

Press Clippings 12/18/2018

---Daily Herald---12/18/2018

U-46 seniors named State Scholars

By: Elgin Area Community School District 46

In recognition of their academic performance, nearly 280 seniors at the five Elgin Area School District U-46 high schools have been designated as Illinois State Scholars.

The award reflects the top 10 percent of academic achievers among the Class of 2019 at each participating high school.

A total of 277 students at Elgin, Bartlett, Larkin, South Elgin and Streamwood high schools recently received notification of the honor from the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, the state program that administers the scholar program and works to make college more affordable through financial aid planning.

The U-46 honorees were among more than 21,000 students from 757 schools across the state who earned the designation this year, the 60th for the State Scholar program.

"Congratulations to our Illinois State Scholars," said CEO Tony Sanders. "We are proud of their accomplishments in our schools and cannot wait to see their future successes."

State Scholars receive a congratulatory letter and a certificate of achievement. They also receive a digital "badge" noting their award that can be displayed on social media platforms or can be shared through online profiles with friends and family as well as prospective colleges or employers.

The 2019 State Scholars from U-46 high schools are listed below by high school:

Bartlett High School

German Acevedo, Najma Ahmed, Rafia Aziz, Jacob Bagley, Keaton Bandur, Paige Bednarke, Patrick Biedrzycki, Devakar Boini, Carter Burzlaff, Gianna Campo, Alyssa Carey, Camryn Charter, Jeet Chaudhari, Jasmin Chaudhari, Amy Chen, Shreya Chenna, Harsh Chheda, Austin Cichon, Sohumi Desai, Neeladri Dhar, Anthony Digiulio, Nicholas Eckelberry, Christopher Emmett, Aaron Farabaugh, Mohammed Faraz, Jenna Fitzgibbon, Kimberly Gamalo, Ramya Gandhi, Austin Garbacz, Andres Garces, Yaseen Ghani, Abigail Hawes, Rachel Helgesen, Emily Hettinger, Ryan Hogan, Roshni Jacob, Garrett Jurina, Azam Khan, Lindsay Kovach, Andriy Kylyushyk, Erin Leone, Philip Lesniak, Amanda Leveille, Nathan Linkevich, Charlotte Linnartz, Dirk Locascio, Monica Lulek, Kayla Malinowski, Patricia Marasigan, Samantha Martino, Danaiel McCarthy, Kelly McGee, Laura McGee, Jasmine Mendez, Alan Michalek, Meher Mirza, Smridhi Mittal, Alexa Mogan, Muna Mohammed, Mustafa Mohammed, Anna Monson, Rachel

Montesano, Katelyn Mundorf, Aakash Nagarapu, Braden Nicholson, Jeremy Noesen, Joseph O'Callahan, Meha Pandya, Aayush Patel, Arush Patel, Harshal Patel, Om Patel, Payal Patel, Rushi Patel, Siddhi Patel, Eduardo Perez, Regan Polly, Dharra Prashaad, Celeste Pratt, Jenna Rajewski, Jason Roberts, Natalie Rock, Victoria Rzucidlo, Zain Sattar, Paula Sawicka, Tyler Serpico, Rohan Shah, Frenki Shyti, Erica nSmith, Kelsey Sniatynsky, Sachi Solanki, Evan Springer, Amogh Srigopal, Preethi nSrinivasan, Sophia Szubert, Nimesh Tailor, Isabella Talaue, Sofia Terenzio, Matthew Tomasek, Michael Tomaso, Denise Valdez, Kevin Vesta, Theresa Videckis, Hannah Walker, Tessa Wanthal, Anika Wilen, Nich Wolf, Michael Yonker, Jack Young, and David Zepeda.

Elgin High School

Franklin Aguilar, Ramiro Almanza, Naomi Amadei, Rachel Caldwell, Collin Ceryance, Guadalupe Chavez, Kyle Coates, Spencer Culotta, Christina Curtis, Eric Damerow, Lauren Dimayuga, Cameron Fischer, Michelle Garner, Rosalynn Genel, Emily Graves, Gabriel Gulumian, Eric Guo, Genevieve Heydt, Joseph Hoberg, Jeffrey Johnson, Caroline Kaczmarek, Jaden Kosin, Marta Krakowski, Riya Kumar, Ryan Lim, Ashley Magarzo, Joseph Meza Martinez, Nicole Martinez, Aautumn McGowan, Cassandra Merena, Meredith Metzger, Cassandra Meyer, Gloria Mora, William Morrow, Sarah Moskow, Shrinal Patel, Laurena Patino, Joshua Placko, Sallyann Rattanatay, Syan Raval, Reanne Rivera, Diana Schmidt, Alexander Sentowski, Simona Simeonova, Viseth Som, Sabrina Szul, Alec Turner, Kennedy Venable, Joseph Villalobos, Amber Weaver, and Stephanie Zapf.

Larkin High School

Caroline Chwalisz, Emily Crawford, Kevin Duffy, Scarlett Ford, Tori Garcia, Madelyn Golden, Noa Greenfeld, Quetzoe Jacob, Jordan Kosin, Cristian Lara, Kassia Lesiewicz, Fatima Maldonado, Jocelyn Martinez, Paige Politowicz, Carolyn Przywara, Omar Ramirez, Maritza Renteria, Chloe Robbins, Jackson Teetor, Michael Tendy, Kitzia Tinajero, Leanna Tran, and Zachary Wilder.

South Elgin High School

Dina Aldabbagh, Carli Allen, Nicole Allen, Hannah Anderson, Kathleen Bardfield, Sarah Boghossian, Bridget Bondi, Madison Caliendo, Delaney Catania, Grace Cork, Sydney Cuda, Abigail Culloton, Jack Cullotta, Izabella Cyran, Katelyn Delaney, Emily Deleon, Parth Desai, Alia Echols, Nathaniel Evensen, Hayley Fisher, Kyle Fox, Luke Fox, Ian Garvin, David Hahn, Jane Holish, Kylee Hunter, Jeremy Ivanauski, Zach Joseph, Rachel Kelly, Madeline Kordecki, Samantha Koss, Trevor Kravis, Jayoung Kwon, Benjamin La Vine, Jackson Lamb, Elijah Lee, Nathan Marchosky, Madalyn McCann, Mackenzie Molina, Maxwell Moring, Patrick Noworol, Megan O'Neil, Julianna Olguin, Jay Patel, Manan Patel, Rahi Patel, Margaret Pavlik, Sara Pfeil, Jesibell Philavong, Isabella Popadiuk, Julie Prohaska, Samantha Prus, Angelica Quinto, Isabella Rossolille, Grace Ryan, Coral Sather, Kevin Seidler, Anna Skrzypchak, John Staniszewski, Natalie Taylor,

Joseph Teschke, Stacy Thorson, Jacob Tokarewich, Alan Tran, Julie Wafford, Jace Warrick, Parker Watson, Emily Wellman, Brittany Wendel, Ana White, and Kristine Zamora.

Streamwood High School

Jakub Adamek, Victoria Bajorek, Mary Chung, Dane Crouse, Emma Crowe, Brianna Cunanan, Danielle Defeo, Matthew Dlugosz, Nicholas Droll, Ivan Flores, Edgar Gasca, Christian Gonzalez, Nikky Jordan, Kiara Kerkooffs, William Morgan, Jazmine Palad, Archana Patel, Archana, Nicole Pisarek, Anna Rataj, Nicole Rataj, Alexander Tannhauser, and Marcos Villarreal.

---The Courier-News---12/18/2018

U46 may tighten travel policies

Red flags raised by \$57,000 bill for trip to Nashville program

By: Rafael Guerrero

Proposed changes to the District U46 travel and reimbursement policy would require school board approval for all work-related conferences or events costing more than \$25,000.

The new rules would also require anyone not employed by the district but participating in a district-related trip receive prior written approval from the district CEO or superintendent if they request travel-related reimbursement.

The revisions come three months after The Courier-News reported U46 paid more than \$57,000 for 33 people — including three who were not district employees — to travel to Nashville in 2017 and 2018 to study the city's career pathways programs. The district reimbursed attendees for airfare, hotel costs, registration and transportation/parking expenses.

School board member Jeanette Ward, who raised questions about the trips earlier this year, said she supported the policy changes and believed they could go even further.

Ward said the \$25,000 threshold was a concession reached after she was unable to persuade a school board committee and district attorneys to add a provision requiring board approval for any travel reimbursement paid to someone not employed by the district.

"I still believe that it needs to be voted on in open session by the board, just like if (board members) take a trip," Ward said at last week's school board meeting. The rules should apply to anyone who is not a district employee, she said.

"If the district's central office is going to pay for a trip by a community member at least the community and the board ought to be informed," she said.

Board President Donna Smith and other board members, however, said the revisions being made should be sufficient given it's rare that someone not employed by the district would be reimbursed for large travel expenses.

Other board members added the board does not need to approve every reimbursement case since most trips involve parents volunteering to go on short trips organized by the district.

"I worry that we would be voting on every one of those so I'd rather leave it at the \$25,000," board member Sue Kerr said.

"I don't need to know every time someone is involved in an activity just because they happen to not be an employee," board member Veronica Noland said.

"I believe the \$25,000 threshold is appropriate. This is a very large district. I absolutely don't want to get every expenditure regarding a non-employee in this district."

A final vote on the policy changes will be made at a future meeting.

Students show off top photos, awards

Kane County education office holds contest and exhibit

By: David Sharos



- Dori Ellinger and her daughter Grace Ellinger, 17, stand by a picture of a bubbling bath bomb that was one of 10 overall winners of a photo contest offered by the Kane County Regional Office of Education.



- Nina DiCristofano, 17, of Burlington Central High School, shows off a picture of cinder blocks and rubble she entered in the photo contest.

Eighty students put their photography on display Thursday during an exhibition at the Batavia Fine Arts Centre.

The Kane County Regional Office of Education presented the event, featuring about 100 photos from local students. It was the fifth year the education office has held the event, said communications and website coordinator Matt Muntner.

“This is basically the end of a 10-week contest where students submitted work to us and we had a group here at the ROE [Regional Office of Education] that voted and selected the weekly top 10 as well as an overall winner from each week,” Muntner said.

“The idea was to bring all of the winners together and have their work on display.”

Art Centre manager Dominic Cattero said this was the first year the exhibit has been held at the Batavia Fine Arts Centre and that the venue was a good fit.

“This is about art, so the Art Centre fits, and we also needed a larger venue as the exhibit has continued to grow,” he said.

The event included appetizers provided by culinary art students from Batavia High School as well as orchestra music from the school’s band.

Image Awards of Geneva presented trophies to the 10 weekly winners.

Cattero said nearly 2,200 photos were submitted over 10 weeks with some like Mimi Cammelot, 17, a senior at Bartlett High School, submitting just one picture while Nina DiCristofano, 17, of Burlington Central High School, submitted 20.

Both received trophies for being selected as one of the top 10 entries overall.

Cammelot chose to take a picture of her 15-year-old cousin Gracie.

“I took a picture of my cousin and cropped it so you see just her eyes and a little of her nose,” Cammelot said. “All of my cousins have brown hair and blue eyes and I’ve been struck by Gracie’s eyes for a long time — they are green and a bit yellow and I like her freckles.”

Cammelot was accompanied by her parents as well as Michele Zappa-Eickmeier, of Elgin, who has been teaching art at Bartlett High School for 21 years. She said Cammelot has been among her best students.

“Mimi is definitely one of the best and has taken 3 1/2 years of photography,” Zappa-Eickmeier said.

“She has really come into her own, and I’m not surprised she was selected as one of the winners. She produces high-quality work and always has attention to detail.”

DiCristofano said her somewhat abstract photo depicts moss-covered cinder blocks she found near a burned down building.

“There is this place we pass when we go to my cousin’s house in Huntley, and I have been looking at it for some time,” she said.

Grace Ellinger, 17, of St. Edwards in Elgin, also won one of the top 10 awards for her picture of a bath bomb that was held in the palm of someone’s hand emitting bubbles.

“For me, I thought the picture had a pop of color and now that my mom bought me a better quality camera, I’ve been doing more than I could with my phone,” Ellinger said.

Ellinger’s mother, Dori Ellinger, said her daughter “has been taking pictures for a long time” and has always been a creative person.

“I see this as a foundation she can take forward into college and an arts program anywhere,” Dori Ellinger said.

“I love that she does this.”

---Kane County Reporter---12/18/2018

84.7 percent of Elgin teachers stay put; average earns \$68,004.51 per year

By: Local Labs News Service



More than 84.7 percent of teachers stay at Elgin High School year to year, according to the 2018 three-year average in the latest Illinois schools report card.

The Illinois State Board of Education records data concerning faculty salary, retention and attendance because maintaining a stable faculty makes for a better environment for teachers and students, furthering student success, according to the report.

SD U-46 full-time faculty members number 2,134, with a student-teacher ratio of 21-to-1. There are 2,582 students enrolled at the high school.

The average salary for teachers within the district is \$68,004.51, ranking it 143rd out of 999 districts in the state for pay. About 74.6 percent of teachers at the high school and 74.6 percent of those in the district were absent 10 days or fewer in 2018, compared to 70.2 percent of teachers in the state.

Salaries vary depending on the school and district, as well as the teacher's level of experience and education, according to the report. The U.S. Department of Education considers teacher attendance a "leading indicator" of how well students perform. When a high rate of teachers are absent more than 10 days, data shows students perform worse.

SPORTS

---Daily Herald---12/18/2018

Glenbard South getting in a groove again

By: Scott Schmid

Losing a valuable group of players from last year's Class 3A third-place team, Glenbard South anticipated a bit of a learning curve to begin the 2018-19 season.

But after an inconsistent start, the Raiders quickly appear to be on the right track following Thursday's 62-20 win over Streamwood in the Upstate Eight Conference matchup in Glen Ellyn.

Glenbard South has won three games in a row to improve to 6-4 overall and 4-2 in league play.

Maggie Bair led all scorers with 16 points to go along with 11 rebounds and 4 steals.

"Going into it, we knew this was a different season," Bair said. "It's a new team, some new faces. But a lot of the girls were on the team last year and they know what it takes. Our underclassmen are stepping up big time, we only have a couple of seniors on the team. They are doing a great job of being leaders.

"Everyone has a role and when we are playing together, we are a good team."

Bair poured in 12 points in the opening quarter as the home team jumped out to a 22-4 advantage. That margin increased to 31-12 at halftime behind three consecutive baskets from Lauren Cohen.

The sophomore guard then hit a pair of 3-pointers out of halftime to finish with 15 points.

"Everyone on our team is comfortable with shooting," Cohen said. "And it's something we've been working on a lot in practice because we realize we haven't been on that much. But we know we can make those shots. Everyone was contributing, not just one person."

Indeed, the Raiders made 10 3-pointers as a team, including a perfect 3-for-3 performance from beyond the arc by Kori Willison off the bench. Cat Karr also made two and checked into double figures with 10 points.

"They all shot the ball really well," Glenbard South coach Morgan Kasperek said. "We can shoot the ball, we just haven't done it. We are a young team, with the exception of Maggie.

"We really concentrate on defense to start the year. The offense takes a little while to come. When you concentrate that much on defense, it takes a while to get the offense rolling. But we are not playing for game one, we are establishing ourselves for the end of the year."

The Sabres (2-9, 1-5) only had two players score -- Riya Patel made four 3-pointers and netted 12 points and Mandy Mien chipped in with 8.

"They shot the ball well," Streamwood coach George Rosner said. "They moved the ball well, they played defense. We had no answer for their offense and we only had two players score. Normally we have lots of people score. We didn't have that tonight."

Elgin, Larkin alums ready for round two

By: Jerry Fitzpatrick



- Frank Jakubicek, left, has helped Cary-Grove get off to a 6-2 start averaging 13.6 points a game.

Coming soon to a gym near you: Larkin vs. Elgin alumni, Part Two.

Organized by Elgin graduate Brandon Grissette ('07), Elgin High's Chesbrough Fieldhouse hosted its biggest crowd of the season last January when alumni from the city's two public school squared off for charity.

Due to public demand -- not to mention fevered interest from the players themselves -- the Elgin vs Larkin alumni challenge returns on Wednesday, Dec. 19, this time at Larkin.

"Chesbrough is bigger and holds more people, but I wanted to give Larkin the opportunity to host it as well," Grissette said. "I felt it would be something cool for Larkin's fans."

Proceeds will be donated to the Easter Seals Jayne Shover Center in Elgin, which helps infants, children and adults with disabilities achieve maximum independence and provides support to their families.

Like last January, the event will feature two men's games. The first game with older alumni (Old School) begins at 7:15 p.m. A second game with recent graduates (New School) tips at 8:05 p.m.

DJ Ace Boogie returns to host and provide commentary throughout the evening and local dance team 2 Crucial will entertain between games. The Larkin band, drum line and dance team will also perform.

The new twist? The event begins with a women's game for the first time. The Elgin women take on the Larkin women at 6:15 p.m.

The Larkin roster includes Tissanie Simmons, Jill (Thomas) Kowalyszyn, Courtney (LaFerle) Massie and all-time leading scorer Marlee Kyles.

The Elgin roster spans the last 25 years of that program's history. The Class of '93 is represented by Jennifer Kiefer and Apryl Rodman Lowe. Lakiya Harvey ('16) is the most recent graduate.

The Old School men's games showcases well-known players like Elgin's Jessie Henderson ('90), Wallace Lynch ('93), Rodney Clifton ('95), Mark Bartee ('95) and Charlie Tomlin ('03).

Larkin counters with players like David Binion ('92), Sherick Simpson ('93), Steve Knapp ('03), Paul Kowalyszyn ('04), Dayvon Ellis ('06) and Drew Jones ('14).

There will be a pregame ceremony at 6:50 p.m. to honor Simpson for his 2018 induction to the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

The New School men's game tips at 8:05 p.m. The big addition since last January? Two-time Daily Herald All-Area Honorary Captain Kory Brown ('12) will play for Elgin.

Brown and fellow all-area honorary captain Arie Williams ('13) head a loaded roster that includes Grissette ('07), Jeremy Granger ('08), Armani Williams ('08), Xavier Granger ('07), D'Angelo Stewart ('08), Marcus Redburg ('09) and Isaiah Butler ('14).

Larkin may have its hands full. Brown, Grissette, Redburg, Arie Williams, Jeremy Granger and Isaiah Butler and others play together regularly. They won the Schaumburg men's league last summer and currently lead a men's league based in Huntley. Grissette said the former Maroons won a game last Sunday by 42 points. "The other team actually quit with two minutes left," he said. "If we don't win by 25, it feels like a loss."

Win or lose, Grissette said he is looking forward to a second successful event that celebrates basketball in the city of Elgin.

"As soon as last game was over, I instantly started thinking about Round 2," he said. "I was just overwhelmed by the feedback from the community and different people wanting to know if we were going to do it again. It feels like we've started something special."

Trojans aiming high: Cary-Grove is one of several Fox Valley Conference teams involved in a wide-open title chase.

Led by 6-foot-6 junior Frank Jakubicek (13.6 ppg, 6.9 rpg) and 6-1 junior guard Beau Frericks (18.1 ppg), the Trojans are as balanced and deep as they've been in years.

Cary-Grove (6-2, 2-1) notched two key road wins last week to open FVC play but suffered a 3-point setback at home against Dundee-Crown on Wednesday.

The Trojans prevailed 62-48 at Huntley last Wednesday, thanks to 20 points from 6-5 senior forward David Aulert.

Last Saturday, senior forward Ryan Rice scored 18 points to pace a 58-47 victory at Crystal Lake South.

"We're playing a lot better than we have in the past," Rice said.

Jakubicek, who has an offer from DePaul and strong interest from Belmont and Northern Iowa, found himself in early foul trouble in both games. The Trojans discovered other ways to score.

"I feel really confident we have a lot of really good personnel on our team," Jakubicek said. "We have a lot of weapons. And we all work really hard in practice every day trying to get better. I feel confident it will keep getting better and we will keep winning more games."

FVC teams have taken turns beating each other in the early going. Cary-Grove defeated Huntley (5-3, 2-2) and Crystal Lake South (6-3, 2-2) but lost to Dundee-Crown (7-1, 2-1), which lost to Huntley by 17 points on Dec. 1. CL South, in turn, routed Huntley by 19 on Wednesday. Hampshire (4-4, 3-1) knocked off CL South last week by 6 points but dropped an 84-73 decision in overtime on Wednesday against early league leader Crystal Lake Central (5-4, 3-0).

The Trojans think they will be in the thick of the FVC race until the end and be in position to make postseason noise.

"We have high aspirations to do things that Cary-Grove basketball hasn't done," third-year coach Adam McCloud said. "Guys believe they can do it and I think they believe they can do it in a lot of different ways. Everybody thinks they can compete and play at a high level."

Said Jakubicek: "We went through our rebuilding phase and now we're sort of seeing the success that comes out of that. It's exciting."

Bartlett tops Larkin for 7th straight win

By: Scott Walsh

Good coaches always find something for their teams to work on, no matter how well the team is playing. Case in point: Bartlett head coach Brad Hunt.

After watching the Hawks dismantle Larkin 52-29 Thursday evening for their seventh straight win after dropping a pair of games over Thanksgiving, Hunt's attention was already focused like a laser on Bartlett's home game 24 hours hence against St. Charles East.

"This is a quick turnaround and we have got to be better tomorrow," Hunt said. "Give Larkin credit -- they out-physicaled us and really brought the game to us. But we're a natural drive-and-kick team, and when we bring the ball up and make one pass then shoot, we can't do that and we did it too many times tonight. When we played our-drive-and-kick game, we got a lot of layups and wide-open threes."

Bartlett improved to 9-2 overall and a perfect 6-0 in the Upstate Eight. Freshman guard Mackenzie Hare led all scorers with 19 points, 11 of which came in the third quarter.

Sophomore Justina Hernandez scored all 13 of her points in the first half. Junior point guard Alexis Sinclair added 11.

Larkin, which dropped to 3-8 on the season and 2-4 in the conference, got 6 points apiece from juniors Janelle Clements and Ashley Miller and 5 each from classmates Brianna Young and Aaliyah Dixon. Both Young and Dixon embodied that physical dimension that irked Hunt, as each had 10 rebounds to give Larkin a 33-30 advantage on the glass.

"We always try to come out as a team and make the extra pass and keep up our teamwork," explained Hernandez. "Coach is always encouraging us and always gives us great feedback and constructive criticism on how we played. Sometimes we forget, but this isn't completely new to us."

Hernandez wasted little time before attacking the Royals' defense. Two minutes into the game and with the score tied at 2-2, she scored a second-chance bucket after Teagan Noesen rebounded Hernandez's errant shot, then added a drive to put Bartlett on top 6-2. Sinclair then drained back-to-back 3-pointers to push the Hawks to a 12-2 lead after one.

The second stanza belonged to Hernandez, who scored 9 of Bartlett's 15 points. She kicked off a 12-0 run when she converted a breakaway layup and provided the bookend bucket on a drive with just over a minute left in the half. Young got Larkin to double digits with a trio of free throws in the final 47 seconds, but the Royals trailed 27-12 at halftime.

If Hernandez stole the Bartlett show in the second, it was Hare's time to shine in the third. She tallied 11 straight points for the Hawks to put them up 38-22, then watched as Sinclair drained a trey with nine seconds left to make it 41-22 after 24 minutes.

South Elgin shakes off slow start, tops Elgin

By: Eric Bridges

South Elgin defeated Elgin 51-37 at Chesbrough Field House Friday night in a basketball game pairing Upstate Eight Conference rivals that didn't start out the way either team had hoped it would.

However, in the end, it may have ended in a way that gave each coach something to build upon.

South Elgin coach Brett Johnson gave credit to the Maroons (2-6, 0-4) for battling the entire 32 minutes of the game and also thought that the seniors on the team came away with an unexpected benefit.

"We knew coming in that Elgin was going to zone us and it was going to be tough," Johnson said. "Hess (Elgin coach David) does a great job preparing his team for the next team and he knew that we have some shooters. We had that nice run in the second quarter by some of our bench players, but we have a lot of work to do. Elgin did a great job tonight of battling us and making us play, and I think our seniors found out a little about themselves tonight. Hopefully, we can take advantage of that at some point."

South Elgin (7-1, 4-0) led 7-2 after the first quarter as both teams struggled to maintain possessions and capitalize on open shots. Maroons senior Trey Yarber brought the host team back to take an 11-7 lead to start the second quarter, canning a 3-pointer and earning another 4 points when he converted steals into layups.

But Yarber's efforts weren't enough to hold off the Storm, as Vincent Miskiewicz and fellow senior Drake Montgomery scored 13 points between them to take the lead back 20-11 and thwart the early comeback.

Miskiewicz and Montgomery saw an opportunity to provide some senior leadership for their team to help pull them through a tough spot in the game.

"We had a slow start tonight and we didn't come out focused," Miskiewicz said. "Our shots weren't falling, so we (Montgomery) had to step it up and take over. We're the seniors and the team captains, so we had to do whatever it takes to win."

The Maroons trailed 47-24 midway through the fourth quarter, but went on a 13-0 run to bring life back into a gymnasium that had been quiet since the halftime show had ended. The rally wasn't enough to turn the game into a win, but Hess saw the effort that he is hoping to instill in his team as he builds the new program.

"We talked before the game about competing and what that looks like for 32 minutes," Hess said. "I was proud of the effort ... that's what you're looking for. That's the foundation, and then the next step is to play efficient, play smart, and play together. We're playing harder, but that's the tough thing about basketball. You have to play hard on defense, but then you have to play controlled on offense. We're looking for growth

there. I feel fortunate to work for some great coaches, and the one thing we always talk about here is the culture comes first day in and day out. Preparation is so important."

Burlington Central shoots past South Elgin

By: John Lemon

Burlington Central scheduled a number of Class 4A schools on its nonconference slate this season, and the Rockets' first challenge came Saturday afternoon at South Elgin.

Thanks to 22 points from junior Kathryn Schmidt and 20 from sophomore Elana Wells, the Rockets passed that test in thrilling fashion, coming from 8 points behind in the fourth quarter to win 54-52.

It's the first of three straight 4A exams for Burlington Central (10-1) whose next two games are at Batavia and Dundee-Crown.

"It's a nice change from our conference to play really good teams like this," Schmidt said. "They (South Elgin) hit a lot of shots. It's fun to get out and play with them."

The teams traded the lead 9 times. After the Rockets jumped out to a 14-2 start, South Elgin chipped away to within 30-28 at halftime. The Storm kept surging in the third quarter to build their biggest lead at 45-37 before the Rockets rallied in the fourth.

"Intensity happened, we had to play defense, we had to be smart on our plays, make stops, capitalize on offense," Wells said. "Our conference isn't that strong but playing these nonconference games is fun. I like the competition."

Schmidt and Wells both made six 3-pointers. The final of those came from Schmidt well behind the 3-point arc with 3:20 remaining, erasing South Elgin's last lead of the game and putting the Rockets up 50-48.

Megan McClure drove to tie the game for South Elgin (8-5). The Storm got the ball back with a chance for the lead. But when their shot missed Wells chased down the long rebound and raced the other way, banking in an off-balance lay-in to give the Rockets the lead for good at 52-50 with 1:40 left.

"Coach said to attack the basket, play smart," Wells said. "I was hoping for a foul but didn't get it but glad the ball went in."

Burlington Central held, then extended to a 54-50 lead when Madelyn Menke drove baseline and fed Schmidt for an inside basket. McClure scored for the Storm with 5 seconds remaining, Wells missed a free throw with :1.7 left but South Elgin didn't have time to get off a desperation full-court heave.

With South Elgin up 45-38, Wells and Schmidt nailed long 3s in a 20-second span to quickly bring the Rockets within a point. It was back and forth from there with Schmidt finding Zoey Kollhoff for a conventional 3-point play to match a 3-pointer from South Elgin's Casey Brennan.

"They have two Division I players, it is what it is," South Elgin coach Dan Mandernack said. "I scheduled this game to play a great team, big crowd, playoff atmosphere. We're 6-0 in conference and we're all focusing on that but today was an opportunity to play a really good team. They hit some big shots."

Brennan led South Elgin with 17 points including a 3 to cap a 12-4 run to end the third quarter. McClure added 14 points, freshman Ella Winterhalder came off the bench for 9 points in the first half, and Miah Galvin finished with 8 points and 6 rebounds.

The Storm played without Aryanna Williams, their second leading scorer who recently broke her foot and is out at least six weeks.

"Our girls stepped up and met the challenge," Mandernack said. "Just excited to see where this takes us. They (Wells and Schmidt) weren't getting layups or running a set play, they were pretty much coming down and being all-state caliber players. Those girls are really good. We'll just learn from it."

Kollhoff added 7 points for the Rockets while providing much of the defense on South Elgin's leading scorer McClure. Reili Gardner hustled for 7 rebounds.

"South Elgin played well," Rockets coach Mark Smith said. "We haven't played a team like that for a while. Just a gummy, great fourth quarter for us. Hit some 3s and pulled it out."

Family bond strong as Paynes team up at Streamwood

By: Craig Brueske



- Streamwood's first-year coach Kent Payne, left, has been joined on the bench by his son Cully, middle, and St. Charles North grad Nick Neri, right.

When Kent Payne took over as Streamwood's boys basketball coach earlier this year, one of the first things he did was assemble a varsity assistant coaching staff.

He didn't have to look too far, asking his oldest son, Cully, and his longtime friend, Nick Neri, to come onboard along with family friend, Joe Nemetz, who is also Cully's godfather.

Returning to high school head coaching for the first time in 22 years, Payne has surrounded himself with a pair of former high school basketball standouts in Cully Payne and Neri.

Cully, 28, is a 2009 graduate of Schaumburg, where he earned first team IBCA all-state honors after averaging 21.6 points, 5.4 assists, 3.1 rebounds and 2.2 steals per game during his senior season.

Upon graduation, Cully attended the University of Iowa, where he was named to the all-Big Ten Freshman Team after averaging 8.7 points and 3.8 assists per game for the Hawkeyes in 2009-2010.

He finished his collegiate career at Loyola, where he averaged 7.9 points and 4.2 assists during the 2012-2013 campaign.

Neri, 28, is a 2009 graduate of St. Charles North, where he averaged 14.3 points and 4.9 assists per game as a senior while helping lead the North Stars to a 22-win season and a regional championship.

After joining Cully as a preferred walk-on at Iowa in 2009-2010, Neri transferred to the University of Wisconsin-Parkside, where he spent his final 3 years and played on the Rangers' NCAA Division II tournament-qualifying team as a senior.

They may have traded in their uniforms for street clothes but they can still be found again near the action.

"When my Dad got the job, I figured I'd be there maybe one or two times a week helping out," said Cully. "I've been there every day."

It didn't take long for Neari to make a decision either after being asked to join the Sabres' basketball coaching staff.

"I was really excited for Kent when I learned he was getting back into coaching," said Neari. "I work together with Cully all day (at CJQ Electric, Inc. -- a lighting contractor in St. Charles) and figured it would be good for us to get out of the office and help kids play better basketball."

Kent coached Cully and Neari in their early AAU playing days with the Illinois Spartans.

"We would play teams with guys two or three years older than us," recalled Neari. "We were a bunch of suburban kids who couldn't dunk and we ended up beating some inner-city teams with Division I recruits. Those were some of the best days of my life."

Both Cully, who owns CJQ Electric, Inc., and Neari soon realized some of the challenges they faced at Streamwood.

"The demographics are so different from where I played (at Schaumburg)," said Cully. "There had been a losing culture here at Streamwood -- something that needed to be changed. From the beginning of the summer to now, it has been a complete 360 (degree) difference."

A year ago, the Sabres finished 11-19 overall but were winless in the Upstate Eight Conference River Division.

Just a month into the current campaign, Streamwood finds itself at 3-6 overall but already owns a pair of conference victories (2-2 with wins over Glenbard East and Elgin).

"The players are ecstatic," said Cully. "Meanwhile, I'm asking myself, 'how do we get better?'"

Cully admits it's a "cool situation" working alongside his dad.

"I love that man," he said. "He's been there for me through everything -- the business world, basketball, life. I've learned so much from him. It's kind of like we've come full circle -- my dad had my grandpa (Jim) on the bench as an assistant (at St. Edward) before he was diagnosed with ALS."

Cully said his dad has mellowed quite a bit from his earlier days.

"I remember my dad telling me I should walk home one time after I had a bad game at Schaumburg," he said. "He was hard on us but we wound up having three Division I players in the family (Cully's sister, Katlyn -- Florida Gulf Coast, EIU, NIU and brother, Quinten -- Ball State, Dartmouth). On the flip side, my parents allowed me to be where I am now in my business by taking chances."

Both Cully and Neri are currently enjoying the ride as coaches.

"I love the kids," said Neri. "I enjoy seeing them work at it."

"The kids have been unbelievably responsive," added Cully. "It has been a great experience."

Poulin reflects on 200: In his 13th season, St. Charles North basketball coach Tom Poulin recorded his 200th career victory during last week's 37-30 victory over Jacobs.

Not bad for a guy who didn't expect to become a varsity head coach.

"I was told many times, 'you're not going to get it,'" recalled Poulin. "I waited for a long time just to get a shot. I coached eight years of girls basketball before I got the boys sophomore job here.

"I was happy -- that was good. I could have stayed there for 20 years so to get an opportunity (as a head coach) and now to have 200 (wins) -- it's great."

Bartlett breaks school record in win over Glenbard East

Daily Herald Reports

Bartlett set a new school record with sixteen 3-point baskets Monday in an 81-19 victory over Glenbard East.

The previous school record was twelve 3s set earlier this year against East Aurora and Streamwood.

Mackenzie Hare led the Hawks (11-2, 7-0 in the Upstate Eight Conference) with 19 points. Lexie Sinclair scored 16 points and Shelly Banks had 10.

Teagan Noesen, Hannah Walker and Savannah Standefer all added 9 points for the Hawks while Hayden Dudek and Sophia Moore both scored 5 for Glenbard East (4-9, 3-4).



- Bartlett's Justina Hernandez passes the ball against Glenbard East during the Hawks' win at home Monday night.



- Bartlett's Alexis Sinclair, left, keeps the ball from Glenbard East's Sophie Moore during varsity girls basketball at Bartlett High School Monday night.



- Bartlett's Danielle Hedeem, left, guards Glenbard East's Lauren Huber during varsity girls basketball at Bartlett High School Monday night.



- Bartlett's Danielle Hedeem takes a shot against Glenbard East during varsity girls basketball at Bartlett High School Monday night.



- Glenbard East's Emily Ryan saves the ball from going out of bounds during varsity girls basketball at Bartlett High School Monday night.



- Glenbard East's Lauren Huber, right, brings the ball up court as Bartlett's Shelly Banks prepares to defend during varsity girls basketball at Bartlett High School Monday night.



- Bartlett's Alexis Sinclair soars to the hoop against Glenbard East during varsity girls basketball at Bartlett High School Monday night.



- Bartlett's Lexie Sinclair drives to the basket.



- Glenbard East's Hayden Dudek, right, snags a rebound in front of Bartlett's Hannah Walker during varsity girls basketball at Bartlett High School Monday night.

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Led by Luke

Scheffers steps into leadership void to boost St. Charles North

By: Paul Johnson



- St. Charles North's Luke Scheffers, right, drives against Larkin's Pierre Black last season. This season, the North Stars are counting on him after the team graduated five starters.

After graduating all five starters from last season, St. Charles North knew it would need junior point guard Luke Scheffers to take on a larger role.

Scheffers has answered the call, helping to push the North Stars (4-3) over .500 with a comeback win Tuesday over Jacobs. It was coach Tom Poulin's 200th career win.

"We're getting our chemistry together now," Scheffers said. "We're adjusting to a new system. Race and space is our key term.

"Being a point guard, you're the coach on the floor. You have to make sure you're leading in a positive way."

Poulin had a feeling Scheffers would eventually be a standout from the moment he arrived as a freshman.

"He stepped right into that leadership role last spring and has been the person that I go to," Poulin said.

"He then relays it to the team. He led throughout the summer and the fall.

"Luke leads the team with his work ethic and his commitment to the game and his commitment to improving. He really took the reins at the end of last year."

Scheffers said it was a point of pride for the North Stars to deliver Tuesday's milestone win for Poulin, who's in his 13th season as St. Charles North's head coach.

"It's definitely something I'll remember and something that I appreciate," Poulin said.

"It makes you look back and reflect on all the people. You remember the people and the relationships that you had.

"That's really what it's all about. That's what a night like that does for me."

As usual, Poulin put together a grueling nonconference schedule to go with the beefed-up schedule in the new DuKane Conference.

The North Stars play South Elgin on Saturday at the Sears Centre, followed by next weekend's rivalry game with St. Charles East. North drew third-seeded Danville in the Dec. 27 opening of the Pontiac Holiday Tournament.

"We're pretty confident coming into the next couple weeks," Scheffers said.

"(The tough schedule) gets us better every game. We're looking forward to that. That just strengthens us."

Road trip: For the third time in program history, Larkin is heading to the Route 66 Shootout in Waynesville, Mo.

The Royals (3-6) face St. Louis Christian on Friday and Nettleton (Ark.) on Saturday.

“They’re both highly regarded teams, so we’re going to have our hands full,” Larkin coach Deryn Carter said.

Carter said that the games are fun, but the main takeaway from the weekend is the time the team spends at the Fort Leonard Wood, a U.S. Army training installation in Pulaski, Mo.

“We get to tour the base, talk to soldiers and talk to the commanding officers,” Carter said.

“It’s a special trip in that regard. When the guys get done in our program, they always look back on that so it will be a great experience.”

The young Royals won two straight before stumbling Tuesday against Glenbard South.

“We’re getting better, but we still aren’t where we want to be ultimately,” Carter said. “We’re working on it, but I’m happy with where we’re at.”

Rising stars: Elgin Academy has been one of the area’s breakout teams, and the Hilltoppers picked up their biggest win of the season Wednesday.

The tiny school with an enrollment of 112 knocked off Harvest Christian 46-42.

The Hilltoppers (5-3) are seeking their first regional title since 1983. It remains the program’s only regional title.

Junior guard Ryan Ulrichs has made an immediate impact after transferring in from Grayslake Central. He scored 19 points Tuesday.

Elgin Academy travels to Yorkville Christian on Friday and hosts Chicago University on Saturday.

Paul Johnson is a freelance reporter for The Courier-News

Boys Basketball

Top 5

With records through Thursday and previous ranking in parentheses.

1. South Elgin 6-1 (2)
2. Dundee-Crown 7-1 (3)
3. St. Charles East 5-3 (1)

4. Burlington Central 5-3 (4)

5. Huntley (5)

Player of the Week: Senior forward Nikola Sinik scored a career-high 34 points Tuesday to lead Streamwood to a 74-51 upset win over Elgin. The Sabres snapped a two-game losing streak.

Hare stays hot, leads Bartlett over St. Charles East

By: Dave Hess

Mackenzie Hare certainly doesn't play like a freshman.

The Bartlett first-year player scored 16 points including 6 crucial points in the fourth quarter to lead the Hawks to a 46-38 nonconference win over St. Charles East in Bartlett Friday night.

"Mackenzie is one of our young and talented players," said Bartlett coach Brad Hunt. "She had a good game tonight and made some big shots down the stretch."

Hare, who was 6-of-10 from the field and 2-of-4 from 3-point range, grabbed 6 rebounds and dished out 3 assists with 3 steals.

"It was a tough game," said Hare. "St. Charles (East) played us tough in the second half and made it close. It was nice to get the win."

Justina Hernandez added 10 points with 3 assists for the Hawks (9-2).

With Hare connecting on a pair of 3-pointers with 10 points and Hernandez adding 8, the Hawks held a 27-17 advantage at halftime.

But, the Saints (1-8) mounted a valiant third quarter comeback.

Led by 8 points from Alexis Kiefer, the Saints outscored the Hawks 14-5 in the third quarter and sliced Bartlett's lead to 32-31 after 3 quarters.

The Hawks seized control of the game by scoring the first 6 points of the fourth quarter on 2 baskets by Hare and a putback by Savannah Standefer and led 38-31 with 5:22 left in the game.

"We didn't play a very good second half," said Hunt. "We are very young and we made enough plays to win. Give St. Charles East credit they played with a lot of energy and got within 1 and made it close. They didn't quit. We didn't shoot free throws (9-of-18) very well. We showed a lot of resiliency for such a young team. We are off to a good start but our young players are still meshing together."

The Saints climbed as close as 41-37 on a putback from Gabrielle Schmidt with 1:38 left. But, St. Charles East couldn't get any closer.

Kiefer and Victoria Kortan paced the Saints with 8 apiece, while Ashley DiOrio (2 3's) and Schmidt scored 6 apiece.

"I certainly can't fault the effort from our young team," said St. Charles East coach Aubree Schuett. "We made a slight adjustment at halftime and played much better in the second half. We had plenty of opportunities to take the lead but we had too many unforced turnovers. Our success will come. We need to be patient."