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La historia de Elgin

History museum offers Spanish language tours once a month

By: Rafael Guerrero



The Elgin History Museum has started offering guided Spanish-language tours on the third Saturday of every month. Museum officials hope the tours attract more Latino visitors and connect more with the community.



The museum has two floors of temporary and permanent displays and exhibits chronicling the city's long history. Current exhibits include looks at the Elgin National Watch Co., Elgin High School's 150 years, and the dairy industry.

The history of Elgin can now be learned in English and in Spanish thanks to new Spanish-language tours being offered at the Elgin History Museum.

Two hour-long tours — one at 11 a.m. and the other at 1 p.m. — are held every on the third Saturday of every month. The goal is to remove the language and cultural barriers that might prevent people from coming to the museum and learning about Elgin's history, officials said.

“When someone speaks in a heavier accent like me (in a museum setting), they feel like, ‘Hey, he’s someone like me,’” said Armando Trejo, one of the Spanish-speaking tour guides.

Museum Director Elizabeth Marston said they don't have demographic data on visitors, but they do know many of the schools that bring students to the museum for field trips have high Latino enrollment. Many of those students have never been there before, making it likely their parents haven't visited either, she said.

“A lot of times at local museums, a family’s first visitor is the kid,” Marston said. “It can become a tradition, but it takes time to make it a tradition.”

Museum board member Tina Viglucci suggested the tour idea last year and enlisted three people to join her in leading them: Trejo, an archivist at Elgin Community College; **School District U-46 teacher Betty Martinez**; and Maggie Sifuentes, a recruiter with the Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois. All of them are fluent in Spanish, with families from Puerto Rico, Mexico and Colombia, Viglucci said.

Training was provided so they could learn about the displays, how to conduct a guided tour and other skills needed, officials said.

Trejo’s first tour was with a family who had moved to Elgin just a couple of years earlier. Not only did Trejo share information with the family about himself and the city, the family shared with him, he said.

“If you do it in their own language, they develop more trust, feel more comfortable,” he said.

“The family I had was so surprised about what we were talking about,” Trejo said. “They were impressed with all the maps, recognizing streets.”

One of the first tours Viglucci led included a couple who had lived in Elgin for decades and a family whose child had already visited with their school. The child was excited to bring their parents, she said.

Latinos are part of Elgin’s history, Viglucci said. Some residents had friends or family members who worked at the Elgin National Watch Co., the Woodruff and Edwards foundry and the dairy industry, important parts of the city’s past, she said.

“We all want to know how we are a part of history,” she said.

The museum has only a few panels documenting Latinos migration and contributions to the city, Marston said. She wants to change that and hopes to create an exhibit “within the next couple of years, but we do need funding,” she said.

She’d also like to make a documentary similar to “Project 2-3-1: Two Boxcars, Three Blocks, One City,” which looked at Elgin’s black community. The 2015 film and exhibit were made possible through a partnership between the museum, documentary director Phil Broxham, and local donors.

“We want to be more welcoming for Spanish speakers,” she said. “It’s the future of our city, our country. We want to make sure everybody knows our doors are open.”

Museum admission is \$3 for adults, \$1 for students, and free for children 5 and younger and Elgin History Museum members.

It’s at 360 Park St. and open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday.

SPORTS

---The Courier-News---01/17/2020

Mackenzie's moment

'Rock star' Hare hits 1,000 points as Bartlett edges South Elgin

By: Paul Johnson



Bartlett's Mackenzie Hare drives as St. Charles East's Leah Griffin reaches for the ball during a game at St. Charles East on Jan. 6.



Bartlett's Lexie Sinclair scoots past Geneva's Grace Hinchman (11) in the 2019 Class 4A Batavia Sectional semifinals.

Bartlett's Mackenzie Hare calmly stood at the free-throw line in the final seconds Friday.

The sophomore guard nailed a free throw to ice a 56-45 Upstate Eight win on rival South Elgin's home court, helping the Hawks take sole possession of first place in conference.

That's not all Hare accomplished, however. She scored a game-high 19 points to reach 1,000 for her career, needing a mere 56 games to do it.

The only Bartlett player to reach the milestone faster was Lindsay Schrader, a former McDonald's All-American and Notre Dame star who remains the program's all-time leading scorer. Schrader, the 2005 Illinois Ms. Basketball, finished her career with 2,423 points.

"It's pretty cool, but most importantly, I was really happy that we won that game," Hare said. "My team has been great. It's been a fun year."

Hare became the 11th player in program history to reach the 1,000-point mark. Her sister Kayla and current teammate Lexie Sinclair were two past players to reach 1,000.

Kayla Hare is a sophomore playing at Missouri-St. Louis.

"I didn't know what was going to happen in high school," Mackenzie said. "I watched my sister and how she had her milestones. I talked to her right after the game."

Bartlett coach Joseph Eirich knows how unique it is to reach the standard with nine regular-season games remaining along with a potential postseason run.

“It’s incredibly special,” said Eirich, who pointed out that Hare has made 168 3-pointers, closing in on 200 for her career. “It’s unbelievable.

“I’ve never been around someone that got to the 1,000-point mark so fast. She’s a rock star.”

Sinclair, meanwhile, has an outside shot of reaching 1,500 points as a junior.

With Hare and Sinclair leading the way, the Hawks (16-7, 11-0) are hitting their stride. They have won five straight going into Thursday’s conference game against West Chicago.

“The girls have been coming into their own,” Eirich said. “We’re playing the best basketball we have all season the last week and a half.

“Everything is just going better. There’s not one specific thing that’s better, other than we’re better getting into transition and beating teams down the court before they can set up their defense.”

Babb’s barrage: Harvest Christian had won eight of its last nine games heading into Monday’s nonconference matchup against Genoa-Kingston.

The Cogs put an end to that streak, though, thanks to the hot shooting of junior guard Bridget Babb.

Babb drilled eight 3-pointers en route to a game-high 30 points to lead the Cogs to a 65-42 victory. Babb added a team-high 15 points Tuesday in a 49-43 victory at Rockford Christian.

Babb has led Genoa-Kingston in scoring the past three games. The Cogs (9-11, 2-2) have road games next week at Rockford Lutheran and Winnebago.

Did you know? Elgin Community College is going through a 3-12 season, but St. Edward graduate Mariel Franco has been a bright spot.

The sophomore guard is averaging a team-best 19.6 points, and she’s the only Spartan to have started all 15 games.

Franco is shooting 39.4 percent from 3-point range. She’s also averaging 3.5 steals and 2.5 assists, both best on the team. She ranks second with 5.4 rebounds, and scored a season-high 37 points in a Dec. 5 win over Harper.