

Press Clippings 2/15/2022

Daily Herald

Crosswalk, fencing planned on Larkin Avenue so students don't dart across the Elgin street --- 2/14/2022

By Rick West



Students from Larkin High School in Elgin cross five lanes to reach the other side of Larkin Avenue. The city plans to build a crosswalk in the area similar to one on the east side of the school on McLean Boulevard. *Rick West | Staff Photographer*

Time will soon run out on the daily game of human "Frogger" taking place on school days on Larkin Avenue in front of **Larkin High School**.

Last week, the Elgin City Council gave preliminary approval to hire an engineering firm to design a pedestrian crossing north of the school in an area where students frequently dart through traffic to reach the nearby McDonald's, Dunkin' Donuts and Beef Villa.

"It's been a problem for as long as I can remember," council member Tish Powell said. "I'm glad the city and school district are getting together and trying to come up with a solution to address the safety issue."

The proposed project would include a midblock crossing near the Beef Villa restaurant with a refuge island in the middle turn lane. Approximately 1,100 feet of fencing would be constructed on Larkin's frontage and part of McLean Boulevard to funnel students to areas where they can legally cross the street.

The crosswalk would feature rectangular rapid flashing beacon signs similar to a crossing built on McLean Boulevard at Van Street on the school's east side in 2015.

"Students really seem to be using that McLean crossing," Powell said. "So hopefully, if we put something on the Larkin side, we can make that journey as safe as possible."

The city allocated \$250,000 in the 2022 budget to address the issue. City staff members had met with Elgin Area School District U-46 officials in the fall of 2021 to design a solution, along with input from the Elgin police, public works and neighborhood services departments.

In an early vote, the council unanimously approved an agreement with Hampton, Lenzini and Renwick Inc. for \$35,375 to prepare necessary design engineering documents, plans, specifications, bid documents and construction oversight for the project.

The McLean/Larkin area sees over 17,000 vehicles per day. A November pedestrian and traffic study found over 320 students crossing Larkin Avenue midblock during the hour before school and 425 crossing after school let out in the afternoon.

The crossing location, near the westernmost exit of the school, was chosen to avoid interfering with entrances or exits to any businesses on Larkin.

If the plan gets ultimate approval during an upcoming council meeting, the city anticipates completing the project by the end of July.

Daily Herald

Suburban Mosaic column --- 2/14/2022

By Madhu Krishnamurthy

African American studies

Elgin Area School District U-46 is developing a new African American studies course that will be offered at all five district high schools, tentatively starting in the 2022-23 school year.

Work on the curriculum began in the fall of 2020. The idea for a new African American studies course gained momentum after the school board adopted a resolution and call to action for equity in June 2020, in the wake of George Floyd's murder and nationwide Black Lives Matter protests.

Jacob VandeMoortel, U-46 coordinator for K-12 social studies and world languages, said the idea for the course predates the formation of the Illinois Black History Curriculum Task Force, which released its report last April with the goal of improving how Black history is taught in schools.

U-46's new course combines language arts and social studies instruction, and is designed as a high school elective for all students, irrespective of race or background, to engage in the history, literature, identity and experience of African Americans in the United States.

The course will be reviewed by U-46 administrators this spring and go before the school board in early June.

Chicago Tribune/The Courier-News Students' Valentine's Day cards and flowers an 'unexpected' surprise for Elgin hospital workers: '(It) makes me feel appreciated.' --- 2/14/2022

By Gloria Casas



State Reps. Anna Moeller and Suzanne Ness collected hundreds of Valentine's Day cards made by School District U-46 and Community School District 300 students to pass out Monday to first responders at Advocate Sherman Hospital in Elgin. (Gloria Casas / The Courier-News)

Bridgette Craig ended her nursing shift at Elgin's Advocate Sherman Hospital early Monday with a Valentine's Day surprise: A carnation and a handmade card made by a local student thanking for her work as a first responder.

"I was not expecting this at all," Craig said. "It's really an unexpected thing that makes me feel appreciated."

The gifts were presented to her by state Reps. Anna Moeller and Suzanne Ness, who came to the hospital Monday to pass out flowers and the cards made by **School District U-46** and Community School District 300 students.

Armando Martinez, who has managed one of Sherman's COVID units since May 2021, said one of the cards he received said, "Thank you for not letting us get COVID." It was written by a child named Leigh, and was presented like a storybook in which nurses and doctors helped end the virus, he said.



Armando Martinez, who manages a COVID-19 unit at Advocate Sherman Hospital in Elgin, shows the Valentine's Day cards he received Monday courtesy of the School District U-46 and Community School District 300 students who made them for the medical facility's first responders. (Gloria Casas / The Courier-News)

"I got the cutest things," Martinez said. "It's nice to have on Valentine's Day."

Valentine's Day in 2021 and 2022 are a blur for Martinez and his colleagues, who were too overwhelmed by patients being treated for the virus to even think about the holiday, he said. The team of nurses, doctors and caseworkers he works with helped him get through those difficult times, he said.

"We have to support each other," Martinez said. "It's a collaborative effort. We really have to rely on (each other) so that way we can ensure patients are taken care of and their needs are met."

Moeller and Ness asked local children to make Valentine's Day cards to thank frontline workers. Other legislative offices did the same thing for seniors living in nursing homes, they said.

Since Sherman has lifted its COVID-19 visitor restrictions, the two legislators were able to deliver the cards personally. More cards were distributed to other locations, including Greater Elgin Family Care Center.

"We've come off probably the worst two years in recent history in health care dealing with the pandemic," said Moeller, D-Elgin. "You read stories about how overwhelmed staffs, hospitals and clinics are in dealing with COVID patients.

"We felt this was a good time to say thank you and let them know they are appreciated. I thought this was a great, innovative way of involving the community and sending some love to our nurses, doctors, and health care workers on the frontlines."

Sherman has seen a decrease in COVID cases, said Susan Morby, vice president, chief of nurses. "We are definitely past the (most recent) surge," she said.

"It's just been a long journey," Morby said. "I think it's been exhausting (for health care workers). They have worked so hard for so long. ... Despite it all, I'm amazed they show up every day. We're very mission-driven, and the people who work here are the same. I think no matter what we are here to serve."

Being recognized for that commitment is "wonderful," she said.

"We are so thankful they came especially on Valentine's Day," Morby said. "We have something we call 'Sherman love.' It's a special energy we seem to feel and have, so Valentine's Day has an extra special meaning for us."

The 74 – The 74 Million.org 700 Days Since Lockdown – Educators, Students, Parents and Researchers Reflect on Pandemic's 'Seismic Interruption to Education' --- 2/14/2022

By Linda Jacobson

700 days.

That's how long it's been since more than half the nation's schools crossed into the pandemic era.

On March 16, 2020, districts in 27 states, encompassing almost 80,000 schools, closed their doors for the first long educational lockdown. Within nine days, the nation's remaining districts followed suit.

Since then, schools have reopened, closed and reopened again. The effects have been immediate — students lost parents; teachers mourned fallen colleagues — and hopelessly abstract, as educators weighed “pandemic learning loss,” the sometimes crude measure of COVID's impact on students' academic performance.

To mark what will soon stretch into a third spring of educational disruption, The 74 spoke with educators, parents, students and researchers about what Marguerite Roza, director of Georgetown University's Edunomics Lab, called “a seismic interruption to education unlike anything we've ever seen.” They talked movingly, often unsparingly, about their missteps and occasional triumphs, their moments of despair and fragile optimism for the future. *[You can scan through our expanding archive of testimonials [right here](#).]*

As spring approaches, there are additional reasons to be hopeful. More children are being vaccinated. Mask mandates are lifting. But even if the pandemic recedes and a “new normal” emerges, there are clear signs that the issues surfaced during this period will linger. COVID heightened inequities long baked into the American educational system. The social contract between parents and schools has frayed. Teachers are burning out. “There are kind of two camps,” said Beth Lehr, an assistant principal of Sahuarita High School, south of Tucson, Arizona. “There's the one camp of ‘This too shall pass,’ and then there's the other camp of ‘Yeah, it's going to pass, but I don't know if I want to wait for it to.’”

But none of this was on anyone's mind on March 16, 2020.

The World Health Organization had declared a pandemic only five days earlier. Two days after that, then-President Donald Trump called a national emergency. And in the Northshore School District, a system of 22,000 students northeast of Seattle, schools had already been closed for over a week. In late February, one of its schools shut for deep cleaning after an employee traveled out of the country with a family member who had

become ill. The district's closure offered a glimpse into what many thought would be a short-term disruption.

'I realized it wasn't science fiction'

Susan Enfield, *superintendent of Highline Public Schools in Washington*: A very good friend of mine who works in the Northshore School District called me, end of February, and said, "I think we're going to close ... and I think the rest of you won't be far behind." I said, "No way, there's no way they're going to close schools." I mean, I really was incredulous.

Robin Lake, *director of the Center on Reinventing Public Education*: I was having brunch with my sister in Kirkland, Washington, when the news broke that there were multiple cases and deaths at the Life Care Center nursing home just a few miles away. My husband sent me a text telling me to get out of Kirkland right away, and everything felt ominous.

Marguerite Roza, *Seattle-based director of the Edunomics Lab at Georgetown University*: My daughter and I were driving to go pick up some fish for dinner. In the car, they announced the governor's order — it was with a bigger lockdown kind of order — and we walked into the fish market place, and the guy behind the counter goes, "Have you heard anything yet?" We were like, "Yep." And he goes, "What did he say?" We said, "Lockdown." And he [grunts], "Uhhhh." Already, the streets were pretty empty, and the first person we talked to was the guy packaging up our salmon.

Tony Sanders, *superintendent, School District U-46, near Chicago*: I was asked to serve on a statewide panel of superintendents ... to provide guidance to school district leaders across the state. Our first meeting, held on Sunday, March 15, was attended by prominent legislators, state health officials, the deputy governor for education and state superintendent of schools. Hearing the projections of worst-case scenarios should we not "flatten the curve" was surreal. At the conclusion of that meeting, where we worked to socially distance, but had no idea yet about the need to wear a mask, I made the four-hour journey home in complete silence and disbelief.

Michael Mulgrew, *president, United Federation of Teachers, New York City*: We started tracking this during the Christmas holiday. We had some teachers who were in China. We had them quarantine when they came back. I didn't realize [things had changed] until March 16, the day after the New York City public schools closed. I was in my car driving around the city and I was shocked that the streets were empty. That's when I realized it wasn't science fiction.

Bridgette Adu-Wadier: *freshman, Northwestern University, graduate of T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria, Virginia*: By the end of March, Gov. Ralph Northam basically announced that all the schools would be closed due to the pandemic for the rest of the school year. I watched the livestream, and I was texting my friends. One of them was actually really upset and crying about it, just because it was such a stressful situation to be in — like, things are never going to be the same again.

'We were completely unprepared'

Parents, superintendents and others — many in a state of shock — had little time to plan as events unfolded at frightening speed.

Toni Rochelle Baker: *family liaison for Oakland REACH, a parent advocacy organization, Walnut Creek, California*: They gave us curfews in our city and then they told us to stock up for food. I don't live my life like that. I'm a single mother. I go grocery shopping when I can. We get what we need, and now you're telling me to stock up on food? That was scary. I didn't have a deep freezer. I didn't have extra money just laying around [to] go spend \$300 on food. I didn't have Wi-Fi at the time because I didn't really need it. I have my phone, and now I need Wi-Fi for three people.

Maria Amado, *family child care provider, Hartford, Connecticut, who opened her program for school-age children during remote learning*: [Translated from Spanish] Educators, including myself, sewed masks for the children, and we looked for resources to support each other. Some gave fabric to make the masks, others the elastic. It may not have been in big ways, but they all contributed. And now I remember this and think, "Where did I find the time to make the masks?" It was the adrenaline to survive, knowing this would protect me and I had to do it.

Tony Sanders: We needed to place emergency orders for Chromebooks and other devices. We had to completely transform our approach to food service so that by March 17 we were feeding our students and community at food pickup locations throughout the district. There were decisions that had to be made that I would never have thought of. We had to determine how we would ensure employees would continue to be paid. During the first days of the pandemic, I recall sitting alone in my office. The view from my window was a large parking lot with one vehicle.

"During the first days of the pandemic, I recall sitting alone in my office. The view from my window was a large parking lot with one vehicle."

—Tony Sanders, superintendent, School District U-46,
outside Chicago



Sherrice Dorsey-Smith, deputy director of programs, planning and grants, San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and Their Families: I had to figure out how we were going to open what we called emergency child and youth centers. These were spaces for essential workers to leave their children for the day while they were at work. Child care centers were closed, schools were closed, but some people needed or were required to continue working. They needed a safe place for their children during the day. I had to figure out how to get breakfast, lunch and snacks to all the sites. I remember working through the weekend nonstop, literally 48 hours.

Note: To read this complete article, click on the link below.

https://www.the74million.org/article/700-days-since-school-lockdown-covid-ed-lessons/?fbclid=IwAR150736vpZOwm7YCZRI-oD--CaclSj5jYu_zxF5yJMTekdlw7Hs1KxSts

Daily Herald

Rosner's 41-year coaching career ends with loss to Barrington --- 2/14/2022

By John Leusch



Barrington coach Babbi Barreiro, left, played for George Rosner, right, at a camp back in 1983. Rosner, Streamwood's head coach since 1980, coached his final game Monday with a regional loss to Barrington. *Paul Valade | Staff Photographer*

With 31.5 seconds left in Monday's opening round of the Class 4A Barrington regional, the game was stopped as Fillies girls' basketball coach Babbi Barreiro led her players onto the court to honor the man coaching their opponent.

A standing ovation followed for legend **George Rosner**, who was coaching his final game of a 41-year career as **Streamwood's girls' basketball coach**.

After his team dropped a 53-18 decision to the Barreiro's state power and Mid-Suburban League champion (25-5), Rosner said he was touched by the moment.

"That was very nice what Barrington did," said Rosner, who began as the Sabres head coach in 1980. "I didn't expect that and appreciated it very much."

Neither Rosner nor Barreiro could have ever expected to be facing each other in Rosner's final game of a career in which he also spent four years as the head coach at Palatine.

When Barreiro attended the Doug Bruno camp in Lisle as a sophomore player from Elk Grove High School in 1983, Rosner was her coach.

"I remember it like yesterday," Barreiro said. "You just never know how you're going to run into people again. So this was special to be part of tonight. Hats off to George Rosner,

obviously an institution in the game of girls basketball in Illinois and we were really honored to have him here tonight."

Also on hand were Rosner's wife Kathy, a handful of Streamwood players from the mid 2000s and a player from Rosner's first team he coached at St. Monica in Chicago.

"He's just one of those guys you would do anything for," said Streamwood junior varsity coach and 2007 grad Aly Del Fava who has known Rosner since she was seven years old. "It's incredible how he dedicated his life to not only coaching but teaching (civics and economics). He put so much of his life into this and it's heartbreaking to see it go."

One of his biggest stars, all-stater Chris Francke Tomasiewicz, couldn't attend Monday but said she was thankful for all the lives Rosner positively impacted but most thankful for the impact he had on her entire family.

"The best high school coach a girl could have," she said. "He was an excellent role model, had a great positive approach and created a family environment."

Rosner now gets to spend time with his family, including grandchildren.

"It's a little hard to handle right now," said Rosner, who retired from teaching in 2012. "I've got a lot of emotions running through me. I know it's over but it will hit me harder when I'm driving home."

Junior Sophie Swanson scored the game's first 6 points and led Barrington with 18 points, 5 steals and 4 rebounds in about 24 minutes. Teammate Laura Mahlum added 10 points. Jamia Gatlin led the Sabres (3-28) with 5 points.

"I know my girls played hard tonight," Rosner said. "We were definitely overmatched. We played a super team, maybe the best we've seen all season. But our girls gave it all they had and with one starter missing."

"The girls did a nice job," Barreiro said. "I thought we started out a little flat. We were anxious to get the tournament going and that showed a little. I'm glad to get a game under our belt and hopefully be on our way."

Barreiro's top-seeded team will move on to face No. 4 McHenry (12-20) for the regional title at 7 p.m. on Thursday.

"She (Barreiro) is a credit to her profession for sure," Rosner said. "I respect her very much. I remember her as a little girl and she really hustled on the court."

Rosner ended his career at 468 wins.

"He was our childhood," Del Fava said. "And seeing it end is a little heartbreaking, the end of an era."

"I think the program is in good shape," Rosner said. "There is a lot of nice young talent and kids coming up who can play. I think it will be in good hands."

Just like it has been the past five decades.