

Press Clippings 3/15/2018

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'We are young, and we are strong': Suburban teens join walkout against gun violence

DAILY HERALD REPORT



South Elgin High School students joined a national walkout Wednesday to protest gun violence in schools in response to the Feb. 14 shooting at a Florida high school that left 17 teens and staffers dead. *Rick West | Staff Photographer*

In a remarkable show of unity, thousands of students at high schools across the Chicago area walked out of their classes Wednesday morning to join a nationwide youth protest against gun violence.

Most of the demonstrations began about 10 a.m. They were to last at least 17 minutes, one minute for each of the students and staffers killed one month ago at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

A common theme was honoring those victims and calling for action to ensure mass shootings at schools never happen again. Many of the demonstrations resembled 1960s-era rallies, with protest signs and student speakers using bullhorns to deliver emotional messages.

At some suburban high schools -- including Libertyville, Mundelein and Lake Park -- administrators supported students' rights to protest and worked to ensure safe, peaceful demonstrations. At others -- including Dundee-Crown, Hampshire and Wauconda high schools -- administrators cited safety concerns in holding indoor events and threatened disciplinary action against any teens who walked out of class or left the building.

Walkouts also took place at some junior high schools, including Robert Frost in Schaumburg.

South Elgin



South Elgin High School sophomore Hannah Kolbusz, 16, cries while listening to a speech Wednesday during a demonstration to protest gun violence in schools. Students were protesting in response to the Feb. 14 shooting at a Florida high school that left 17 teens and staffers dead. - *Rick West | Staff Photographer*

Senior Promise Ogunleye told hundreds of students gathered to show solidarity with the Parkland, Florida, shooting victims and their families that "Columbine should have been enough."

About 6,000 **Elgin Area School District U-46** students walked out of class Wednesday and wore orange ribbons symbolizing the national protest against school shootings.

At South Elgin High School, some students spoke emotionally about how the tragedy affected them, and many shed tears when the names of the 17 Parkland victims were read out aloud.

"Because we are tired of waiting to see who will be next, we say enough," Ogunleye said. She urged students old enough to vote to make their voices heard at the ballot box next week.

The Parkland victims bore special significance to 17-year-old junior Alexandra Pizano.

"I was in elementary school when Sandy Hook happened," she said, referring to the Dec. 14, 2012, shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, where 20 children and six school employees were killed. "I remember thinking to myself this can't happen again. I'm here so we won't be next. So no one will have to be next."

U-46 CEO Tony Sanders attended the protest at South Elgin to "supervise" along with school employees.

"What I love about this is the students are talking about policy, not people and politics," Sanders said. "Every voice will be heard. From a school safety perspective, if the 2,700 students in this school want to walk out, there's no way we can stop them. It's better to work with the students and make it a learning experience. That's why we are allowing this."

-- Madhu Krishnamurthy

Teaching moment

From observing moments of silence to the tone of a meditation chime to creating origami doves as symbols of hope and peace, some suburban schools quietly marked their national protest against gun violence with faculty members using it as a teaching moment.

Students in a seventh-grade English classroom at Abbott Middle School in Elgin wrote letters about what they would ask government officials to do to prevent school shootings and improve safety. They also made 1,000 paper doves that will be sent to Parkland, Florida families with messages of peace.

Kimball Middle School in Elgin held an assembly for students to talk about free speech, while Elgin High School students launched an effort promoting 17 acts of kindness to honor Parkland victims.

At Dundee-Crown High School in Carpentersville, students staged a walk-in and stood in hallways with arms linked together, student Alyssa Realzola wrote on Facebook.

"During the moments of silence, many said it was deafening because they would have never thought that D-C could be that quiet during a school day," she wrote. "And if students chose not to participate, then they were able to sit in the main gym, but I know

that they still continued to talk of the many ways that us, as students, could help and stop the violence in our schools."

-- Madhu Krishnamurthy

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Elementary, junior high students also walk out to support gun safety

BY ERIC PETERSON

Junior high, middle school and elementary students in the suburbs were among those who joined in a nationwide walkout to protest gun violence Wednesday.

At Frost Junior High in Schaumburg, students reached out to the principal in advance to plan their participation, in which they walked outdoors around the school for 17 minutes in recognition of the 17 students and staffers killed a month ago at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. About 100 to 120 of the school's 650 students took part, District 54 spokeswoman Terri McHugh said.

Not every junior high in District 54 had students who marched, and some students said they were doing so in remembrance of those killed in Florida, rather than in protest against gun access. Like other elementary and middle schoolers in the suburbs, the District 54 students who took part remained on their school grounds.

"Our plan was to be prepared," McHugh said.

Students at all four of Palatine Township Elementary District 15's junior highs as well as some of the elementary schools participated, spokeswoman Morgan Delack said. Participation was allowed only if students initiated the conversations with their principals in advance.

The largest turnout was probably at Plum Grove Junior High in Rolling Meadows, where Delack said she saw some of the students deliver powerful, mature speeches.

Families were kept informed, even if a school anticipated no student participation at all, Delack said.

Students at Chippewa Middle School in Des Plaines Elementary District 62 also took part in the walkout, images of which were posted on the school's [Facebook page](#).

Students across **Elgin Area School District U-46** participated in different ways, including moments of silence, classroom reflections or walkouts, even at the elementary and middle school levels.

• Daily Herald staff writers Christopher Placek and Madhu Krishnamurthy contributed to this report.

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Larkin graduate to talk about efforts to eliminate tetanus in moms, kids

SUBMITTED BY KIWANIS CLUB OF ELGIN

Dr. Timothy Erickson, a 1978 Larkin High School graduate, is returning to Elgin to help "Eliminate Maternal/Neonatal Tetanus." Join a presentation at 6 p.m. Monday, March 19, at Imago Creative Studios, 216 Prairie St. in Elgin.

After Dr. Erickson's graduation from Larkin High School he went on to earn his M.D. degree from the Chicago Medical School in 1986. He completed emergency medicine residency training at the University of Illinois and his medical toxicology fellowship at Cook County Hospital in Chicago.

Erickson then served as the director for the UIC Center for Global Health and Professor of Emergency Medicine and Medical Toxicology at the University of Illinois at Chicago and is now director of the Division of Medical Toxicology at Brigham & Women's Hospital in Boston. He has presented at hundreds of national and international invited lectures related to global health based on his extensive international research and experience in Africa (Rwanda, Sudan, Kenya), Asia (India, Vietnam, Nepal), South America (Brazil, Peru, Argentina), Europe (Kosovo, Ukraine, France) and Antarctica.

Erickson's comments will be directed toward global health issues and more specifically their impact on the world's children and steps being taken to address related issues.

In addition to Erickson, Michael Grudzinski, senior director of UNICEF's Global Cause Partnerships, and Ann Updegraff Spleth, Kiwanis Children's Fund, will be presenting information regarding their organization's efforts to provide and improve the health of the world's children and their partnering efforts for the worldwide elimination of maternal/neonatal tetanus.

This Kiwanis Club of Elgin event is to promote Kiwanis International's partnership with UNICEF and its efforts to raise funds to "Eliminate Tetanus" in the 15 remaining countries that have yet to accomplish this worldwide goal. The goal that no mother or newborn dies needlessly as a result of a tetanus infection incurred prior to or at birth.

For more information regarding this event or if you are interested in attending/contributing to the elimination of maternal/neonatal tetanus, contact Rick Poulton at (847) 977-4541 or iigov2016.17@gmail.com. Support [#KidsNeedKiwanis](#).



Dr. Timothy Erickson, a 1978 Larkin High School graduate, is returning to Elgin to speak on eliminating maternal/neonatal tetanus. *Courtesy of Timothy Erickson*

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Elgin activists say they will protest until police shooting video is released

BY ELENA FERRARIN

A group of Elgin activists protested for the second consecutive day Wednesday, saying they plan to continue to do so every day in front of the police department until body camera video in the fatal shooting of Decynthia Clements is released.

"We don't want to lose momentum and we want to let them know this is a serious issue," co-organizer Corey Battles said.

About 30 people gathered in small groups, talking among themselves and with police officers in an atmosphere much more relaxed than that of a rally the previous day.

"Basically, we just want answers," said Tanisha Farr of Elgin, who said she was a friend of Clements'. "We want to know what was the reason (for the shooting)."

Police said Clements, 34, had a knife and was shot early Monday by Lt. Christian Jensen after an hourlong standoff that came after she fled from a traffic stop. Officers attempted to negotiate with her, then moved toward the vehicle to pull her out after "a fire was lit inside," Police Chief Jeff Swoboda said. She was shot after she exited the car, he said.

Authorities said she died of multiple gunshot wounds. Jensen, a 19-year-veteran of the department, is on administrative leave during the investigation.

On Tuesday, Swoboda and a few of the activists had loud verbal exchanges. On Wednesday, Swoboda and other officers milled about, listening to protesters and trying to answer questions in friendly conversation.

As for when the video will be released, Swoboda backed off from his previous statement that he wouldn't wait months to do that, saying the investigation is in the hands of the Illinois State Police.

South Elgin High School students Nadya Quezada and Amarrah Banner earlier in the day took part in a nationwide youth protest against gun violence, then joined the protest by the police department.

"This is crazy. I never thought something like this would happen in Elgin," Banner said.

Clements was black and Jensen is white. Some protesters said they believe race played a factor in the shooting, but the Rev. Bob Whitt, who is black and works as community police liaison, disagreed. "To me, it's not a race issue. It's an issue of right and wrong," he said, adding the investigation needs to play out.

City officials announced Wednesday they are planning to hold a "courageous community conversation" regarding the shooting, although no date was announced. The event is hosted by the human relations commission, which has hosted a few such proactive conversations centered on race-related issues in recent years.

Mayor David Kaptain said in a statement Wednesday that will be a chance for constructive dialogue.

"I am saddened by the unfortunate situation that occurred early Monday morning which resulted in the death of Ms. Clements," Kaptain said.

"There are still many questions unanswered, and I wish to remind all to please be patient. ... Our police department continues to be open and transparent, and additional information will be shared with the public as soon as possible. The community needs to heal and it's important we continue to support the friends and family of Ms. Clements, our police department and one another."

Battles said he and the others want an independent investigation, or for a local resident to be part of the investigation by state police. Once the video is released, the group will consult with the family to see "if they are comfortable with it," Battles said.

Battles said he and the other organizers want the protest to remain peaceful.

"We are not trying to turn this into a Ferguson situation or a riot. We are just trying to demand justice," he said.

SPORTS SECTION

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School, community pride as important to Larkin winning

BY JOHN RADTKE



Larkin head coach Deryn Carter pumps his fist as the Royals celebrate their win against Benet in the Class 4A supersectional boys basketball game at Northern Illinois University Tuesday. Larkin takes on Belleville West in the state semifinals Friday in Peoria. John Starks | Staff Photographer

Wednesday was not your normal day at Larkin High School.

The entire school took on a little different air, courtesy of the Royals' boys basketball team, which defeated Benet Academy 53-46 Tuesday night in the Class 4A supersectional at NIU to become the first team in school history to advance to a state final basketball tournament.

"There's definitely electricity and a buzz to what's going on," Royals coach Deryn Carter told statewide media during Thursday's IHSA conference call just after noon.

You could sense that buzz hadn't worn off yet at practice later in the afternoon, from the players to the coaches, as they got ready to put the euphoria aside and get to work on how they can conquer mighty Belleville West in Friday night's first state semifinal at Carver Arena in Peoria.

"I slept a little bit but I still have that rush and I think everyone does," said senior Anthony Lynch, who scored 16 points in Tuesday's win. "The first announcement of the day was that we won and it was great. The eyes keep getting wider and wider and it's more exciting every day. You cherish coming to practice more and more."

"A lot of people are happy and we're happy. It's a good thing," said senior Jalen Shaw, who on Tuesday had 11 rebounds and 2 blocked shots to go with 5 points and who gave props to his mom, Lisa, for being his No. 1 fan. "It's settled in. I've been ready for this moment since the beginning of the season. We made team goals and from the beginning one of them was to go to state."

This is no small thing for Larkin, and for the city of Elgin. It's been 20 years since a boys basketball team from an Elgin school has made it to a state final tournament. In fact, since Jim Harrington's 1997-98 Elgin team played in Peoria, only one other team has made it to the Elite Eight -- Mike Sitter's 2007-08 Elgin team, which was the first year of four class basketball and Elite Eight teams were supersectional teams and not state finalists.

In fact, throw out all the class changes and this Larkin team is the first from the city to play in a state semifinal since Elgin in 1955.

"It means a lot," said Lynch, a lifelong resident of South Elgin and Elgin. "This town has a lot of tradition and is very close. Elgin and Larkin have a lot of tradition and people worship that. It brings everyone together. It's something to look forward to and support and we want to give that back this weekend. We just have to get back to being focused. We're excited but we also have to stay humble."

No one person at Larkin knows more about the tradition than Carter, a Larkin grad who scored over 1,000 points as a Royal. A lot of people wondered why he took the job back in 2009. The program was in disarray and then won 5 games in his first two seasons. Well, there hasn't been a losing season since and Carter is now 143-117 in his tenure at his alma mater.

"There's a lot of pride in being able to take the program from where it was to where it is now," Carter said. "I'm still pinching myself a little. I used to not like having that Elgin in front of Larkin because we were Larkin. But now I kind of like having that Elgin in front of Larkin. There's a lot of pride in it, a lot of community pride. I'm very proud to bring it back to Elgin, but even prouder to have it on the west side."

As their coach, it's up to Carter to get the Royals focused on business, but he also wants them to enjoy the experience.

"The fun thing about setting goals is you have to work to get them but when you do it's time to enjoy it. You have to enjoy the moment when it happens," he said.

Even though Carter hasn't coached a team at state, he's no stranger to the experience. His sister, Corry, has won three state championships and taken 10 Whitney Young girls teams to state. Carter's brother-in-law, Nick Irvin, has won three Class 3A state titles at Morgan Park and has his Mustangs in Peoria again this weekend. Carter said there were many text messages and emails back and forth between he, Corry and Nick Wednesday.

But one of the guys who this may mean the most to is Carter's dad, Deryl, who has assisted Corry on many of the Young teams, and who is also a volunteer assistant for Deryn.

"It's been one of my dreams since Deryn took over here," Deryl Carter said Wednesday. "I'm just blessed that both my kids want me with them."

Just as the Larkin basketball team, not to mention the entire Elgin community, is blessed to have the Carters leading the Royals this weekend to the IHSA's Big Dance.

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Baseball: Coates' no-hitter leads Elgin past Marengo

DAILY HERALD REPORT

Kyle Coates threw a five-inning no-hitter Wednesday as Elgin opened its baseball season with a 10-0 nonconference win over Marengo.

Coates struck out 9 and walked 2.

John Fortmann had a big day at the plate for the Maroons, going 3-for-4 with a home run, double and 5 RBI. Jack Sitter added 2 hits with a double and an RBI and Payron Reynolds had 2 hits and an RBI.

Westminster Christian 14, Hiawatha 0: JT Stoll had a triple and 3 RBI to lead Westminster to a Northeastern Athletic Conference win. Theron Dorsey (2 RBI), Nathen Martinez (2 hits, 2 RBI), Matthew Schulenburg, Mason Runkel (2 hits), Anthony Calabrese (RBI) and Connor King (2 RBI) each had doubles for the Warriors. Five Westminster pitchers combined on a 2-hitter with Andrew Kurcz being credited with the win.

ACC 26, IMSA 2: Mac Doherty (2 hits, 2 RBI) and Alex Rakes (4 RBI) each tripled as Aurora Central Catholic moved to 2-0 with this nonconference win. Hunter Darnell (3 hits, 6 RBI) and Mikey Elliott (3 hits, 2 RBI) each had 2 doubles for the Chargers and Connor Lentz had 2 hits with a double. Nathan Schweisthal threw all 5 innings for the win, allowing 6 hits with 5 strikeouts.

Elgin Academy 6, Christian Liberty 0: Ethan Hill threw a five-inning 1-hitter with 13 strikeouts and 1 walk as the Hilltoppers opened the season with a nonconference win. Colin Konicek had 2 hits and an RBI for EA while Murtaza Syed Shah homered and had 3 RBI.