

Press Clippings 3/13/2018

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Moms putting on prom

U-46 special ed alumni's parents organizing dance

BY MADHU KRISHNAMURTHY



Kim Herrera, of South Elgin, with daughter Natalie, who is a graduate of South Elgin High School. Herrera is helping organize a prom for special needs alumni of Elgin Area School District U-46. *Brian Hill | Staff Photographer*

For years, South Elgin High School graduate Natalie Herrera has attended Elgin Area School District U-46's prom for students and alumni of its special education and transition programs.

Roughly 120 students, alumni, teachers and administrators from U-46's five high schools participated in last year's 11th annual Spring Fling hosted by the South Elgin Special Education transition program. Participants purchase tickets to cover food and entertainment costs.

Organizers this year decided to limit prom to current students, similar to other events and activities at U-46 schools.

"Those organizing this event want to ensure (it) remains special to current students who are all 21 and under," U-46 spokeswoman Mary Fergus said. "All graduates are always welcome to attend school alumni events."

Disappointment with this decision has prompted two South Elgin moms to organize their own prom to keep the tradition alive for alumni with special needs.

"The kids, after they graduate, so many of them they don't do anything. This is something that year after year they greatly look forward to," said Kim Herrera, of South Elgin, 27-year-old Natalie's mother. "(Alumni) have been invited to all the proms since it started. There's 30 alumni just from South Elgin."



Natalie Herrera of South Elgin at a past prom for students and alumni of U-46's special education and transition programs. - Brian Hill | Staff Photographer

Herrera hopes to reach out to alumni from the other four U-46 high schools but said, "getting the information out to the other alumni parents is difficult."

Parents volunteering to organize the event will meet soon to finalize a date and location for the prom -- either May 5 at the Bartlett Hills Golf Club and Banquets or May 19 at Villa Olivia in Bartlett. Each venue requires a minimum number -- between 40 and 50 -- of participants. The event will include dinner, dance and a DJ, Herrera said.

Parents of alumni interested in participating can contact Herrera at Kimiam3160@gmail.com or Cathy Keith at (630) 213-9258 for details.

SPORTS SECTION

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Boys soccer: Elgin blanks Hampshire

BY ALLEN OSHINSKI

Hampshire's boys soccer team definitely got off to a slow start Tuesday.

The Whip-Purs' bus was late arriving for the game against Elgin. Then the Whips gave up a penalty kick and got a player and coach carded off within the first 10 minutes.

But, despite having an extra man, the Maroons were slow to take advantage. They did eventually capture the momentum and with 2 goals from Omar Lopez and rolled to a 4-0 win in nonconference action at Memorial Field.

"It was an ugly game," said Elgin coach Dave Borg. "We're happy with a 4-0 win because we didn't play well. We had some good runs at the end of the second half when we started to have some through balls and our midfielders played better. I thought we'd be lucky to get out of here with a 1-0 win the way it was going. We just couldn't get any kind of rhythm, momentum, or anything going."

Elgin jumped on top when Lopez converted the penalty kick but then stalled. The defense, led by Manny Ramirez and Alex Kunicki, kept Hampshire from threatening either. Braeden Frenette had the Whips' only shot on goal on a free kick midway through the half.

Elgin finally broke through again when Kunicki jumped on a rebound and punched it in in the 33rd minute.

Elgin began to get in sync midway through the second half. Lopez scored his second off a feed from Fernando Nava with 24:25 left. Jean Padilla-Gomez capped the scoring with about 12 minutes left.

"It was a little bit better," said Lopez of the second-half spurt. "But we still didn't play like we want to play."

Hampshire's Sawyer Shores put the ball in the net late in the game, but it was negated by an offside call. It was that kind of day for Hampshire.

"When you give up a penalty kick and lose a guy on a red card in the first 10 minutes, it changes the whole game," said Hampshire coach Rick Schuster. "We told the kids that we can't afford to get red cards. We're not good enough to play 10 on 11."