

## Press Clippings 10/20/2017

---Courier News--- 10/20/17

### **Bartlett breaks ground on stadium**

Residents celebrate beginning of long-awaited athletic complex

BY RAFAEL GUERRERO



Adults and Bartlett High School students gather outside the high school's soon-to-be activity complex on Thursday. Project organizers quickly set up a groundbreaking ceremony for the project, which will add bleachers, lights, a press box and a retention pond to the site by next summer. (Rafael Guerrero/Courier-News)

Where a small shed stands, locker rooms will go. A tree a few steps north? That will be the site of a concession stand. Not far from there will be the main entrance to the Bartlett High School activity complex.

George Kantzavelos looking into the future as he discussed the stadium site Thursday. The two-decades-old dream for Bartlett High School and its community is closer to being a reality.

"I knew we would get here one day," said Kantzavelos, a past chairman of the high school boosters and the main organizer behind the activity complex project.

Adults and teenagers gathered just outside Bartlett High's football and track and field facilities for the unofficial start of the complex project. By next summer, the site should resemble a high school athletics stadium, with bleachers, lights and a press box.

"No more Streamwood," Principal Mike Demovsky shouted to those who had gathered outside, referring to their "home" field at Streamwood High School, several miles north up Route 59.

Earlier this week, School District U46 board members unanimously approved a \$1.6 million bid to complete the first phase of the project — bleachers, press box, lights and a retention pond.

Board member Sue Kerr, who has lived in Bartlett since 1993, said it has long been a topic of discussion for Bartlett residents, including her, as her children attended both Bartlett and South Elgin high schools, and South Elgin moved forward on its athletic facilities.

Jeff Bral has been working at Bartlett High School for most of its 20 years, the last nine as athletic director. He said that for years groups attempted to get the stadium built, but when Kantzavelos took the lead in 2011, a consistent message and goal took shape.

Donations started coming in, making it easier for the district to move forward with plans. Notable donors this summer were Bartlett-based Greco Foods and Cheese Merchants of America, who gave a combined \$500,000.

Bral said Bartlett got a taste of what Friday nights could be like at the field last fall when the school hosted its first homecoming game. It was a challenge, he said, as they had to accommodate 1,500 to 2,000 people, rent out temporary seating and figure out the marching band's position in all the festivities, among other concerns.

When recalling the events of the 2016 homecoming game, Bral said, "the spirit, the climate — beautiful like today — there was a lot of excitement. We were finally getting an idea of what it could all look like for us (in the near future)."

One student in attendance in 2016 was Casey Pearce, the district's student representative on the school board. The Bartlett senior said the crowd could feel the difference, in the form of a home-field energy. During Monday's board meeting, she said she was excited for future Bartlett students, such as her younger sister.

"Winning your homecoming game at your actual home is like nothing else," she said Thursday.

Construction is expected to begin next week, Kantzavelos said. The work is expected to be completed next summer. While phases two and three of the project are not yet confirmed or approved by the board — phases that could get the stadium visitors bleachers, concessions and a main entrance — he said it could take a couple of years to assemble 100 percent of the funding needed for the construction phases.

"We don't want to stall the work, we want to keep momentum going," he said.

---Daily Herald--- 10/20/17

## **ECC hosts first fair featuring historically black colleges**

**BY MADHU KRISHNAMURTHY**

Elgin Community College hosts its first fair Saturday featuring historically black colleges and universities.

Representatives from more than 20 institutions will participate in the free event, which is open to all.

It is designed to cater to low-income and black college and high school students in ECC's district, including 15 private and public high schools within **Elgin Area School District U-46**, Community Unit District 300, Burlington Central Unit District 301, and St. Charles High School District 303.

"The goal of this fair is not to detract from the excellent colleges and universities we have in Illinois," said Brittany Barber, ECC student life coordinator for targeted populations. "ECC is dedicated to diversity and equity. These are institutions that historically were created in response to segregation and racism, but they don't exclude others."

ECC's student population is 6 percent black, which also is representative of the district. While the fair is tailored to black students, everyone is welcome to participate, Barber said.

"Everybody can benefit from these institutions," said Barber, adding one in five students at black colleges and universities is not black.

Some of the notable black institutions participating are Spelman College of Atlanta, Fisk University of Nashville, Tennessee, Howard University in Washington, D.C., Morgan State University in Baltimore, and Alcorn State University in Lorman, Mississippi.

Within the past five years, 19 students have transferred from ECC to such institutions, Barber said.

"That's not due to lack of interest. That's just due to lack of knowledge," Barber said. "We wanted to make sure that students knew about all of their educational options. Knowledge is empowering. This is a fully immersive experience that celebrates and acknowledges that you have a future at institutions that have always been an advocate for your populations."

The goal is to make the fair an annual event and build partnerships with these institutions so ECC students can transfer easily after completing a two-year associate degree, Barber added.

The fair will be 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Building B Jobe Lounge on ECC's campus, 1700 Spartan Drive.

It will feature presentations by the United Negro College Fund, which funds scholarships for black students and general scholarships for 37 private black institutions. It is sponsored by ECC, U-46, the United Negro College Fund, the Black History Family Festival Board, and Delta Sigma Theta Inc.

## **SPORTS SECTION**

---Courier News--- 10/20/17

### **Boys soccer: For Larkin, its Aleksandar the great Zdravkovic scores 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> goals as Royals stop Huntley**

BY PAUL JOHNSON

Larkin's Aleksandar Zdravkovic played club soccer his freshman year, but he wanted to see what the high school experience was all about this season.

In his first taste of postseason action Wednesday, the sophomore forward stepped up again.

Zdravkovic scored two goals in a span of a minute in the second half of the Royals' Class 3A Huntley Regional semifinal game against the host Red Raiders. That was all Larkin needed in a 2-0 win.

Larkin advanced to Saturday's 2 p.m. regional title game against Jacobs.

"It's a really fun atmosphere, especially when you're on a good team," Zdravkovic said. "It was one of the reasons I came out and played, to see what it was like. I wanted to try it out. It's been fun so far.

"Playing with your friends and trying to prove that you're the best is fun."

Both teams slogged through the first 60 minutes with few offensive chances. Enter the explosive Zdravkovic.

With 20:14 left he unleashed a rocket out of midair off a rebound to open the scoring. A minute later, he scored again on a crafty maneuver, getting around a defender and lofting a shot into the goal.

"I can't say enough about him," Larkin coach Ken Hall said of Zdravkovic, who has scored 26 goals. "He's made the difference in our team from last year. It's made us a better team. He's a great player."

Neither team applied much pressure the rest of the way, but Zdravkovic's burst was all the Royals (12-7-3) needed.

"Really what it ended up boiling down to was a moment where we didn't defend like we needed to," Huntley coach Kris Grabner said. "It wasn't one kid.

"It's a team effort of knowing where the biggest threat is on the field and making sure he has no space, because he doesn't need a lot of space. That kid is talented."

Huntley (7-15) did provide Grabner with some highlights near the end, however.

"I was proud of our guys," Grabner said. "We played better soccer in the last three weeks of the season than we played all year, which is what we're looking to do. You can't ask for much more out of your guys."

Next up for Larkin is Jacobs, a defending sectional champion. The Golden Eagles are led by Wisconsin-bound senior striker Noah Melick. Jacobs beat Cary-Grove 3-2 in double overtime Tuesday.

“They are very, very fast, so we have our hands full,” Hall said. “We’re fast, too, so it’s going to be interesting to see. We have to stop their top player, that’s no secret.”

Games like this are what drew Zdravkovic to playing for Larkin, and he’ll get a chance to show what he can do on a big stage.

“I’m not going to be nervous about it,” Zdravkovic said. “I’m just going to come and play my game and hopefully my friends will come and play their games too and give 110 percent. That can help us win.”