

Press Clippings 4/16/2022 to 4/18/2022

Daily Herald

M/I Homes acquires land for Becketts Landing and The Townes at Becketts --- 4/17/2022

SOUTH ELGIN -- M/I Homes, one of the top homebuilders in the Chicago market, today announced an expansion of its Chicago-area portfolio with the acquisition of 84 acres of land for its upcoming Becketts Landing and The Townes at Becketts communities in South Elgin.

Located along McLean Boulevard, north of the McLean Fen Forest Preserve and south of Spring Street, Becketts Landing and The Townes at Becketts will include 170 single-family homes and 178 townhouses, respectively. M/I Homes is on track to start infrastructure and site work in May. Construction on the communities' first homes will begin this fall, with completions and first move-ins targeted for early 2023. Pricing will be announced ahead of the start of sales in June.

"Already, 2022 is shaping up to be one of our busiest spring and summer real estate seasons yet, and Chicago's northwest suburbs continue to be in high demand thanks to their established downtowns, strong school districts and wealth of conveniences and amenities," said Rick Champine, area president of M/I Homes. "Becketts Landing and The Townes at Becketts will be a significant addition to the local market, bringing hundreds of new-construction homes that will resonate with the variety of homebuyers that are attracted to South Elgin and the surrounding area."

Both Becketts Landing and The Townes at Becketts will offer floor plans from M/I Homes' Smart Series, which offers a simplified homebuying experience by bundling available floor plans with preselected collections of designer-chosen interior and exterior finishes.

"Our Smart Series homes are all about creating an easy, streamlined experience for buyers -- which is especially helpful for first-time buyers as well as anyone seeking to maximize their homebuying budget," said Cheryl Bonk, vice president of sales and marketing for M/I Homes. "The process simplifies the financial end of purchasing a new-construction home, while also giving buyers access to the latest on-trend finishes and features. Between the different Smart Series collections we're offering across these two communities and the available options for single-family and townhouse floor plans, Becketts Landing and The Townes at Becketts are sure to check all the boxes for a lot of buyers in the market today."

At Becketts Landing, buyers can choose from 13 single-family designs available in a variety of elevations to complement the community's winding streetscape. Floor plans, including three

ranch layouts, feature partial basements and two- or three-car garages. Available home sites include lots edging naturalized basins as well as a selection of properties backing up to the neighboring forest preserve.

Situated just east and north of Becketts Landing, The Townes at Becketts comprises 178 two-story townhouses offering either front- or rear-load garages. Townhouse buyers can choose from four floor plans to fit a wide variety of lifestyles and needs. The low-maintenance community also comes with landscape maintenance and snow removal included as part of HOA fees.

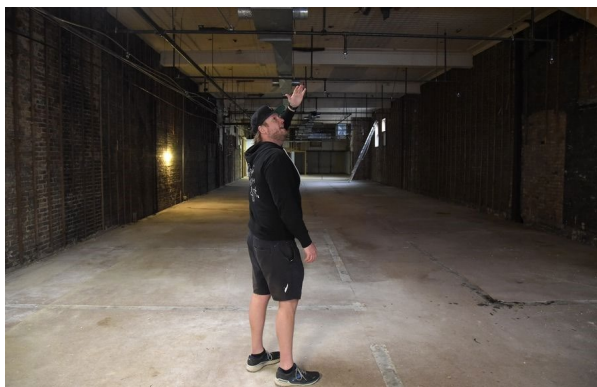
Located a short distance from the riverfront downtown districts of South Elgin and Elgin, Becketts Landing and The Townes at Becketts are also convenient to downtown Geneva and St. Charles, offering residents access to a variety of options for shopping, dining and entertainment. Nearby recreational offerings include the Fox River Trail for walking and biking along the Fox River, as well as the Blackhawk County Forest Preserve and Jon J Duerr Forest Preserve. The Townes at Becketts is served by the **U-46 School District**, which includes **Fox Meadow Elementary**, **Kenyon Woods Middle School** and **South Elgin High School**, while Becketts Landing is served by both **U-46** and District 303, which includes Corron Elementary, Thompson Middle School and St. Charles North High School.

Interested buyers can visit www.mihomes.com/becketts to learn more about the communities as well as sign up for a June 2 "First Look" event for Becketts Landing and a June 9 event for The Townes at Becketts, offering early access to floor plans, pricing and homesite selection appointments.

Daily Herald

‘It’s so exciting’: Side Street Studio Arts to move to bigger space in downtown Elgin --- 4/15/2022

By Rick West



Side Street Studio Arts co-founder Tanner Melvin gives a tour of their new space at 62 Grove Ave. in Elgin. He said the renovation will take up to two years. *Rick West | Staff Photographer*

Pointing out the character of the exposed brick and wood beams, Tanner Melvin -- co-founder of Side Street Studio Arts -- didn't seem to mind the years of neglect and layers of lead paint and asbestos that coated the dusty old building at 62 S. Grove Ave. in Elgin.

Side Street Studio Arts had found its forever home.

"It's a building that needs a lot of attention and some love to reactivate," Melvin said. "But it's so exciting. This is going to be a part of Elgin history."

After nine years at its current location at 15 Ziegler Court, including several expansions, Side Street had outgrown its old building. The nonprofit, which focuses on art exhibition, education, performance and advocacy, had to limit enrollment to its free summer programming because of space limitations. Their most recent signup for summer programming for U-46 students had a waitlist in less than 24 hours.

"We have the people, and we have the budget to do more. We just don't have the room," he said. "With this space, we'll be able to double if not triple the number of students."

The 18,000-square-foot space at the new spot, spread out over two main floors with a mezzanine and a full basement, is more than triple the space they have in their current location.

The building, which dates back to the early 1900s, was recently purchased by the Reva & David Logan Foundation. The foundation, which has supported Side Street with grants in the past, is a Chicago-based family foundation that provides strategic grants to support social justice, the arts and investigative journalism.

Side Street will get a long-term lease with a nominal rent of under \$100 a year. The arrangement will save Side Street about \$50,000 a year that they say will go back into programming and paying artists.

"We've had amazing landlords since we started, and it's going to be really sad leaving," he said of the space they've called home since 2013.

Side Street will pay for the renovations to the space.

The project will include installing a new HVAC system and ductwork, new electrical system, a new sprinkler system and updating an old manual elevator.

Melvin said it will take a couple of years to do the work. He couldn't say for sure how much it would cost but threw out \$1 million as a guesstimate.

"We have a lot of fundraising to do," he said. "These old buildings, they need a lot of work. But the community has supported us from day one in a number of ways, and we'll do whatever we have to do to raise the money."

Melvin said they plan to keep the floor plan open for flexibility. The first and second floors are mostly wide open already, extending from the front on Grove Avenue to Riverside Drive on the rear. A bank of windows on the second floor provides a wide view of downtown Elgin, and the back windows on the mezzanine look straight out on the Fox River.

"To find a building that gets this amount of light is not easy downtown," he said.

They'll redo the hardwood floors upstairs and use it primarily for performance space "like an old school dance hall," he said.

The space also has a rooftop area that they plan to renovate. "The views are going to be amazing," Melvin said. "We've already had people inquire about renting it."

A downstairs basement area will be for education and lab space. Melvin said he hopes to transform an old boiler into a forge for glassblowing and metalwork.

In addition to doing what Side Street already does in a bigger way, Melvin said he hopes it can branch out with some new events like a large-scale biennial art show that opens up from their space and spills onto Riverside Drive.

"Every downtown needs an entertainment district," he said. "We have been trying for nine years to get other people involved, and we've done a lot of great work, but his town needs more. This town deserves more. This place is going to be part of that."

Kane County Connects

2022 Kane County ROE Educator of the Year – Week 2

Nominees --- 4/14/2022

From Kane County Regional Office of Education report

Educator of the Year, a 46-year tradition, will take part on April 29 at the Q Center in St. Charles.

Leading up to the big event night, the [Kane County Regional Office of Education](#) will be sharing all the nominations over multiple weeks, with the representatives in the categories of High School Teachers and School Administrators being presented this week.

High School Teacher Category



Nominees in this category must spend more than 50% of their time teaching, in the classroom, to children in levels 9th through 12th grade.

In Kane County, there are 16 high school buildings serving more than 36,000 students.

Here are this year's nominees:

- Jacob Burlingame, District 303, St. Charles North High School, High School English Teacher
- Juan Figueroa, U-46, Elgin High School, High School Teacher for Dual-Credit Spanish, Lang Arts ALE 1
- Jennifer Hoemann, District 302, Kaneland High School, High School Science Teacher
- Max Payleitner, District 303, St. Charles East High School, Special Ed and Wellness Teacher
- Patricia Sampson, District 129, West Aurora High School, High School Music and Band Teacher
- Jessica Trilling, District 131, East Aurora Extension, Mathematics High School RSSP Teacher

School Administrator Category



School administrators in this category are the instructional leaders of their district. Principals, assistant principals, administrators, coordinators, and directors must spend, at least, 50% of their time on administration duties.

Here are the nominees for school administration:

- Sheila Conrad, District 131, Krug Elementary School, Principal
- Dr. Sarah Mumm, District 302, Kaneland School District #302, Director of Educational Service Early Childhood-5th Grade
- Ron Murphy, District 129, West Aurora High School, High School Administrator
- Dr. Steve Tucker, U-46, South Elgin High School, Assistant Principal

About the Kane County Educator of The Year Awards

Each year, Educator of the Year nominations are submitted by staff, friends, and family to recognize exceptional educators. Winners in each category are announced, along with the overall Educator of the Year winner.

Along with nominees, school district representatives are cordially invited to a formal dinner. Social hour begins at 5:30 p.m. with dinner being served at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are available now through local district offices.

Learn more about Educator of the Year, visit www.kaneroe.org/educator-of-the-year/.

Stay updated with Kane ROE and subscribe to the bi-weekly newsletter from the Kane ROE and follow-on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

Chicago Tribune/The Courier-News South Elgin High School's annual auto show making its return May 14 --- 4/14/2022

By Mike Danahey



The **South Elgin High School** Auto Show is scheduled for May 14 and will be featuring an array of cars as well as a demonstration by the school's Hot Rodders of Tomorrow engine teardown team. (Steve Schertz / HANDOUT)

After a two-year hiatus, the **South Elgin High School Auto Show** will be happening once again this May, and the educator behind it couldn't be happier.

"I'm excited," automotive instructor Steve Schertz said. "I enjoy introducing the parents and general public to our amazing automotive program here at South Elgin High School, and I like showing off all the student accomplishments and student success throughout the year."

Schertz and the high school's Auto Club have held it annually for 18 years until the COVID-19 pandemic shut it down in 2020 and 2021.

"In the past, typically with good weather, we would have 85 to 120 cars and a few hundred spectators," Schertz said. "With 20 different categories of trophies, we attract a very eclectic and wide variety of cars. Those have included Italian exotics, Japanese sports cars, classic muscle, actual race cars, trucks, fire equipment, military vehicles and antiques. It's a great show that any auto enthusiast can enjoy."

The cost to enter a vehicle in the show, being held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, May 14, outside the high school's auto shop at 760 E. Main St., is \$5. Spectators get in free.

The automotive program at South Elgin High School has about 185 students, and they are playing key roles in staging the event, he said.

“I direct them (and) they pretty much run it,” Schertz said. “They were put in charge of finding our sponsors, advertising by hanging up flyers and making posts on social media.”

Come show day, students will be hosting registration as well as selling T-shirts, raffle tickets and concessions, he said. They will also be available to answer questions, hand out trophies and provide labor for the setup and teardown.

Schertz said his hope is that by their involvement, students will gain knowledge of hosting community events and build social skills by asking for sponsorships and promoting the event.

The auto show also will feature members of the high school’s Hot Rodders of Tomorrow engine teardown team putting on an exhibition. Two automotive students will be awarded scholarships that day to help continue their education.

“It’s also a chance for me to see South Elgin High School auto alumni from years past as they return to see the old auto teachers and to visit the learning space they started in. Alumni typically bring their cool cars back to show off, too,” Schertz said.

For more information, send an email to steveschertz@u-46.org.

Chicago Tribune/The Courier-News

Elgin News Digest --- 4/14/2022

By Mike Danahey

U-46 lauds groups for helping with COVID vaccinations

School District U-46 recognized five health care organizations as its business partners at the Elgin Area Chamber of Commerce’s annual meeting and awards reception.

The district applauded the assistance it received from Greater Family Health, VNA Health Care, Advocate Health Care, Jewel-Osco and Med-Call Healthcare in distributing COVID-19 vaccinations.

Shots were made available to all of U-46’s approximately 6,500 employees, and more than 1,200 community members age 65 and older received vaccines at U-46’s Educational Services Center.

With Med-Call’s assistance, U-46 hosted vaccine clinics at all 40 of its elementary schools in November 2021. Med-Call worked with state agencies, provided staff and maintained records that allowed nearly 2,000 elementary students to get vaccinated.

Daily Herald

Softball: Burlington Central rolls to Slugfest championship - -- 4/16/2022

By Jared Birchfield, Daily Herald Correspondent



Central's Olivia Sutton (5) just beats the throw to **Elgin's** first baseman (12) during the Larkin Slugfest Softball Tournament Saturday April 16, 2022 in Elgin. *Brian Hill | Staff Photographer*

Burlington Central exploded for 51 runs on Saturday to win first place in the **Larkin** Slugfest softball tournament held at the Elgin Sports Complex.

The Rockets overwhelmed **Elgin** 22-1 in the tournament opener, rallied to beat **Bartlett** 11-9 in the semifinal and rapped out 18 hits in two innings to beat Larkin, 18-4 in the championship game.

Jacobs also staged a comeback to edge Bartlett in the third-place game, 10-9 with a bottom of the seventh walk-off hit.

Central coach Scott Richman was just happy to play.

"It's been a rough year. The first game this morning was our fourth game of the year. We've had so many rainouts. Other teams have had upwards of 10 games already," said the Central coach. "It's about time we're we got some games in."

"They got to our pitchers. They started hitting the ball," **Larkin coach** Anne Vogt said. "Unfortunately, we didn't respond with our bats. That was the bottom line."

The Royals (7-2) jumped out to an early lead in the game, scoring runs in the first and second innings. Freshman Kaitlyn Neubert's 2-run home run over the right field fence put Larkin up 3-0 when Central (4-2) came up to bat in the bottom of the second.

"I want to say she hit .750 on the day if not more," Vogt said about Neubert, who was one of Larkin's three picks for the all-tournament team. "Her bat is just hot and she's also playing great defense."

Thirteen Rockets went to the plate in their half of the inning. Capped by Lauren Knief's 2-run blast over the center field fence, Central scored nine runs on 10 hits and an error.

Knief, a senior, went to the plate just hoping to end a hitting drought.

"My hitting has been in a slump today, so I switched to my old bat -- my almost broken, completely cracked bat -- and it actually worked in my favor," Knief said. "I just needed a complete change. I wanted to do anything I could to get out of my slump and it worked."

Larkin got one run back in its half of the third.

Central had another big inning in the bottom of the third, scoring nine more runs on eight hits and a Larkin miscue.

Everyone in the Rockets starting lineup got a hit and scored in the title game.

In addition to offensive output, Richman was pleased with defensive play of second baseman Anna Sanders and shortstop Rylie Duval,

"You can't go wrong with the middle of our infield. Anna and Rylie are the rock of our defense," he said. "They play shortstop just as good as anybody as I have seen."

Freshman call-up Allie Botkin also made a favorable impression on Richman.

"She pitched in game one and she came out here and started the championship game and she gave a phenomenal effort," said the Central coach.

Sanders, Duval and Botkin were all named to the all-tournament team.

Larkin had a similar path as Central to the title contest. The Royals downed St. Edward 13-3 in their first game and edged Jacobs 3-2 in the semifinal.

"Kailey Cronin pitched a heck of a game against Jacobs and drove in the winning run," said Vogt.

Cronin along with teammate Mya Bermudez were also named to the all-tournament team.

At one point, Jacobs (5-5) trailed Bartlett (5-6) by seven in the third-place game but battled back.

"We threw three different pitchers to throw their hitters off balance." said Jacobs coach Katie O'Brien. "Our hitters then just started hitting and hitting is contagious."

Golden Eagle Aria Patel, who had the walk-off hit, and pitcher Caitlin Cook represented Jacobs on the all- tournament team.