

## Press Clippings 5/2/2018

---Courier News--- 5/2/18

### Sparkin a career

Elgin, Hampshire program upgrades help students become certified welders

BY RAFAEL GUERRERO



A student exits one of Elgin High School's 14 welding booths. The school recently spent more than \$350,000 renovating and equipping its welding lab, which is now accredited for welding certification testing. (Rafael Guerrero / The Courier-News)

Michael “Boomer” Herritt has always had “a knack for repairing things,” he said.

So it was fitting that the welding program offered at Elgin High School would catch his attention, and that he now has plans to attend a welding school in Florida once he graduates this spring. It’s tempting to start work right now, something his stepbrother is trying to persuade him to do, Herritt said.

“Some of us (in the Elgin welding program) already got job offers,” he said. “But we don’t talk about it much. We just work.”

**District U46** is making it easier for prospective welders like Herritt to get those post-high school job offers thanks to the district’s recently renovated welding lab at Elgin High School, one of only three high school labs nationwide to be an accredited testing facility. Another is located at nearby Hampshire High School.

The lab will soon be open to U46 students and anyone else wanting to earn the welding certification needed to get jobs in an industry desperate for more employees.

“We’ve tried to provide them with a variety of welding equipment and related equipment that is about as good as they can expect when they get to industry,” said Nick Moran, a certified welding instructor and inspector at the school.

The renovated lab includes 14 new welding lab booths, new tools and more high-tech instruction. The lab, which cost about \$354,000 to build and equip, was finished in February.

“We have a full-blown lab,” Herritt said. “It’s a lot better than what we used to have.”

The last time the welding lab was upgraded was about 20 years ago, officials said.

This month, members of the region's manufacturing and welding community will get their first look of the Elgin facilities. Kathleen Burley, president of the Golden Corridor Advanced Manufacturing Partnership, will be among them, she said.

The partnership's objective is to expose students to possible manufacturing careers through open houses, internships and other opportunities, Burley said. The group wants students develop an interest in manufacturing careers, graduate from high school and find employment in the "Golden Corridor," the stretch of Interstate 90 between Rockford and O'Hare Airport along which several manufacturers are located, she said.

"Like everyone in manufacturing, (local) manufacturers are getting desperate," Burley said. "Current employees are getting older and are retiring."

Burley is a former board member at School District 300, which is home to Hampshire High School's welding program. Along with its dual credit welding partnership with Elgin Community College, Hampshire High's lab also recently earned its accreditation to be a testing facility.

Similar to Elgin, Hampshire will be able to test students and community members on their welding expertise, said Kristin Corriveau, D300's assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction. Tests are a couple of hours long and require test takers to be evaluated on the quality of their finished welding work, she said.

"(Hampshire's accreditation) allows our students to meet industry standards for welding in school. They can do testing at our facility," she said. "Actually, we will have our first-ever two students test at our facility next week."

U46 and D300 are part of the Regional Career Pathways initiative. The initiative allows students to participate in career and technical education programs that may not be offered at their home school. Moran said Elgin's welding program could soon accept students from other schools inside and outside the district. School districts involved in the Regional Career Pathways program include U46, D300, Central School District 301 and School District 303 in St. Charles.

Moran said such partnerships among school districts are needed because they must address the region's current and future employment needs in manufacturing, which is the area's top industry. On a national scale, welding organizations say 300,000 welders need to be trained and employed through 2025 to stay globally competitive, he said.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, professions in welding are anticipated to grow by 4 percent through 2024. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports the median pay for welders was about \$40,000 last year, although those with specialties are paid significantly higher.

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## Team carries 'jersey along with us'

Larkin HS boys volleyball players honor teammate killed in car crash

BY RAFAEL GUERRERO



The jersey worn by Larkin High School volleyball player Jonathan Duran is draped over a chair as his team gathers to remember him before Monday's game. (Rafael Guerrero/Courier-News)

Jonathan Duran's legacy lingers for his teammates on the Larkin High School boys volleyball team, who saluted their fallen member Monday in a ceremony before their match against rival Elgin High School.

"He was front middle and the opponent always knew he meant business," teammate Manny Delgado said of Duran, 17, of Elgin, who was killed March 5 in a car crash. "He always had his teammates and tried to make the best out of any situation.

"We now and always will carry his jersey along with us."

Teammates draped Duran's jersey across the open seat next to coach Katie Smiley in the emotional event.

Most of the hundreds in attendance wore black as part of the "blackout" theme of Monday's match.

Smiley said Duran frequently wore the color, and his car also was black.

"This game is for him," said Smiley, a Larkin social worker who had known Duran since he joined the volleyball program as a freshman.

It was the latest event the Larkin community held in honor of Duran, who was driving east on South Street, near Alfred Avenue, when he lost control of his car and struck a tree. An investigation found Duran had been driving more than 70 mph in a 30-mph zone but was not under the influence of alcohol or drugs, Elgin Police Department spokeswoman Kristie Hilton said.

Over the weekend, organizers set up a car show fundraiser for his family, for whom donations also were collected at Monday's game.

"We've been together since it happened," Smiley said of her team, calling them "my rock." "They are a resilient team. They have handled this hurdle and totally bounced back from it."

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## Creator drawn to unique officer program in Elgin

Comedian explores policing in America in new HBO series

BY JANELLE WALKER



Wyatt Cenac's new HBO show, "Problem Areas," focuses on areas where new approaches are being taken to end the divide between police and the residents they're protecting. The episode that aired Friday looked at Elgin's Resident Officer Program. (HBO)

Living in New York City, the idea of officers living next door to the people they police was unique to him, comedian/actor Wyatt Cenac said.

"In New York, police officers can't live in neighborhoods they work in," Cenac said.

It is done in Elgin, and it was a concept intriguing enough for Cenac to explore as part of his 10-part HBO documentary series, "Wyatt Cenac's Problem Areas."

Cenac — perhaps best known for his appearances on Comedy Central's "Daily Show" and his comedy specials — focuses his show on policing in America and looking at things being done that are different from the norm.

The episode on the Resident Officer Program of Elgin aired Friday night. Among those interviewed were Elgin police Chief Jeff Swoboda, Sgt. Eric Echevarria, Officer Heather Farrell, former **U46 School Board** member Traci O'Neal Ellis and resident/activist Marcus Banner.

The series looks at why "the same things keep happening, the same headlines keep getting written" about police and the African-American community, as Cenac notes in one episode.

Policing, he said, is something worth having a deeper discussion on, "regardless of what city you live in."

"It is a subject that is brought up a lot in the news," Cenac said via phone Monday. "There are cities that (policing) works better in than others, and some (where) it doesn't work as well."

As he and producers looked into what they wanted to cover, they identified a few tent-pole topics: community policing among them. Elgin's Resident Officer Program, where officers work in the neighborhoods where they live, was one such topic, Cenac said.

“Satellite policing,” where officers don’t live in the town for which they work, was seen as one of the problems in Ferguson, Mo., where black resident Michael Brown was shot and killed by white police officer Darren Wilson in 2014, he said.

The Elgin program is being considered in other areas, including Rockford, where former Elgin police Cmdr. Dan O’Shea is now chief of police, which also was interesting, Cenac said.

“For me, it was about trying to understand this complex subject,” he said. “Are these programs things that can work in other cities? Is it something worth considering as we continue to have the conversation, trying to have police departments and agencies that represent and care.”

What the show isn’t is “Cops,” the former Fox series that featured police officers making arrests, Cenac said.

“Our approach was one looking at the whole picture. Not just talking to police but talking to community members, legislators, trying to talk to everyone that has a stake as much as we could. All of their stories make up the overview of what it looks like in a city,” he said.

For the most part, police departments were happy to tell their stories, even if other community members were a little more reticent, Cenac said.

While telling those stories was the goal, Cenac said he is realistic about what he can accomplish.

“I am not looking at my TV show to change the world. I would be a fool if I believed that my TV show could do something that people who have marched for, died for, fought legislatively for, haven’t been able to do,” he said.

What he’s learned in showing “is that change is possible. Change is good,” Cenac said.

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## **Oakhill parents named U46 volunteers of year**

Officials honor efforts in, out of elementary school

BY RAFAEL GUERRERO



CEO Tony Sanders, from left, and board member Sue Kerr, stand with Phil Novello and Vanessa Castelan, who are School District U46’s Volunteers of the Year for 2017-18. (School District U46 )

Two Streamwood parents have been recognized as School District U46's Volunteers of the Year.

At the 21st annual volunteer reception last week, U46 officials recognized the various volunteers who "donated their time and talents this school year," a district news release said.

Two of the volunteers recognized were Vanessa Castelan and Phil Novello, parents of Oakhill Elementary School students in Streamwood. The two won Volunteer of the Year honors for their work in and out of the elementary school.

Castelan facilitated a spring networking event for Parent Teacher Organization and booster group members districtwide. At the event, attendees exchanged fundraising ideas and shared strategies to increase parent/volunteer participation in their buildings, the news release said. She also is described as the "linchpin" of the school's Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports team.

Novello organized a recent U46-sponsored real estate agent breakfast to better inform agents about the assets of towns that make up the district. According to the release, he also is active in the school's Dad's in Action parent work group.

Both parents are members of the district's Citizens' Advisory Council's Family & Community Engagement committee, with Novello being co-chairwoman.

"Vanessa and Phil work tirelessly to support the district's goal of increasing our families' understanding and involvement in their child's learning by helping keep district events, programs and initiatives energized, organized and successful," U46 CEO Tony Sanders said.

Another parent recognized at the reception was Cynthia Hernandez, president of the Parents and Teachers of Huff Elementary in Elgin. She won the "Helping Hands" award, recognizing volunteerism at an individual school level, the news release said. She helped get teachers and parents involved in regular school events and seminars, and helped develop a pilot outreach program at Huff, the release said.

---Daily Herald--- 5/2/18

### **3 educators win top state awards for work U46 staff honored for health, support, at risk-programs**

BY RAFAEL GUERRERO

Three School District U46 educators are the recipients of state awards recognizing their work in the areas of health education, educational support and at-risk students.

Tina Pizzitola was named the Illinois Education Association's Educational Support Professional of the Year, Natalie Simons received the Illinois School Health Educator of the Year award and Randal Ellison is the recipient of the 2018 Excellence in Education award from the Illinois Coalition for Educating At-Risk Youth.

All three were recognized for their achievements at Monday night's U46 school board meeting.

Pizzitola, a para-educator who rotates between schools based on need, received her Educational Support Professional of the Year award at the IEA's representative assembly in April.

"Time after time, year after year, I am asked why do I do what I do, why do I stay. My answer to that is my students need me," Pizzitola said. "These children are my neighbors; this is my community."

Simons is a health teacher and assistant athletic director at Bartlett High School, and previously taught at Larkin High School in Elgin. According to a district news release, she was nominated for the health award by Jennifer Dellis, the Kenyon Woods Middle School health educator, and Lisa Meister, a Geneva High School health educator, who cited a number of reasons for her nomination, including her ability to mentor younger teachers.

"I tell my students the first day they walk into class, 'This will be the most important class you will ever take,'" Simons said.

"That's the challenge, to try to get them to buy into the importance of their well being."

Ellison, the district's coordinator for pre-K-12 discipline and educational options, received the top administrator award at the recent Illinois Coalition for Educating At-Risk Youth's annual conference.

"Mr. Ellison knows how these students have struggled with past experiences and is aware of the negative choices they have made, which could potentially affect their future," DREAM Academy Principal Lourdes Baker wrote in her nominating essay. "He believes that every student, regardless of their circumstances, has the ability to learn and become a productive member of society."

"To me, the greatest honor is to be recognized by your peers and by your teammates," Ellison told those in attendance at Monday's meeting.

## **SPORTS SECTION**

---Daily Herald--- 5/2/18

### **Baseball: South Elgin wins on Gomez hit in 7th**

DAILY HERALD REPORT

Nate Gomez singled home Grant Baker with the game-winning run in the bottom of the seventh inning Tuesday as South Elgin defeated Glenbard East 7-6 in an Upstate Eight Valley baseball game.

Gomez had a double, home run and 4 RBI for the Storm (6-3, 3-3), who scored 3 runs in the bottom of the seventh to claim the win.

Baker had a double and 2 RBI while Patrick Keaty had a home run and Zach Saunders a double and 2 RBI.

St. Charles North 11, Elgin 0: Nick Skurka allowed just 2 hits over 5 innings with 9 strikeouts and 3 walks for the North Stars (14-2, 9-1) in their UEC River win. Adding to the SCN offense were Ryan Thiese (2B), Justin Dunne (2 hits, 2B, 2 RBI), Steve Hamer (2 hits, HR, 2 RBI), Sean Nemetz (HR), Nick DeMarco (HR, 3 RBI) and Michael Gattuso (2B, RBI). Robert Bartlett and William Morrow had the only hits for Elgin (6-15, 3-10).

Batavia 21, Streamwood 5: Jared Martin (4 hits, 4 RBI), Carter Gette (2 hits, 2B, 3 RBI), Cole Nelson (2 hits, 2B, 5 RBI), Jack Tryzna (2 hits, RBI) and Joey Sartain (HR, 3 RBI) led the Bulldogs (13-7, 10-5) to the UEC River win. Brad Niedzwiedz had 3 strikeouts and 1 walk to earn the win. Tyler Jones (2 hits, 2B), AJ Reyna (2B, HR) and Michael Pawilkowski (2 hits, HR, 2 RBI) led Streamwood (8-9, 4-8).

Bartlett 18, East Aurora 4: In a UEC Valley win, Bartlett (3-12, 2-6) got production from Joey Allen (3 hits, 2 doubles, 2 RBI), Jacob Chowanec (2 hits, 2B, 4 RBI), Andrew Fehr (3 hits, 2B, RBI), Matt Angelone (2 hits), Ben Fisher (2 hits, 2B, RBI), Kevin Vesta (2 hits, 2B, 4 RBI), Tyler Yang (2 doubles, 2 RBI) and Nick Pavell (2 hits, 2B, 3 RBI). Nico Natali was the winning pitcher.

West Aurora 14, West Chicago 3: Jacob Gray pitched a complete game with 6 strikeouts and no walks for West Aurora (13-6, 6-4) in a UEC Valley win. Providing the offense for the Blackhawks were Cam Zimmerman (HR, 2 RBI), Dustin Tomas (2 hits, RBI), Danny Marion (2 hits, HR, 5 RBI), Ryan Tuescher (HR, 2 RBI) and Anthony Malczyk (2 hits, RBI).

Huntley 14, Hampshire 2: In the Fox Valley Conference, Jordan Goldstein (2 hits), Zach Model (2 hits, 3B, 3 RBI), Hunter Rumachik (2 hits, RBI), Kamrin Hoffmann (2 hits, 3B), Matt Rodriguez (2 hits, 2B, RBI) and AJ Henkle (3 RBI) led Huntley (17-4, 9-3) to the win. Nick Laxner struck out 6 and didn't walk a batter to earn the win. Trevor Laffin (2 hits, RBI) and Matthew Wians (2B) led Hampshire (9-13, 2-9).

Jacobs 6, Cary-Grove 4: Daniel Klein had 2 hits including a home run and 3 RBI to lead the Golden Eagles (11-5, 8-2) to a FVC win. Braeden Wegner had a triple and an RBI for Jacobs while Bryce Vincent added 2 hits with a double and an RBI. Justin Lavrisa went 5-plus innings allowing 5 hits with 8 strikeouts and 2 walks for the win. Tristan Atkins (2B), Ryan Ignoffo (3 hits, 2B, RBI), Kyle Ives (2B, 2 RBI) and Matt Brieg (2B, RBI) led Cary-Grove (12-5, 8-5).

CL South 7, CL Central 3: Blake Kuffel (2B, 2 RBI) and Steven Siavelis (2 doubles, 3 RBI) each had 3 hits to lead Crystal Lake South (6-8, 4-6) to this FVC win. Kyle Hetherington (2 RBI), Patrick Fischer (2B) and Trevor Keegan (2B) also contributed for the Gators. Josh Freeze earned the win allowing 7 hits with a strikeout and a walk.

Sycamore 11, Kaneland 0: Robbie Dudzinski and Luke Gomes each had doubles for Kaneland (13-4, 6-2) in a Northern Illinois Big XII East loss.

Richmond-Burton 10, Burlington Central 7: Zach Schutta had 2 hits with a home run and Ryan Knowlton 3 hits with 2 doubles and 2 RBI for BC (12-8, 9-2) in a Kishwaukee River loss. Also contributing for the Rockets were Nick Matijevec (2 hits, RBI), Ethan Krieger (2B, RBI), Jake Mellinger (2 hits, 2B, 2 RBI) and Peter Cieslica (2 hits).

Aurora Christian sweeps: The Eagles ran their record to 17-4 and 8-1 in the Northeastern Athletic Conference with wins of 21-1 and 21-0 against Alden-Hebron, the



second game going just 3 innings. In Game 1, leading the AC offense were Eric Hernandez (3 hits, 3B, 2 RBI), MJ Stavola (3 hits, 2 doubles, grand slam homer, 5 RBI), Sam Tickel (3 hits, HR, 2 RBI), Clark Turek (2B), Jake Kuntzendorf (HR), Zach Zavasnik (2 hits), Trey Madsen (3 hits, 2B, 3 RBI), Isaac Skogerboe (3-run HR) and Hunter Thompson (2 RBI). Kuntzendorf went 4 innings allowing 1 hit with 6 strikeouts and no walks for the win. In the second game, Stavola had 3 hits with 2 doubles and 2 RBI, Tickel 2 hits with a double and 4 RBI, Turek 2 hits with a double and 2 RBI, Zavasnik a 3-run homer, Madsen a double and an RBI, Nick Ports a double and an RBI and Skogerboe 3 RBI. Thompson was the winning pitcher, allowing no hits with 6 strikeouts and no walks in 3 innings.

Westminster Christian 17, South Beloit 4: In the NAC, Ben Versluys (2 hits, 2B, 2 RBI), Matthew Schulenburg (2 hits, RBI), Andrew Kurcz (2 hits, 2B, 3 RBI), Mason Runkel (2 hits, RBI), Nathen Martinez (3B, RBI), Frankie Schlaffer (3 hits, 2 HRs, 3 RBI) and JT Stoll (2 hits, 2B) led the Warriors (13-7, 8-1) to the win. Schulenburg allowed 5 hits with 11 strikeouts and 3 walks in 5 innings for the win.

IC Catholic 14, ACC 8: Kyle Czerak (2 hits, 2 RBI), Chris Cartwright (2 hits, 3B) and Eric Valles (2 hits, 2B, 3B, 3 RBI) led Aurora Central (12-10, 4-8) in a Metro Suburban loss.

Elgin Academy 27, Schaumburg Christian 1: Cameron Agno had 3 hits with 2 triples and 6 RBI to lead the Hilltoppers (14-4) to a nonconference win. Derek Warren was the winning pitcher.