

Press Clippings 5/12/2022

Kane County Connects

Watch Kane County's Tejas Katira compete May 31 in Scripps National Spelling Bee --- 5/11/2022

Kane County's very own Tejas Katira, 14, from [Larsen Middle School](#) in Elgin (School District U-46) is competing in this year's Scripps National Spelling Bee, and you can watch him in the preliminaries set for May 31.



According to the [Kane County Regional Office of Education](#)'s School of Thought e-newsletter, 234 spellers earned their spots as national competitors by advancing through regional spelling bees, competing against students representing all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Department of Defense Schools in Europe.

Katira won the [Kane County Final Spelling Bee](#) on March 15 at Thompson Middle School in St. Charles School District 303.



Kane County residents can watch the preliminaries, which start at 9 a.m. Tuesday, May 31, and the quarterfinals, which start at 8 a.m. Wednesday, June 1, via free streaming platforms on the [ION Plus](#) and [Bounce XL](#) channels.

The semifinals will be held at around 4 p.m. Wednesday, June 1, and finals begin at 8 p.m. Thursday, June 2. The semifinals and finals also will be live-streamed on ION Plus and Bounce XL.

"The Road to the Bee," a one-hour special, will air at 8 p.m. Thursday, May 26, on ION and Bounce.

Chicago Tribune/The Courier-News Elgin teacher receives school supplies for all her students as winner of the We Appreciate Teachers contest --- 5/10/2022 By Mike Danahey



Amarillys Vazquez, a teacher at Coleman Elementary School in Elgin, was one of 15 Illinois educators to win Back 2 School Illinois kits for their students as part of the We Appreciate Teachers contest. (Back School Illinois / HANDOUT)

Next school year, kids in the dual-language third-grade class at **Coleman Elementary School** in Elgin will each receive a second set of school supplies thanks to the good work of their teacher, Amarillys Vazquez.

Vazquez was one of 15 educators statewide to win supply kits for their classrooms from Back 2 School Illinois as part of the nonprofit's We Appreciate Teachers contest.

"The principal here at Coleman (Brian Stark) submitted by name as a secret," Vazquez said. "I had no idea until I received an email telling me I was one of the winners."

Stark said he nominated Vazquez because of how very involved she is at Coleman, not only in the classroom but also behind the scenes.

"She brings our meetings back to task. Amaryllis is our North star, keeping us moving in the right direction," he said.

She's also a creative teacher who gets students involved in learning and in group activities while being aware of and utilizing current technology, Stark said.

Vazquez is finishing her seventh year at Coleman and spent a year before that teaching at Ontarioville Elementary School in Hanover Park. She's a native of Puerto Rico.

"It was always a dream of mine to teach in Illinois. I have family in the state, so it was a life goal to move here," Vazquez said.

Teaching during the pandemic was a challenge, she said.

"It made me realize what's going on in (students') homes, with the glimpse I would see through our screens. This also gave me opportunities to build relationships with their parents," Vazquez said.

This year she's had to repeat some of the things taught last year as well as help students rebuild social and emotional skills as school returned to a normal setting and structure, she said.

Vazquez credited her husband, a third-shift factory worker, with helping with the home/work balance for her and their two children.

"He's always there to support me. Sometimes it seems he's sleep deprived the entire day," Vazquez said.

Because **District U-46** is using \$1.04 million in federal COVID-19 relief money to provide school supplies to all students in grades kindergarten through sixth grade in the 2022-23 school year, she'll let her students take home the kits she received through the contest, Vazquez said.

Chicago Tribune/The Courier-News

Elgin News Digest --- 5/10/2022

By Mike Danahey

South Elgin elementary School wins books competition

Fox Meadow Elementary School took first place in the 2021-22 Battle of the Books competition, the first time the South Elgin school has won in 47 years of the event's history.

The annual reading and quiz competition, sponsored by the Gail Borden Public Library, the Bartlett Public Library and the Poplar Creek Public Library, started last fall and wrapped up this spring.

Twenty-eight teams from area public, private and parochial schools took part in the event, with each team made up of 12 members from 4th, 5th, and 6th grades.

Participants read works from a list of 22 fiction titles, 15 nonfiction titles and 16 picture books. Six virtual meets were held where students were quizzed on everything from the various books' themes and characters to finding solutions to problems raised in the stories.

Fox Meadow's winning team members were 4th-graders Kalee Stocker and Nick Kenny; 5th-graders Sarah Johnson, Lexi Hayes, Mia Fenner, Liam Bultinck, Hailey Becerra, Eliza Ballschmiede, Ava Swanson, Sophia Huzvar and Ariana Godinez; and 6th-grader Ethan Hoss-Carlson.

The Examiner of Bartlett

District U-46 Board selects its new student advisor ---

5/11/2022

By Seth Hancock: Note – This story also ran in The Examiner of South Elgin and in The Examiner of Streamwood

The **Board of Education in School District U-46** seated a new student advisor while recognizing the outgoing advisor at its meeting on Monday, May 2.

The superintendent's Student Advisory Council (SAC) picks the board's student advisor each year. Bartlett senior Jessica Pearce was the advisor over the last year.

The SAC's recommendation of Angelica Harris, a South Elgin junior, as student advisor and Madeline Conter, an Elgin junior, as the backup advisor, was approved by the board on April 25 by a 6-0 vote, board member Eva Porter was absent.

"Personally, a value I believe that all people should possess is integrity," Harris wrote in her application letter. "Having integrity means being accountable for your actions, and being honest not only with others but with yourself. With this position, I am more than willing to be a student advisor with integrity, and to remain honest with what I believe will most benefit the students in our district. I aspire to voice the opinions and needs of students of all walks of life, because everyone deserves to be treated with the same respect and dignity."

Kurt Johansen, South Elgin's principal, wrote in a letter of recommendation: "In closing, Angelica has my highest recommendation for the position of Student Advisor to the Board of Education at School District U-46, and she will provide a unique perspective should she be afforded this opportunity. Angelica has demonstrated passion, grit, determination, and resiliency in the face of adversity. She has been a tremendous asset to South Elgin High School and I am confident that she will continue on this trajectory if chosen to serve as our next Student Advisor to the Board of Education."

The board also elected its officers, which it does annually. The officers will remain the same with Sue Kerr as president, Melissa Owens as vice president and Kate Thommes as secretary pro-tempore. Thommes will also be the board's representative for the Illinois Association of School Boards.

The Examiner of Bartlett

Expense proposals slated for District U-46 approval ---

5/11/2022

By Seth Hancock: Note – This story also ran in The Examiner of South Elgin and in The Examiner of Streamwood

The **Board of Education in School District U-46** is set to vote on \$754,943 in expenditure items at its upcoming meeting on Monday, May 16. The items were presented at its May 2 meeting.

The largest item is \$360,150, from the education fund if approved, with QuaverEd.com for a contract renewal through 2026-2027 for an online elementary music curriculum.

A one-year contract renewal with Tyler Technologies will cost \$130,862 (education fund) for its MUNIS human resources software.

Costing \$122,500, coming from the nation's taxpayers through bailout funds, the district wanted to use Northwestern University Center for Talent Development for a "differentiated enrichment summer experience," the proposal states. It is "designed to meet the academic and social and emotional needs of gifted learners," and it will be for up to 100 students.

For elementary summer school literacy resources, LitCamp, the district is asking for \$72,802 with Scholastic, Inc.

"LitCamp allows us to reimagine the literacy block and provide students with literacy instruction in a format that aligns with our 6-week summer school. LitCamp's research-based framework is built upon the three pillars for learning to read, write, speak, and listen that connects Literacy Skills, Social-Emotional Development, and Engagement," the proposal states.

The district is seeking \$41,382 (education fund) for a Japanese and Mandarin Chinese world language curriculum expansion proposal with Education Perfect.

"As the Streamwood High School Language and International Studies Academy transitions into the L.E.A.D. Magnet Academy, old Academy courses are being phased out," the proposal states. "This phase out would have included the gradual elimination of Japanese and Mandarin Chinese courses. Because of the prevalence of both Japanese and Mandarin Chinese languages in business, culture, security, and diplomacy, as well as increasing student interest, these languages will be offered at all five traditional high schools in U-46 as general education world language electives."

The district also plans to make concrete repairs on the front sidewalk and curbing at Bartlett's Centennial Elementary School costing \$27,248 (operations and maintenance fund) via Grade Restoration and Construction Services.

Daily Herald

Softball: Larkin rallies for extra-inning win over Glenbard South --- 5/10/2022

By Jared Birchfield, Daily Herald Correspondent

Larkin's Audriana Escobar "took one for the team" at the most opportune time in Tuesday's Upstate Eight Conference extra-inning game between the host Royals and Glenbard South.

The compliment is given to a player who is awarded first base after being hit by a pitched ball.

The left fielder came to plate in the bottom of the eighth with the bases loaded, one out and the game tied. Escobar was award first base after the first pitch of the at-bat hit her in the leg which also forced in Julissa Aguinaga with the winning run for a 5-4 come-from-behind victory.

"I was ready to drive the ball but then immediately it hit my leg," said Escobar.

After the Royals jumped out a 2-1 lead in the first inning on starting pitcher Chelsea Herrick's single down the right field line that scored Escobar and Kaitlyn Neubert, Glenbard South rallied to tie the game in the top of the second. Kaylee Full's single to center plated Lauren Atkinson, who also scored the team's run in the first.

Glenbard South (10-7, 7-5) went ahead 4-2 in the next inning. After Raiders starting pitcher Hannah Rafferty-Flatter popped out, Grace Zeman drew a base-on-balls. Julia Galvin reached base on an infield error. Both scored when Larkin's infield could not handle Madison Blazek's grounder.

Herrick, who pitched all eight innings for the win, kept the Raiders in check the rest of the way. The right-handed senior got out jams in the fifth and sixth innings and retired the side in order in both the seventh and eighth innings.

"Chelsea pitched an amazing game," said Larkin coach Anne Vogt. "Out of the eight innings, five of them ended with either a big strikeout or a big play."

"It was the first hot day of the year and I think both teams did a nice job of sustaining it. It was a long game. I think each team had their opportunities," Glenbard South coach Julie Fonda said. "We didn't hit our pitches; we fished a little bit. Chelsea did a nice job. Last time we saw her, we had 10 or 12 hits. A totally different game."

After the first inning, Rafferty-Flatter settled down and allowed only two base runners in the next three frames. The junior right-hander, who also went the distance, struck out 13 batters.

Larkin (13-6, 9-5) took full advantage of the opportunities it had to get back in the game.

The Royals got one run back in the fifth. Alanis Ortega opened the frame with a walk, advanced to second on Escobar's ground out, and scored on Neubert's single up the middle.

The Royals tied the game in the sixth. Aguinaga opened the inning with a walk and advanced all the way to third when Glenbard South's infield could not handle Sophia Forsberg's bunt. Aguinaga scored on a pass ball during Camila Alonzo's at-bat.

"We hung in there. We didn't hit great, but we played good defense," Vogt said. "We showed a little grit there. We just kept coming back."

Daily Herald

Baseball: South Elgin wins wild one over Bartlett ---

5/10/2022

By Allen Oshinski, Daily Herald Correspondent

Tuesday's **South Elgin-Bartlett** baseball game had a little of everything: a rivalry, emotions running high, the wind blowing out. There were multiple lead changes and, of course, a controversial call resulting in Bartlett playing the game under protest.

For now, the visiting Storm beat Bartlett, 11-8 in the Upstate Eight matchup.

Home runs by Jordan Green, who also doubled, and Matt Jachim, who had 3 hits from the ninth spot, powered the Storm. Jim Bluemling picked up the win in relief.

The controversy came in the bottom of the sixth. With the Hawks trailing 8-7, Patrick Nelson lofted a fly to deep left center. Center fielder Kyle Steinhofer jumped and appeared to glove the ball as he tumbled awkwardly over the fence. After a lengthy conference, the umpires called Nelson out.

Bartlett coach Christopher Baum argued strenuously that the ball cleared the fence and there was no way to tell whether Steinhofer held onto it, but the call stood.

South Elgin added 3 more runs in the seventh to blunt the call's impact somewhat.

Bartlett still managed to bring the tying run to the plate in the bottom of the seventh. Josh Schuberth and Daniel Krulak led off with back-to-back doubles. Two outs later, Ryan Renella was hit by a pitch, bringing up Jack Sharko as the tying run, but Andrew Shall retired Sharko on a fly to deep center to end it.

"We're starting to play better," said South Elgin coach Jim Kating. "After the second inning, we got a little lethargic and lost some of our energy and allowed them to get back into the game. They were hitting the ball well today. I'm very glad our group persevered."

South Elgin started quickly with 3 runs in the first. Green's 2-run double was the key. Jachim's blast to left made it 4-1.

Bartlett rallied to take the lead in the third. After a Cole Spresser triple, run-scoring singles by Nelson and Krulak and an error, Bluemling took over for Storm starter Matt Kolbus. Mario Prieto greeted him with a moonshot toward the goal post beyond the right field fence.

The Storm got one back in the fifth, then took the lead for good with 3 in the sixth. Green's high blast to left tied it before three walks and an error led to the go-ahead run.

Although technically the non-home-run call didn't affect the outcome, Baum made the case that it changed the momentum at a crucial time.

"We put ourselves in a hole defensively, but offensively we kept ourselves in this game," he said. "That [call] changes the momentum. They're high school kids, they feed off the momentum, and that was a game-changing decision."

Kating, not surprisingly, saw it a bit differently.

"What was explained to me, I saw him catch the ball and go over the fence," Kating said. "Once it goes over the fence, if you have that ball caught, then it's an out. That's how it was explained to me."

Krulak finished with 3 hits, including 2 doubles, for the Hawks. Nelson and starting pitcher Brendan Campbell each had a pair of hits.

Chicago Tribune/The Courier-News
Illinois State recruit Karpowicz launches pair of home runs
for South Elgin in first game at Kane County Cougars' field --
- 5/9/2022
By Paul Johnson, Aurora Beacon-News



South Elgin's Ben Karpowicz (4) rounds third base and celebrates his second home run against Bartlett during an Upstate Eight Conference game at Northwestern Medicine Field in Geneva on Monday, May 9, 2022 (H. Rick Bamman / The Beacon-News)

Even if he didn't reach the trees Monday night, **South Elgin's Ben Karpowicz** took a page out of [Kyle Schwarber](#)'s book on making good first impressions.

On June 20, 2014, Schwarber was one of the best prospects to be sent to Kane County. In his second game for the Cougars, he hit a home run that disappeared into the trees.

A year later, Schwarber was in the majors with the Cubs. But a youngster named Ben Karpowicz was in the stadium that night for Schwarber's Kane County debut.

"That's one of the big memories of my youth," said Karpowicz, who's now a senior third baseman for the Storm. "It ended up in the forest out there."



South Elgin's Ben Karpowicz (4) watches his second home run sail over the left-center fence against Bartlett during an Upstate Eight Conference game at Northwestern Medicine Field in Geneva on Monday, May 9, 2022 (H. Rick Bamman / The Beacon-News)

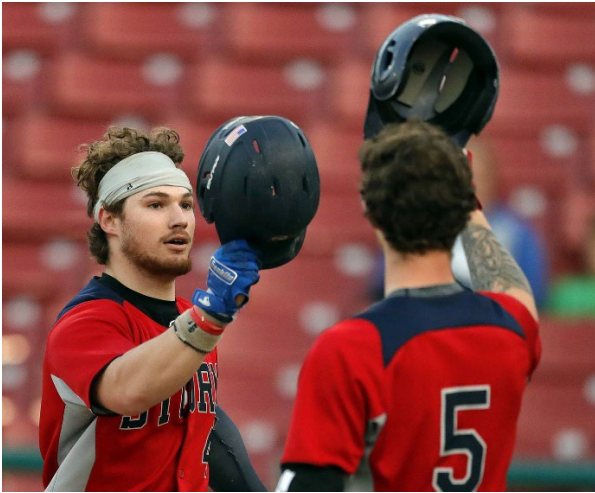
With a pair of home runs, Karpowicz had a game to remember in his first chance to play at Northwestern Medicine Field in Geneva, sending the Storm to a 14-0 Upstate Eight Conference victory over **Bartlett** in five innings.

The Illinois State recruit led off the bottom of the first inning for South Elgin (17-3, 15-2) by launching a solo homer off the scoreboard in left field.

Then in the second, with runners on second and third, Karpowicz blasted another homer into the left field party deck.

“He’s our table setter,” [South Elgin coach Jim Kating](#) said of Karpowicz, who has eight home runs this season. “He’s coming into his own. He’s been taking good at-bats.

“He understands the game real well. He’s a pretty cerebral kid. He’s been doing a good job.”



South Elgin's Ben Karpowicz (4) gets met at the home plate by teammate Jackson Bessette (5) after hitting his first home run during an Upstate Eight Conference game at Northwestern Medicine Field in Geneva on Monday, May 9, 2022 (H. Rick Bamman / The Beacon-News)

Karpowicz, who had two strikes during his at-bat in the first inning, battled to get the Storm on the board.

“I was just in fight mode,” Karpowicz said. “The worst way to start the game is punching out. I have all the power in the world, I think. I didn’t know, but I just kept seeing the center fielder and left fielder run toward the fence and it got out for me.”

Karpowicz was in the same spot, down two strikes in the second inning. After fouling off some pitches, he unloaded.

“That’s what I spend a lot of time working on in the cage — fighting with two strikes, my little B swing as I call it,” Karpowicz said. “I knew what was expected with a base open and the lead.

“I was looking for sliders most of the at-bat and finally he left one over the plate that I could really get my barrel to.”



Bartlett's Ryan Renella (20) gets caught in a rundown as South Elgin's Ben Karpowicz (4) makes the tag for the out during an Upstate Eight Conference game at Northwestern Medicine Field in Geneva on Monday, May 9, 2022 (H. Rick Bamman / The Beacon-News)

Bartlett (12-12, 10-7) walked Karpowicz in the third, but the Storm still put together a nine-run inning to extend the lead. [Josh Genz](#) had the big hit with a three-run double.

Kyle Swalley was tagged with the pitching loss. Three errors by the Hawks didn't help his cause.

“I'm really happy with his performance,” [Bartlett coach Christopher Baum](#) said of Swalley. “He's looked really, really good. I had a nice talk with him before.

“Regardless of the outcome, the one thing he did was his composure stayed really good. He still went out and competed. That's a big step in the right direction.”

Drew Piaskowy (5-0) was dominant for South Elgin. He struck out nine without a walk and allowed three hits in five innings.



Bartlett's Daniel Krulak (25) lets a pitch past against South Elgin during an Upstate Eight Conference game at Northwestern Medicine Field in Geneva on Monday, May 9, 2022 (H. Rick Bamman / The Beacon-News)

“Drew has been our warrior all year,” Kating said. “He’s done a really good job on the mound. He likes to compete. It’s really hard taking him out of games because he never wants to come out.”

After dropping two of three games to Streamwood, South Elgin has rattled off five straight wins.

Karpowicz said the Storm had some extra juice thanks to Monday’s venue.

“This was really important,” Karpowicz said. “For some guys, it was their first time stepping on a really nice field. You could feel the energy.”

“Everybody was on the edge of the dugout just to get on the field. Everybody was just itching to go throughout the whole team.”

The Examiner of Streamwood **Sabres baseball on a roll, win four straight contests ---**

5/11/2022

By Seth Hancock

The **Streamwood** baseball team is streaking by winning four straight in the Upstate Eight Conference play.

The Sabres opened the week with a pair of victories over West Chicago, 11-4 on Monday, May 2 and 4-3 in a nine-inning game on Wednesday, May 4 both games at Streamwood.

Nick Weaver (two doubles), Jacob Gama (double, three RBI), Kevin Lunz (double, two RBI) and Austin Paskewic (double, RBI) each had a pair of hits and Josh Wilder drove in three runs on Monday. Richard Santiago (3-for-4, double), Weaver (2-for-4, two doubles), Lunz (2-for-5, three stolen bases) and Wilder (2-for-4, RBI) led at the plate on Wednesday.

Miguel Rodriguez tossed four innings to earn the win in Game 1, and Carter Blanchard tossed three scoreless innings in relief for the save. Weaver got the win in four scoreless innings of relief of starter Eric Arroyo (five innings, two earned runs, seven strikeouts) in the extra-inning win.

“We know we’re a good team,” Weaver said. “We scratch and claw. That’s the way these games are going to be in May and June.”

Although outhit 7-5, the Sabres took advantage of nine walks to defeat Elgin 4-2 on Thursday, May 5 at Elgin. Paskewic got the win pitching a scoreless seventh inning, after Streamwood broke a 2-2 tie in the top of the frame.

Weaver was 2-for-3 with two doubles and two RBI and Paskewic was 2-for-2 with a double as the Sabres capped the week with a 3-1 victory over East Aurora on Saturday, May 7 in Aurora. Rodriguez tossed a complete game allowing one run on four hits and no walks, and he struck out seven.

Streamwood is now 13-8 overall, 12-5 in the UEC where it stands in third place behind Glenbard East (14-1) and South Elgin (13-2).

The Sabres have now won 10 of their last 13 games including a series win, two out of three games, against then conference leader South Elgin.

“The two wins over South Elgin were huge,” said South Elgin coach Dan Jennings. “They are program-changing wins. Our guys are playing with more confidence and are learning to win those tight games. We have had a few letdowns, but they are for small periods of time rather than for multiple games.”

Daily Herald

Larkin’s Durrant qualifies in 1,600 run --- 5/11/2022

By John Bumbales

With a 68-37 lead over rival Hersey at about the halfway point of the meet, the Prospect girls track team clearly established itself as the team to beat Wednesday night at the Rolling Meadows Sectional.

From there, Prospect just ran away with this 13-team meet as the Knights outscored runner-up Barrington 144 to 80 for the championship. Hersey was third with 51 points followed by the host Mustangs (47 points), Fremd (43) and **South Elgin** (42).

The Knights' 4x800-meter relay team set the tone early as Veronica Znajda, Kaitlin Skelton, Hailey Erickson and Cameron Kalaway took first place in 9:25.90 to advance to the state meet next week at Eastern Illinois University.

The top two finishers in every event as well as any individual to beat the cut-off times and distances also qualified for the state meet.

Prospect had numerous key contributors as senior Daria Tersina set a school record with a winning time of 12.20 in the 100-meter dash. The Winona State University-bound Tersina also won the 200-meter dash (25.12), and the triple jump (11.47 meters). Tersina also placed second (5.49 meters) in the long jump.

Prospect's Giselle Salom Hamwi was the pole vault champion with a winning mark of 3.12 meters. The Knights kept the momentum going in the 800-meter run as Lily Ginsberg (2:14.38) placed first to edge teammate Audrey Ginsberg (2:16.47) in second. South Elgin's Naomi Ruff (2:16.59) also earned a trip to state in the 800-meter run.

"She (Tersina) is a big-time athlete, and we've been blessed to have the opportunity to coach her," said Prospect coach Peter Wintermute, whose team also won the sectional title last year. "Ultimately, this meet is about putting kids in the lineup with a chance to live for next weekend."

Barrington put together an excellent meet behind freshman Scout Storms winning the 3,200-meter run in 10:42.21, and the 1,600-meter run in 4:58.61. The Fillies also got first-place finishes from Breanne Dunn in both the 100-meter hurdles (15.50), and the 300-meter hurdles (46.28). Barrington's Claire Kavanagh (38.61 meters) won discus, while teammate Sofiabella Amirante qualified for state in shot put.

"I'm really happy with the two state qualifiers in shot put and discus," said Barrington coach Jody Gitelis. "Storms ran a 10:27 as her best time this season (at 3,200 meters), and she's an incredible little athlete."

Rolling Meadows' sister duo of junior Hannah Oloro (1.55 meters) and senior Ore Oloro (1.55 meters) placed first and second, respectively, in the high jump. Fremd's Kiera White won high jump with a leap of 5.56 meters while the Vikings' team won the 4x200-meter relay in 1:45.36. Hoffman Estates' Ashley Oliver won the 400-meter dash in 56.96. Prospect won the 4x400-meter relay.

"They (Oloro sisters) have worked hard," said Rolling Meadows coach Charlie Henry. "They both did cross country for the first time in the fall, and they've looked great all year."

Hersey's Becca Caliendo was one of seven state qualifiers in the shot put with a winning throw of 12.99 meters. Schaumburg's Layla Jessie placed second in the triple jump to qualify for state.

"Becca (Caliendo) is going to be throwing (shot put and discus) at Purdue next year," said Hersey coach Jim Miks. "And this is actually her first full season of track. She's a great athlete and a great kid."

Other second-place finishers were Prospect's Anika Knipple (pole vault), Hersey's Claudia Sepko (110-meter hurdles), Hersey's Anna Harden (3,200-meter run), Prospect's Emma Letzig (300-meter hurdles), South Elgin's Ruff (1,600-meter run), and Hoffman's Oliver (100-meter dash).

Larkin's Heather Durrant qualified for state at 1,600 meters while Prospect's Lillian Lucansky qualified in the discus. Other shot put qualifiers were Hoffman Estates' Amaya Hendrickson, Schaumburg's Jackie Tuzil, Schaumburg's Antenise Williams, Hersey's Chinemerem Iwuagw, and Prospect's Madison Payne.