Schlichter said.

Huntley is investing in a few new positions related to social-emotional learning because of a growing need for mental health services.

Schlichter said the idea is to go beyond providing classroom interventions for students with social-emotional needs and being proactive through instruction and incorporating social-emotional lessons into the curriculum.

"We are leading a district review. It's a more intensified focus ... looking at a needs assessment, really integrating it into our core classrooms," Schlichter said. "This is more of a planning year. This will be for all levels across the district. There's different models out there that we are evaluating."

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Elgin gun range doing brisk business after one week

BY ELENA FERRER



Fox Valley Shooting Range owner Mark Glavin, from left, and his son Brant, wife Kitty and son Mark at the business at 780 S. McLean Blvd. that opened last week in Elgin. *Brian Hill | Staff Photographer*

About two minutes after Elgin's new gun range, Fox Valley Shooting Range, opened on Friday morning, customers started walking in, some to wander the aisles of the store, some heading straight to shooting practice.

They were greeted by owners Mark Glavin, his wife Kitty, and their sons Brant, 22, and Mark, 19, who exuded friendliness as they offered coffee and cookies, and helped customers get set up with registration including strict checks of driver's licenses and firearm owners identification cards.

The 23,000-square-foot business at 780 S. McLean Blvd. officially opened last week after more than a year of construction. It includes 14 shooting bays and a store that sells firearms -- handguns, long guns and shotguns -- and supplies such as scopes and ammunition.

Customer Ron Nagreen of Elgin said he's been to the gun range at least four times in the last 10 days. "I think this place is going to do good," he said. "I am telling everyone I know about it."

The Glavins said they are happy that business is picking up steadily. A grand opening will take place this fall.

The relaxed atmosphere is in stark contrast to the heated debates before the gun range was approved by the city council in May 2017. The business had some supporters, but it was mostly detractors who cited concerns about noise, traffic and safety. Council members initially voted "no," then reversed themselves and gave their OK in a 5-4 vote.

Glavin said he took all feedback seriously and invested in modern soundproofing construction. On Friday morning, with five customers practicing target shooting

simultaneously, the noise was well muffled inside the building and virtually undetectable outside.

The sign outside the building simply says "Fox Valley Range," as per city restrictions. There are cement barriers along the building and more than 60 interior and exterior security cameras. The shooting bays have ricochet-proof walls, meaning stray bullets won't bounce around but will embed in the wall, Glavin said. Two bays are private -- perfect for "date night" or "family night," Kitty Glavin said -- and have additional ricochet-proof floors.

Easter Seals DuPage & Fox Valley and **Elgin Area School District U-46**, both across McLean Boulevard, were especially vocal opponents of the gun range. U-46 said it would leave if it opened. Their landlord, Rick Heidner, vowed to open a competing gun range if all his tenants left.

So far, Heidner's tenants haven't gone anywhere. Heidner declined to comment this week other than to say the gun range "won't be good."

U-46 has renewed its lease for one year "while we review our options for a new location," spokeswoman Mary Fergus said. Theresa Forthofer, president and CEO of Easter Seals DuPage & Fox Valley, said the agency has no current plans to move but did "an extensive security update." The third tenant, Presence Home Care, declined to comment.

Ian Alexander of Fusion Fitness MMA, next to the range, said he and other nearby business owners agree the Glavins have brought welcome traffic to the strip mall. "I can't hear anything. We were never concerned."

Glavin had said his gun range would be "women-friendly." On Friday, he pointed to the modern decor, open spaces and easy-to-use touch-screen system in the shooting bays as proof.

"We welcome everyone here. We are looking forward to growing the business," he said.

---Courier News--- 8/10/18

U46 looks at JROTC

Proposal to add military program to curriculum draws mixed reactions

BY RAFAEL GUERRERO



East Aurora High School Navy JROTC members take part in Veterans Day activities in Aurora. School District U46 may add a U.S. Army JROTC program to its curriculum. (Linda Girardi/Beacon-News)

School District U46 may add a U.S. Army Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps program to its high school curriculum, a proposal that's drawing both positive and negative reactions.

"JROTC programs include a rigorous academic curriculum relevant to the 21st century," Craig Essick, commander of Elgin American Legion Post 57, told U46 school board members at a meeting in July.

Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford, a U46 parent, is against the idea. "They shouldn't be getting military training while in high school," she said.

If enacted, the program would be part of the career pathways/academies education system the district is developing for implementation starting in the 2019-20 school year. U46 officials are soliciting feedback from the community to present to the school board in September, U46 spokeswoman Mary Fergus. It is just one of many programs and career clusters under consideration, she said.

JROTC supporters say the program should be one of many career options to be considered by students. Daniel Symonds, a member of Post 57's executive committee, said these types of classes teach teens invaluable citizenship and leadership skills.

Symonds, a 16-year military veteran and a sergeant first class with the U.S. Army Reserve, said he would have benefited from such a program when he was in high school.

"There are kids out there who are disadvantaged (and) need the discipline" such a program would offer, Symonds said.

He and Essick spoke in support of a possible U46 JROTC program at last month's school board meeting, noting that military branches already oversee JROTC programs in schools across the country. It's offered at West Aurora and East Aurora high schools and at several in Chicago, they said.

East Aurora's Naval JROTC was introduced in 1996 and enrolls about 600 students, one of the largest JROTC programs in the nation, according to Lt. Lauren Carthan, East Aurora's senior naval science instructor. The cadets are mostly Hispanic and split almost evenly in terms of gender, she said.

The program has "built a culture" that extends outside of the classroom, Carthan said. Parents tell them their children are more disciplined and more respectful, she said, and graduation rates among cadets are higher than the school average.

"Our kids tell us — especially those who go on to college — they come back to tell us how much of a difference it made for them," she said.

Cadets in East Aurora also contribute to the community by participating in color guards, parades and other events, Carthan said. According to East Aurora High School, cadets do about 16,000 hours of community service each year.

Critics of the program, however, view JROTC as an attempt to militarize the schools. Mary Shesgreen, chairwoman of the local group Fox Valley Citizens for Peace and Justice, calls it a "recruiting tool" for the military that could target low-income students and families.

“Why is it OK to take our students at Elgin or Larkin (high schools) and say, ‘Here’s a path for you, be a part of this,’ ” Shesgreen said. “I don’t think that’s right.”

A few community members, including Shesgreen, voiced their objections at U46 forums and school board meetings at which career pathways were discussed this spring and summer.

Shesgreen said she hopes U46 takes into consideration some of the challenges that soldiers and veterans face, including alcohol abuse, homelessness, depression, suicide and unemployment after they leave the military. “This is on top of injuries, which can be profound and extreme. PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), is real and it takes many forms,” she said.

“I think (schools) should concentrate on the best high-quality education possible, engage and mold the future leaders of our world, and not to train them for these unjustified wars,” said Earl Silbar, a fellow member of Fox Valley Citizens for Peace and Justice.

The Elgin resident said he opposes using schools to create systems in which students are “trained to follow orders that may be destructive in other countries.”

JROTC students are not required to enlist in the military after they graduate from high school, Carthan said. It’s just another option a high school can offer, the only difference being “they just happen to wear military uniforms once a week,” she said.

“It’s a class. It’s not going to take over a school,” Symonds said.