

Press Clippings 05/15/20

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U-46 gives away 1 million meals to students

District to honor workers who have provide food during COVID-19 closure

By: Rafael Guerrero



Masked School District U-46 employees distribute meals in March to waiting vehicles at Willard Elementary School in South Elgin. The district expects the 1 millionth meal will be handed out Friday.

School District U-46 will give away its millionth meal Friday through its coronavirus pandemic food distribution service, officials said.

The program was launched in March after the state closed schools indefinitely to stem the virus spread. To ensure students would get the meals they'd normally receive in school, the district set up 26 sites at which breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks could be picked up curbside three times a week.

To celebrate the milestone, U-46 will take a brief pause at 10:30 a.m. Friday to recognize the food and nutrition services employees who made it possible, the release said.

Those working Friday morning will clang lids, ring bells and bang drums in celebration of the workers.

"We're so proud and honored to help our families in this time of need," Elena Hildreth, U-46's director of food and nutrition services, said in a statement. "Our team has rallied and grown closer to each other and to our families even as we are physically apart."

Food service workers wash their hands frequently, use hand sanitizer, wear masks and gloves, and stand six feet apart during meal preparation and distribution, district officials said. Meals are handed out on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

According to a news release, more than 12,000 meals were distributed on St. Patrick's Day, the first day of the service.

That number has quadrupled over the last several weeks, leading to the projection that the 1 million milestone will be reached Friday.

Once school dismisses for the summer, 14 sites will continue to provide breakfast and lunch through at least July 1, the release said.

SPORTS

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Priami: Transfer to St. Charles North ‘wasn't really sudden’

Former Bartlett quarterback ready to make himself at home with North Stars

By: Paul Johnson



Bartlett quarterback Michael Priami (6) scrambles away from South Elgin's Vince Clinite (44) during a 2019 Upstate Eight Conference game.

Ever since he was a freshman at Bartlett, Michael Priami has followed the St. Charles North football team from afar.

According to Priami, his family had been looking to move to St. Charles for some time. This spring, they finally found the house they wanted.

The dominoes have fallen from there as Priami is set to transfer to St. Charles North for his senior season. He will compete for the starting job at quarterback.

“I know some of the guys that go to North, so I had a connection with them,” Priami said. “It wasn’t really sudden. It was a thing me and my family were going to do since my freshman year but we just couldn’t do it.

“The guys (at Bartlett) understood because they knew this was going to come. North has a great program. I can’t wait to be one of the next guys to make the program better.”

Priami started last season for Bartlett, helping lead the Hawks to their second straight Class 8A playoff appearance and a share of the Upstate Eight title.

As a junior, Priami passed for 1,440 yards and 17 touchdowns. He added five rushing TDs.

“He’s very polished when you look at his highlights,” North Stars coach Rob Pomazak said of Priami. “He’s athletic, can throw on the run, has a good arm. He has an opportunity to compete for that position.

“Coach (Matt) Erlenbaugh does a great job at Bartlett, and Michael is a good testament to their program.”

Priami feels the St. Charles North offense is a perfect fit.

“I love the spread, my bread-and-butter,” Priami said.

Still, Priami won't be handed the starting position.

“Coach ‘Pom’ hasn't promised anything,” Priami said. “I have to go in and fight for my spot. I love that. I know what to expect.”

Junior Sam DeDobbelaere, who started against Wheaton Warrenville South last season when Kyler Brown was injured, returns. Sophomore Aidan Pieper is in the mix as well. St. Charles North also will use junior running back Nick DeMarco under center at times, a formation Priami experienced alongside Tyler Rivelli last season at Bartlett.

“There are a talented group of kids in the program already,” Pomazak said.

“It's going to be fun to watch them compete against each other. They're only going to make each other better.”

With summer work in jeopardy due to the coronavirus pandemic, though, that competition could be cut short, if it happens at all.

Right now, the North Stars are focused on doing as much as they can online until they can get back on the field.

“At this point, I'm fine if we just get August,” Pomazak said. “We have to be. It is a challenging situation regardless. Then you throw in the fact that a lot of this is going to be virtual, maybe all of it.

“The challenge for us is to become a program that comes out of this stronger.”

St. Charles North missed the playoffs last season after playing in the Class 7A state championship game in 2018.

The North Stars started 18 sophomores and juniors last year, however, and now welcome in a talented new quarterback.

Expectations will be high whenever they get back on the field.

“This is a state-caliber team,” Priami said. “I can't wait to see what we can do. We want to get on the field and get that flow and that chemistry going.

“I want to make the most of it and try to win a state championship.”