

# Press Clippings - 5/26/2023

## – Chicago Tribune –

### **‘Back to the Future’ screenwriter offers doses of encouragement — and reality — to U-46’s Beacon Academy students**

**May 25, 2023**

**By Mike Danahey - The Courier-News**

Students attending the **Beacon Academy** awards ceremony at The Hemmens Cultural Center this week took home a little arts inspiration in addition to honors for their work at the **District U-46 magnet school** over the last academic year.

Bob Gale, co-screenwriter and producer of the “Back to the Future” movie trilogy, spoke to them how ideas, serendipity and rejection all play a role in the life of anyone pursuing a career in film, media production or the arts in general.

“Ideas creep up on you when you least expect them,” Gale said.

Gale recounted that the concept for the first “Back to the Future” film came from a 1980 trip home to his native St. Louis from Los Angeles. A storm had flooded the basement of his parents’ house, and Gale was tasked with salvaging the family memorabilia.

As he was looking through his father’s 1940 high school yearbook, he learned his dad had been the senior class president.

“My high school class president (in 1969) was a bozo,” said Gale, which got him to thinking about what his dad was like in high school and what it would have been like had he been in high school at the same time as his parents.

From there, a rough idea for the movie sprang into his head, he said.

Gale shared it with friend Bob Zemeckis, a writer-director with whom he had written the 1980 comedy “Used Cars.” What resulted was a project that ended up getting rejected by 42 different studios and movie executives.

Time travel movies don’t make money, they were told. Some of the plot points seemed incestuous, a Disney official said.

“It’s easy for a (studio) boss to say no. They get fired if they say yes and the project is a

failure. They want a safe bet,” Gale said. “(As artists) you’re all going to get rejected over and over again.”

“Back to the Future” was ultimately greenlighted only after Zemeckis directed “Romancing the Stone,” which became a box office hit, Gale said.

The first “Back to the Future” movie came out in 1985, followed by sequels in 1989 and 1990. All told, the movies would make about \$1 billion.

Yet even that massive success didn’t guarantee automatic approval when Gale proposed making the first movie into a stage musical. It took six years to bring it to fruition, he said.

“That turned out to be a blessing in disguise,” Gale said.

Advances in technology over those years allowed the production to have better special effects, Gale said.

The musical, for which Gale wrote the book, has been a hit on London’s West End. It’s official Broadway opening is Aug. 3 at the Winter Garden Theatre.

As for how Gale wound up speaking in Elgin, **Beacon Academy teacher Ben Erickson** said he’s been a lifelong fan of the “Back to the Future” trilogy so he decided to reach out to him.

“It took little if any persuasion. We initially had him set for 2020, but the pandemic ruined that,” Erickson said.

Gale joked that he came because he likes Chicago pizza, but his real reason, he said, was the inspiration he felt when science fiction author Ray Bradbury came to speak at the University of Southern California when Gale was a sophomore there.

Bradbury’s stories resonated with him and he decided that over time he would try to pay forward that experience.

Before the awards ceremony, Gale mingled with the crowd, signed collectibles and posed for photos in front of a DeLorean, a hoverboard and a pickup truck, similar to those used in the “Back to the Future” films.

# **– Courier-News –**

## **Local Scoreboard**

**May 26, 2023**

**By From Staff Reports**

### **WEDNESDAY'S RESULTS**

#### **HIGH SCHOOLS**

##### **BASEBALL**

##### **CLASS 4A REGIONAL SEMIFINALS**

##### **GLENBARD WEST**

St. Charles East 8, Glenbard West 3

St. Charles East (26-4): Jake Zitella 2-for-2, 3 RBIs. Eddie Herrera 2-for-4, triple, 2 RBIs. Mike Sharko 2-for-4, 2 runs.

Schaumburg 5, **Bartlett** 3

##### **LARKIN**

**Streamwood** 11, **Elgin** 3

##### **SOUTH ELGIN**

**South Elgin** 1, Glenbard East 0 (10 innings)

### **TUESDAY'S RESULTS**

#### **HIGH SCHOOLS**

##### **SOFTBALL**

##### **CLASS 4A REGIONAL SEMIFINALS**

##### **LAKE PARK**

Lake Park 15, **Streamwood** 0 (4 innings)

##### **SOUTH ELGIN**

**South Elgin** 11, Rolling Meadows 1 (6 innings)

**South Elgin** (23-5-1): Hannah Harms 3-for-4, 3 HRs, 3 runs, 4 RBIs.

**CLASS 1A SECTIONAL SEMIFINAL**

**BOYS VOLLEYBALL**

**REGIONAL SEMIFINALS**

**FREMD**

Geneva d. **South Elgin** 25-20, 25-21

Fremd d. **Streamwood** 25-20, 25-14

**GLENBARD WEST**

Prospect d. **Bartlett** 20-25, 25-14, 25-21

Compiled by Josh Krockey.

*To read the full article, click [here](#).*