

Press Clippings 04/25/20 to 04/27/20

---Press Clippings---04/27/2020
There are no U-46 related news stories.

---The Courier-News---04/26/2020

Side Street Studio Arts delivers for kids

Free kits of supplies being provided to hundreds in area

By: Rafael Guerrero



Side Street Studio Arts in Elgin is assembling and delivering hundreds of free art kits for children and teens as a goodwill project. (Tanner Melvin)



Brown bag art kits for kids, being put together by Side Street Studio Arts in Elgin, may include supplies like watercolor and acrylic paints, paper, canvases, crayons, pencils, glue and other items, depending on the age of the recipient. (Tanner Melvin)

When Side Street Studio Arts' day-to-day operations were upended by the coronavirus pandemic and the stay-at-home order, its owners decided the best way to help kids stuck at home was to bring them a way to make art.

Side Street founders Tanner Melvin and Erin Rehberg are assembling and delivering brown bag art kits for Elgin children and teens free of charge. They're using the art supplies they already had on hand as well as donations from employees and supporters.

So far, they've distributed more than 500 kits in an effort they estimate has reached more than 1,300 young artists, Melvin said.

"We're offering folks and kids a chance to extend themselves in a new direction ... offer them a chance to be creative, imaginative, and improve their mental health," he said.

The kits vary by age. Those going to younger children may include watercolor paint and play dough while an older teen's kit may include acrylic paint and canvas. Other items being collected and distributed are folders, paper, pencils, crayons and colored pencils, Melvin said.

Each kit costs them about \$5 thanks to bulk purchases and donations, he said.

Recently, the Chicago-based Reva and David Logan Foundation made a sizable donation of supplies from which Side Street will be able to make at least 1,000 more kits, he said.

They have more than 1,300 art kit requests so far, Melvin said.

"When we get requests, we ask how many kids you have, how old they are," he said. "That way we can better tailor the art kits to each household."

Delivery is done on a volunteer basis and is limited to a 10-mile radius of its downtown Elgin location, Melvin said.

Side Street is working with the **School District U-46 Educational Foundation** on 1,600 art kits to be distributed to all of the district's preschoolers. The foundation will pay for the supplies.

"When preschoolers are learning, these are the types of things they need. So this was a perfect match," foundation coordinator Dawn Curran said.

Kits will include a watercolor set, crayons, pipe cleaners, pencil, chalk, paper and other items.

In a separate endeavor, U-46 plans to give its preschool students "kindergarten readiness backpacks" filled with English-and-Spanish-language books, supplies and activities, Curran said. The backpacks will be paid for by the district, pending school board approval.

"We're looking to pair the district's backpacks with the kits to limit (potential coronavirus) exposure," Curran said. Both could be delivered some time in May, she said.

Side Street's work on the art kits comes even as it faces its own financial hurdles. In a Facebook update, Side Street said they had applied to nine different "funding opportunities" and had already received one rejection. Many Side Street employees have donated their March paychecks back to the nonprofit organization.

Monetary donations to Side Street helped cover day-to-day expenses of 26 of the first 39 days since Side Street closed, a Facebook update said. Melvin said their two landlords have worked with them to figure out rent.

Side Street has developed an “excellent” base of donors since its inception seven years ago, Melvin said. He hopes the art kits project reminds people of Side Street’s role in the community or introduces them to Side Street for the first time.

“If we can offer even a little bit of help, that’s something we will strive for,” he said.

U.S. News & World Report: St. Charles North in top 30 of state’s high schools

By: Rafael Guerrero

St. Charles North High School ranked 26th in U.S. News & World Report’s latest ranking of best high schools in the state, according to its 2020 list.

The School District 303 school ranked the highest among Elgin-area high schools, based on such factors as state assessments, college readiness exams and graduation rates. The 2020 list included 17,792 schools nationwide and 677 schools in Illinois, according to media report.

St. Charles North was also ranked No. 611 in the nation. According to the U.S. News data, 98% of its students graduated, 67% took at least one AP exam and 56% passed at least one AP exam.

St. Charles East High School was 57th in the state (1,407 in the U.S.), according to the list. Geneva High School ranked 77 (1,661 in the U.S.) and Batavia High School came in at 81st (1,764 in the country).

Bartlett High School just missed the top 100 in the 2020 list, ranking 103rd in the state (2,696 in the U.S.), the report said. It was the highest-ranked **District U-46** school.

Jacobs High School in Algonquin was the highest-ranked school in District 300 school, coming in at 107 (2,926 in the U.S.), according to the list.

Burlington Central High School, the lone high school in District 301, placing 129th in the state and No. 3,703 in the U.S.

Payton College Preparatory High School in Chicago was the top-ranked school in Illinois, data showed. It was No. 9 on the national list.

---Press Clippings---04/25/2020
There are no U-46 related news stories.
