

Press Clippings 05/23/2019

---The Daily Herald---05/23/2019

Actor John Ratzenberger offers advice to students in U-46 media academy

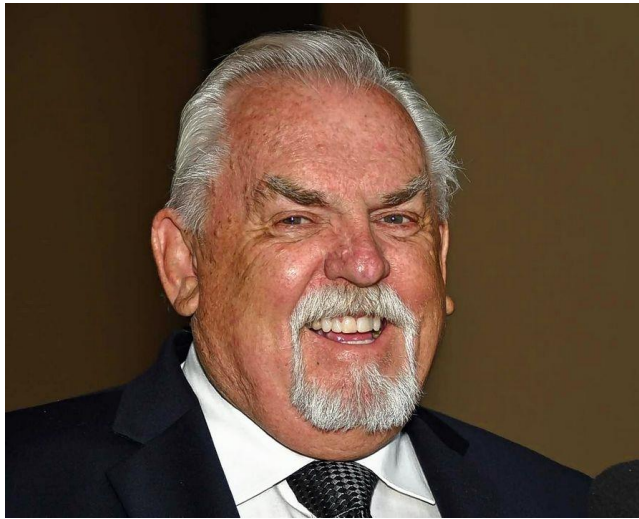
By: Dave Gathman



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"Cheers" fans remember him as Cliff Clavin, the trivia-filled blowhard from the popular 80s and 90s-era sitcom.

Younger folks may hear his voice and realize he has voiced characters in every one of the Pixar animated films, from Hamm the talking piggy bank in all four "Toy Story" films to Mack the truck in the "Cars" series to the abominable snowman in the "Monsters" films.

But if you talk to John Ratzenberger, you get the impression he might prefer to be remembered as the Renaissance man who inspired Americans to again exalt working with our hands.

The actor himself has done "day jobs" and hobbies ranging from furniture making to carpentry, archery instruction, tree surgery and even manning a fishing boat.

Ratzenberger was the keynote speaker Tuesday as the Beacon Academy of Media and Digital Arts based at South Elgin High School held its eighth annual "Beacon Academy Awards" night.

The magnet academy has 267 students, drawn from all over Elgin School District U-46. The event drew a near-capacity crowd of 1,100 to the Hemmens Cultural Center in Elgin.

Speaking to the future media pros, Ratzenberger urged them to pursue their dream, "but don't take it too seriously. And stay close to your family. At the end of the day, when you breathe your last, it won't be your agent who's holding your hand."

Ratzenberger also urged the teens to read and to live a life outside of their cellphone screens.

"There are so many reboots on TV because so many writers out there have never read a book. The writing in the old movies was so much better because the writers had lived World War II, the Great Depression. Take up fishing. Go to Greece. Go to Poland. I would choose which movie to do based on geography. I made a movie called 'Warlords of Atlantis' because it was being made on Malta and I had never been to Malta."

Of course, he acted in a few more successful movies and TV shows, too. Look very, very carefully at "The Empire Strikes Back," "Gandhi," "A Bridge Too Far" and the first "Superman," and you'll find the future Cliff Clavin playing small roles as soldiers or cops. He claims that if you add together the box office receipts of all 38 films in which he has any kind of role, "I am the No. 6 highest grossing actor of all time."

One film Ratzenberger did co-star in has an Elgin connection. In 2010 he played a gruff angel who offers a callous rich man a look at an alternative life in the faith-based film "What If ...". Its director was Dallas Jenkins, who soon after would join the staff of Elgin-based Harvest Bible Chapel as its media director and would work with a division of Harvest to direct the faith-based 2017 comedy-drama "The Resurrection of Gavin Stone." Jenkins still lives in Elgin, though he resigned from Harvest last year.

Interviewed before Tuesday's show, Ratzenberger said he grew up in blue-collar Bridgeport, Connecticut, the son of a male truck driver and female factory worker who were sometimes so poor he had to put cardboard in his shoes to cover up the holes.

He went to the 1969 Woodstock rock festival -- as a worker helping to build the stages. Yearning for adventure and travel, in 1972 he accepted a buddy's proposal to move to England. They formed an improv comedy duo named Sal's Meat Market that he says became a big hit while he played small roles in some of those giant movies.

He stayed in England for 10 years. He might have remained there if he hadn't come temporarily to Los Angeles to do a writing project at the age of 35. While there, he auditioned for a supporting role in a new TV series named "Cheers."

"The audition didn't go well," he said. "But as I began to leave, I asked them, 'Do you have a bar know-it-all in the cast?' They asked what that was. So I gave them five minutes of what would become Cliff Clavin" -- a blowhard letter carrier full of boring trivia, most of it mined from what Ratzenberger calls his own "mind that collects facts like a sponge." The producers liked the character and hired him to play it. He became nationally famous.

"My job for 11 years was to sit in a bar and crack jokes. My father was so proud of me."

But Ratzenberger thinks his dad might be even prouder of how he has been campaigning to get more young people to go into the trades and manufacturing jobs.

For example, he started a nonprofit called the Nuts, Bolts and Thingamajigs Foundation to set up summer camps teaching kids how to use tools.

A passionate Republican, he serves on President Donald Trump's task force to increase the use of apprenticeships. And for several years he hosted a TV series called "John Ratzenberger's Made in America," which showed how things are manufactured in places like the Elgin Sweeper Co. plant and the Weber Grills factory in Palatine.

"I don't call it blue collar work," he said. "I call it essential work. We're running out of people to make this country run, people who can fix things."

Members of each of the academy's nine classes received awards for best director, best videographer, best content maker and best on-screen talent in their class, as voted by their fellow class members. One "rock star" was also honored from each class, named by their teacher based on how well that student helped solve problems and worked with fellow class members.

SPORTS

---The Daily Herald---05/23/2019

Football: Lake Zurich names Planz head coach

By: Daily Herald report



Ron Planz

Less than four months after accepting the head football job at Larkin, Ron Planz has been named the head football coach at Lake Zurich.

Planz replaces Luke Mertens, who resigned this spring after two seasons.

Planz will also be a physical education teacher at Lake Zurich for the 2019-2020 school year, pending school board approval Thursday.

A native of Bensenville and a 1997 graduate of Fenton High School, Planz played college football at Carthage College in Kenosha. Upon graduation from college, he began his coaching at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire as a secondary coach and recruiting coordinator. During his time at Eau Claire he was able to travel overseas, serving as the defensive coordinator for the Danube Dragons in Klosterneuburg, Austria.

For the next five years, Planz was the defensive coordinator and head strength coach at Manchester College in North Manchester, Ind. During his time at Manchester College, he coached seven first-team all-conference players. He left Manchester College to take a position as a defensive line coach and special teams coordinator at Division II Minnesota State University in Mankato, MN. Planz served as the team's defensive line coach and special teams coordinator. Planz helped coach three All-Americans and 12 first-team all-conference players, including a conference defensive player of the year.

In 2014, Planz was hired by Elmhurst College as its head football coach. During his five seasons leading the Bluejays, Planz coached 28 all-conference players, four all-region players, two All-Americans and two academic All-Americans.

After his hiring by Larkin in early February, he told Daily Herald reporter Jerry Fitzpatrick the stability of a high school coaching position made sense for his family.

"I have two young kids and I'm looking for an opportunity to be around them as much as possible," Planz said. "There are a ton of benefits to the college game, and there are also some negatives. One of them is the time you're away from family. This felt like a good time to pursue high school."

Boys lacrosse: South Elgin adjusts, beats Wheaton Academy

By: Jared Birchfield

It took South Elgin three quarters to solve Wheaton Academy's zone defense in Wednesday's second sectional semifinal at Geneva.

South Elgin, holding a 4-2 advantage at the start of the second half, exploded for four goals in the third quarter to break the game open in its 10-4 victory over the Warriors.

South Elgin, ranked second in the sectional, will face top-seeded Neuqua Valley in Friday's championship game. The Wildcats beat Geneva 9-2 in the first semifinal.

South Elgin, a co-op team with players from South Elgin, Elgin, Larkin and Streamwood, jumped out to a 2-0 lead early in the first quarter on goals by Nathan Gehrke and Alex Noworol.

Wheaton Academy (10-7) halved the lead with 3:18 left in the frame on a shot by Ben Thorson.

Cade Newtown scored the first of his three goals a minute later to give his team a 3-1 lead at the end of the first period.

The squads played an even second quarter with each team scoring one goal. Ian Venard scored the first of his three goals for Wheaton Academy while Newton scored his second to give South Elgin a 4-2 halftime lead.

"They are really a skilled team. We have a couple of different zones we run. In our initial zone, they were able to find a few gaps so they got two quick ones on us," said Wheaton Academy coach Geof Weisenborn. "We made some adjustments. We switched up where we were going to pressure, and where we were going to take pressure away. It stalled them for a little bit."

Venard opened the scoring in the second half with a goal 90 seconds into the third quarter to pull the Warriors within 4-3.

South Elgin (18-1) then scored three unanswered goals. Lucas Baer scored back-to-back goals less than a minute apart four minutes into the frame followed by a Griffin Carey shot.

Newton scored his third goal with 41 seconds left in the quarter on a shot over the defense.

"I was coming around on the left side and I turned back and turned back around and took a jump and went over everybody and put it in between the goalie's legs," said Newton.

"The second half, they made adjustments again and we had to switch again. So it was a real chess match there," Weisenborn said. "Closing it to 4-3 early in the third quarter, I felt we were right on the edge. You've got to credit South Elgin to take advantage of some mistakes we made."

"We eventually found a way to crack their zone," South Elgin coach Dylan Butler said. "It was just reminding them that we are talented on the offensive side of the field so we don't need two guys to start hero balling, we don't need to force inappropriate passes. We just do needed to do what we have done all year -- just move the ball faster than the defense can rotate."

South Elgin started the fourth quarter with an 8-3 lead.

The Blackhawks scored two more times in the fourth quarter -- one by Jacob Sietmann and Noworol's second goal. Wheaton Academy answered with Venard's third goal.

Baseball: South Elgin answers Schaumburg's challenges

By: Jerry Fitzpatrick



South Elgin's Joseph Teschke (20) delivers a pitch to Schaumburg Wednesday during the Class 4A Schaumburg baseball regional semifinals.



South Elgin's Patrick Keaty (2) grabs a Schaumburg line drive Wednesday during the Class 4A Schaumburg baseball regional semifinals. *Brian Hill | Staff Photographer*



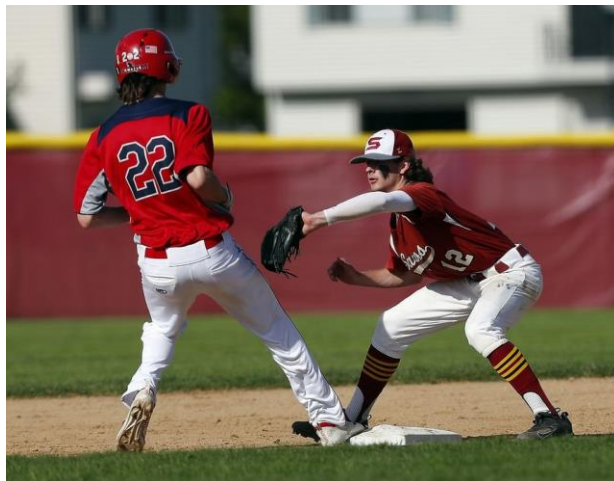
South Elgin's Garrett Wano (3) bare hands a shot down the third base line against Schaumburg Wednesday during the Class 4A Schaumburg baseball regional semifinals.



Schaumburg's (22) tries to escape the tag from South Elgin's Cody Gallagher (9) after being caught between bases Wednesday during the Class 4A Schaumburg baseball regional semifinals.



Schaumburg's Peter Kandefer (17) delivers a pitch Wednesday during the Class 4A Schaumburg baseball regional semifinals.



Schaumburg's Vince D'Orazio (12) tries to put the tag on South Elgin's Austin Doty (22) at second base Wednesday during the Class 4A Schaumburg baseball regional semifinals.



South Elgin's Ryan Kuchta (7) slides safely into third as Schaumburg's Albert Kiszka (5) waits for the ball Wednesday during the Class 4A Schaumburg baseball regional semifinals.



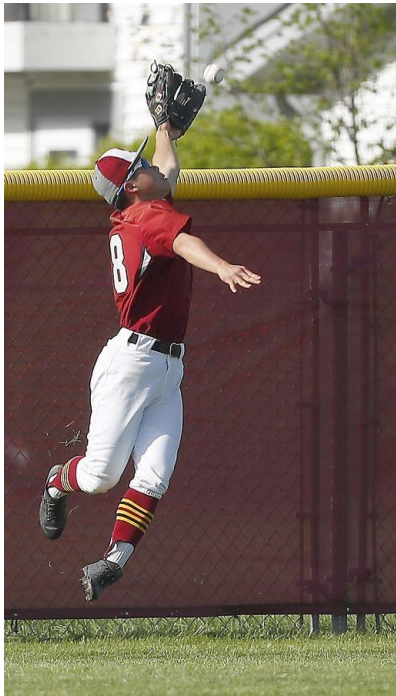
Schaumburg's Jack Bahn (2) fields a shot Wednesday during the Class 4A Schaumburg baseball regional semifinals.



South Elgin's Garrett Wano (3) handles an infield shot from Schaumburg Wednesday during the Class 4A Schaumburg baseball regional semifinals.



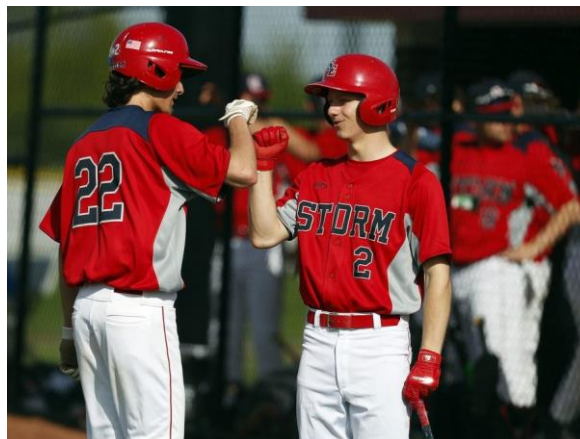
South Elgin's Grayson Downing (4) makes contact on a Schaumburg pitch Wednesday during the Class 4A Schaumburg baseball regional semifinals.



Schaumburg's Yuki Sato (18) tries to reel in a long two-run RBI to left field by South Elgin's Grant Baker (21) Wednesday during the Class 4A Schaumburg baseball regional semifinals.



South Elgin's Grant Baker (21) celebrates his two-run RBI against Schaumburg Wednesday during the Class 4A Schaumburg baseball regional semifinals.



South Elgin's Austin Doty (22) and Patrick Keaty (2) celebrate Grant Baker (21) two-run RBI Wednesday during the Class 4A Schaumburg baseball regional semifinals.

Any baseball elevated into the 20-mph wind blowing straight out to left field at Schaumburg High School Wednesday had a chance to clear the fence.

That made South Elgin's ability to tack on runs after Schaumburg rallies the key to a 10-5 Class 4A regional semifinal victory.

No. 3 South Elgin (25-5) scored 3 first-inning runs and 2 in the third to stake senior right-hander Joey Teschke to a 5-0 cushion.

When No. 16 Schaumburg (11-21) scored 3 fourth-inning runs to trim the deficit to 5-3 -- fueled by Vince D'Orazio's 2-run home run to left -- the Storm answered with 3 runs in the bottom of the fourth, highlighted by Austin Doty's 2-run bomb to left center.

When the Saxons drew within 8-5 in the top of the sixth inning on run-scoring hits by Yuki Sato and Joe Unger, the Upstate Eight Conference champions answered in the bottom half with a 2-run Garrett Wano single to restore their 5-run lead.

"You have to do that in state baseball," South Elgin coach Jim Kating said of adding runs. "I'm proud that they persevered. I'm proud that they scraped a little bit."

South Elgin advances to the regional final on Saturday at 11 a.m. against either No. 6 Batavia (18-13) or No. 11 Lake Park (17-16).

"It feels good to back there again," said Doty, a .405 hitter who ripped his third home run. "A lot of us have been there before."

Teschke improved to 6-0 and lowered his earned-run average to 2.19 despite pitching into a stiff wind that blew the cap off his head during seven deliveries. He held the Saxons to 3 runs (2 earned) on 7 hits and 2 walks.

"For the most part I was keeping it low, keeping it in the park and just letting my team make plays," Teschke said after a 4-strikeout performance.

Junior reliever Joey Haslam bailed Teschke out of trouble with the Storm leading 8-3 in the fifth. Schaumburg put runners at second and third with no outs. Haslam entered and induced a sharply hit groundball to third baseman Wano. He tagged out the runner caught off the base for the first out. Haslam proceeded to strike out the Saxons' Nos. 6-7 hitters to escape.

Haslam loaded the bases in the seventh inning for Schaumburg sophomore pinch hitter Justin Gadowski, who on Monday belted a 2-run, pinch-hit, walk-off home run to beat Marmion 2-0. Haslam induced a harmless fly out to center fielder Doty to end the game.

"You have to just keep the ball low," said Haslam, who allowed 2 earned runs on 5 hits and a walk and struck out 3 in 3 innings. "I did a decent job of that but a lot of balls got up in the air and I was kind of lucky they got under some of them."

Schaumburg outhit the Storm 12-9 but could not pull off the upset despite three rally attempts.

"That's been us all season," Schaumburg coach Cal Seely said. "We didn't have the greatest overall record, but these guys never stopped trying. They are always out there until the very end. We didn't pull it off, but it was a good effort."

Tyler Robinson and Albert Kiszka each finished with 2 hits for the Saxons. Grant Baker hit a 2-run double to stake South Elgin to a 2-0 lead, and sophomore Clay Kapraun and junior Grayson Downing tripled for the Storm.

Boys volleyball: St. Charles East rallies by Bartlett for regional crown

By: Dave Hess

St. Charles East captain Colin Hanley wasn't about to let the volleyball season come to an end.

After his Saints were blitzed by No. 3 seeded Bartlett 25-17 in the first game of Wednesday's St. Charles North regional, Hanley addressed his team between the first and second game.

Hanley's teammates certainly heeded his words of wisdom.

St. Charles East rallied to win the second and third games 25-21, 25-21 to win the regional title.

"I told the guys we have been here before and we have come back many times this year," said Hanley. "We haven't been ranked all year but we need to play with confidence and we can win this match. We played better and blocked better in the second and third games. It is a great feeling to win the regional."

St. Charles East coach Kate McCullagh appreciates Hanley's leadership skills.

"I didn't have to say a word after the first game," said McCullagh. "Colin did all the talking and his teammates listened. It was an inspirational speech and the team responded. We played much better the second and third games and we blocked better. They got any block they wanted in the first game."

The Saints (22-9) advance to the Fremd sectional Friday to play Palatine at 6:30 p.m. The Pirates won the South Elgin regional. Bartlett ends its season at 25-6.

St. Charles East started the win or go home second game on a 9-3 run keyed by 3 kills from Mikelis Brunovskis.

The Hawks climbed to within 17-14 on a kill by Elijah Gregg. St. Charles East evened the match at 1-1 on a game-ending kill by Bayden Slavik.

The Saints continued the momentum from the second game into the third game jumping off to a 6-0 lead.

The Hawks refused to quit and got to within 20-18 after a kill by Toiyon Walton. Bartlett couldn't get any closer. A kill by Bill Stark gave the Saints the game, match and regional title.

"Spotting St. Charles (East) a 6-0 lead in the third game was just too much to overcome," said Bartlett coach Bob Schwan. "We played so well in the first game but

give East credit they regrouped and played with a ton of energy. Hats off to them. A 25-6 record is nothing to scoff at. This loss is a tough pill to swallow and will sting for awhile."

Buskovich paced the Saints attack with 13 kills while Hanley collected 5. Slavik dished out 26 assists and Jacob Coker served 2 aces and defensively had 17 digs.

Bartlett was paced by Walton with 10 kills and 7 blocks. Jarod Bush had 9 kills and Garrett Jurina picked up 11 blocks. Lewis University bound setter Carter Burzlaff distributed 30 assists.