

August 19, 2023

Back-to- School Days



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Shiloh is starting off strong

CUSD 1 begins fall semester with school resource officer

BY GARY HENRY
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HUME — It's a homecoming of sorts for Deputy Ryan Washburn.

The Shiloh High School graduate is returning to his alma mater as the district's school resource officer (SRO). This is a new position for both the district and the Edgar County Sheriff's Department.

Washburn started with the sheriff's department in May after 12 years with the Paris Police Department where he rose to the rank of sergeant. The joint effort to create a Shiloh SRO has taken several years, in part because it was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Chief Deputy Matt Smith has been working on this," said Washburn, who was eager for the opportunity when it arose. "I knew I was the guy for the job. I liked school, and when I was approached, I jumped on it."

The school district is reimbursing the sheriff's department for Washburn's salary. The department is supplying Washburn's vehicle, and the county has the legal responsibility to cover his benefits package.

In addition to being a Shiloh alum, Washburn brings something else to the position which Shiloh District Superintendent Bill Myers appreciates — Washburn is already certified as a school resource officer.

According to Myers, there are approximately 30,000 people working as school officers in the country and only around 6,000 are trained and certified as a resource officer.



Gary Henry/The Prairie Press

Deputy Ryan Washburn is working as a school resource officer at Shiloh School. This is a new first-time position made possible through an intergovernmental agreement between the school district and Edgar County. SRO's provide security but Washburn wants to use the position to foster better community relations between students and law enforcement.

He said many times an officer starts the position and then departs for several months to complete training leaving the school without the services desired.

This is not the case for Washburn and Shiloh. He started the job Tuesday, Aug. 15, and

will remain in the school since he has already completed training and certification.

Myers sees having a sworn officer in the building as an integral part of the school's security plan.

"We can be very proactive in our building,"

said Myers, noting the district has hired counselors, updated doors and windows, placed security cameras in and around the building plus installed two Flock license plate reading cameras on Shiloh Road.

These precautions are important features to keep students and staff safe but the nagging constant for Myers and school board members is the school's isolated location.

"Part of wanting an SRO is how long it takes somebody to get here," said Myers. "This was just the last piece of how we prepare for the unknown."

Washburn acknowledged providing security is an important part of the SRO position, but he sees it as more than an armed presence. He wants to build relationships with the students as somebody they can trust and turn to for help.

One approach will be talking with students and attempting to relate to them on a personal level by sharing likes in music and other entertainment.

"They just see the badge, and that's it," said Washburn. "If they can see the person, that helps."

An additional step in preparing for the job is conferring with Rich Wilson, who served for a period as a Paris Police Department SRO within the Paris 95 school district. Washburn worked with Wilson before Wilson's retirement and said the senior officer was a wealth of knowledge about what he encountered as an SRO.

>> SHILOH, 4



Welcome back students!

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SHILOH

From Page 3

Law enforcement was not on Washburn's radar as a student at Shiloh, but the idea developed after his 2006 graduation. He obtained a criminal justice degree from Parkland and was initially hired as a corrections officer at the Edgar County Jail for approximately five months before starting as a patrol officer for the Paris Police Department.

"I never ventured too far from the area," said Washburn.

Now he has come full circle back to the sheriff's department and Shiloh School.

"I want to become a pillar of trust for these kids," Washburn said. "I want to be a resource for them if they have a question they can't ask a teacher or if something is going on at home."

His work will also include attending extracurricular activities and sporting events, although that requires some balancing of his schedule as a full-time SRO.

Washburn said some departments provide an SRO, but the officer must split that work with other department duties, so it is not possible to give full attention to the students.

"That's what I think will be great about this — it's a dedicated spot," Washburn said.

Having fun isn't hard with a library card

BY BETHANY WAGONER
bwagoner@prairiepress.net

Crestwood Paris School District #4 and the Paris Carnegie Library have joined forces to ensure children from all backgrounds receive equal access to literature.

Ceili Boylan stepped into her role as director of the Paris Carnegie Public Library in 2022 carrying a lifelong passion for literature and education.

"I think some people underestimate the importance of reading, but it increases things like empathy and understanding," Boylan said. "It also is so important to know how to understand words, outside of reading for enjoyment we will always have guides, instructions and contracts in life."

Boylan shared her love of reading as she connected with several local educators and sought a way to get more library cards into the hands of children in Edgar County.

"There really is no such thing as a free library card," said Boylan. "Residents in certain locations, like inside of Paris city limits, receive free cards only because of what they pay in taxes."

>> LIBRARY, 5



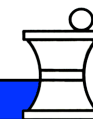
Bethany Wagoner/The Prairie Press

Crestwood School and The Paris Carnegie Library are working together and sharing their resources. A new agreement created by the two organizations gives free library cards to each Crestwood student regardless of their proximity to the library building.

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Justine Bogue PharmD

LIBRARY

From Page 4

"This unfortunately makes it much more expensive for families in rural areas to utilize public libraries."

Boylan found an equally passionate ally in Danelle Young, the Superintendent of Crestwood School and the two began working together to get books into the hands of children regardless of their proximity to the library building.

Young and Boylan presented a potential agreement to both the school board and library board to provide all students at Crestwood with library cards at no cost to the student, or their families.

"Crestwood students will not have to pay for library cards because the school has agreed to share resources with us," Boylan explained. "They have some great resources for professional development, safety training and learning new skills that would be hard for us, as a staff of five, to obtain."

The leadership and educators at Crestwood school agree it is a beneficial partnership.

"The Paris Library is a valuable resource that will support educational opportunities for all of our students," said Young. "This partnership will have a positive impact on the education of our students as well as increase our community engagement."

The access students receive from a library card is not limited to only the local Paris library. Modern technology provides digital resources and easy to use apps students can use to obtain electronic copies of books and media.

"Illinois is a great state for libraries, and they offer a statewide delivery system to libraries called ILDs (Illinois Library Delivery System)," said Boylan. "This system gives kids attending Crestwood, living in rural areas, the ability to get books from large libraries and places like Chicago."

Because of the school's active participation in the agreement students will also be able to check-out and return physical copies of books at school.

"I can give a child a library card, but if they cannot get to the library, it does not do them much good," Boylan said. "The school is going to help with getting books back and forth and helping students digitally access the whole of Illinois libraries."

The collaboration is facilitated through an intergovernmental agreement with any fees being paid for in full by the Crestwood school district.

"I'm grateful that Crestwood has a school board that recognized the value and support we could bring to (Crestwood) kids," said Boylan.

Four ways to help your student's teachers

SPECIAL TO THE PRAIRIE PRESS

(Family Features) —Teachers are more than leaders in their classrooms, they are leaders in the communities they serve, committed to educating the leaders of tomorrow, and their value cannot be overstated. To provide an optimal learning environment that equips their students for success, teachers often go above and beyond, sometimes at great personal expense.

In fact, an analysis by My eLearning World estimates teachers will spend an average of \$820.14 out of pocket on school supplies during the 2023-24 school year, the largest amount ever, which doesn't include all of the hours dedicated beyond the traditional school day.

To help alleviate some of the burden, consider these ways parents, guardians and community members can contribute and support the efforts of educators.

VOLUNTEER IN THE CLASSROOM

One of the easiest ways to learn what life is like in the classroom and truly understand the needs is to spend some time there helping out. Many school districts could use volunteers to assist with one-on-one tutoring, organizing library books, chaperoning field trips, speaking to classes about career paths and more. Start by checking with your child's teacher or calling the front office to see what opportunities might be available.

ASSIST WITH CLASSROOM REGISTRIES

Well-equipped classrooms are essential to student success, but teachers cannot do it alone. To help assist educators in reducing out-of-pocket expenses for classroom supplies, Walmart's Classroom Registry allows teachers to create personalized lists of items they need, making it easy for the community to contribute to and support their efforts. Tailored to educators with personalized creation flow and recommended classroom items unique to each grade level, including popular items such as stationery, classroom decorations, art supplies, classroom treats and rewards such as stickers and edutainment items, teachers can share their lists quickly and easily through direct links to their custom registries. Registries are also discoverable via the registry search using the teacher's last name and state.

WORK WITH YOUR STUDENT AT HOME

Not all learning takes place in the classroom. In fact, parents can model the impor-

tance of education at home and create good habits such as doing homework at a certain time each night, getting a good night's rest before school and using lessons learned in the classroom during family time. Contact the child's teacher to learn more about the lesson plan and what to do at home to assist with the student's education.



Special to The Prairie Press

Teachers play a critical role in childhood development and parents can assist that work in multiple ways.

ATTEND SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS TO VOICE SUPPORT

Because important decisions that impact teachers are often made by those not in the classroom every day, keeping tabs on the issues impacting teachers and local school districts can help parents advocate for edu-

cators if the need arises. Start by attending a few school board meetings to learn how they operate and get a handle on issues directly impacting teachers. Then make your voice heard, or run for the school board, to support policies and actions that serve teachers' best interests.

Here's to a Successful Year!



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Study hard, party hard

Local events help students kick off the school year with a bang



Gary Henry/The Prairie Press

Emma Brown returns a serve in a pick-up game of volleyball during the Aug. 6 Chrisman Back To School Bash. In addition to games and a bounce house, the event featured hot dogs, fresh popped corn and other snacks.



Gary Henry/The Prairie Press

Mason Aaron was on the pitcher's mound for a kickball game at the Aug. 6 Chrisman Back To School Bash in Centennial Park. Organizers said the purpose was to have a fun day as students get ready for a return to class.

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Gary Henry/The Prairie Press

The Chrisman Back To School Bash Aug. 6 in Centennial Park featured a variety of events as a welcome back to school for Chrisman students.



Bethany Wagoner/The Prairie Press

A staff member from Horizon Health shows off his Back to School Bang shirt as he prepares to supervise the Dunk Tank activities during the annual event hosted by the local hospital.



Bethany Wagoner/The Prairie Press

EMT Trevan Land spends time on his hands and knees teaching multiple young students how CPR and other live-saving practices are performed during Horizon Health's Back to School Bang.



Bethany Wagoner/The Prairie Press

Students at multiple different grade levels participate in an obstacle course with assistance from Horizon Health staff members during the annual Back to School Bang event.



Bethany Wagoner/The Prairie Press

Brother and sister, Emery Peterson and Trey Peterson smile for a photo with Paris Illinois Lions' mascot inside of Horizon Health's facility during the Back to School Bang.

Wishing our
students & teachers a
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2023-24 Back to School photo album



Special to The Prairie Press
Alexis L., freshman, Paris High School.



Special to The Prairie Press
Callum T., left, and Jocelyn T., right, Carolyn Wenz and the Creative Center for Children.



Special to The Prairie Press
Jaxon E.



Special to The Prairie Press
Braxton P., first grade, Memorial Elementary School.



Special to The Prairie Press
Lillian C., first grade.



Special to The Prairie Press
Ali S.



Special to The Prairie Press
Mayleen J., sixth grade.



Logan C., left, and Ethan C, right.

Special to The Prairie Press



Sophia L., fifth grade.

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Ryker P.

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Emma S.

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Samantha M., senior, Paris High School.

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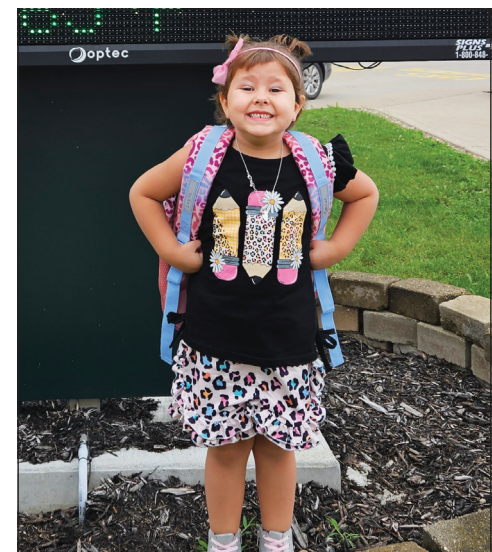
Gunner H.

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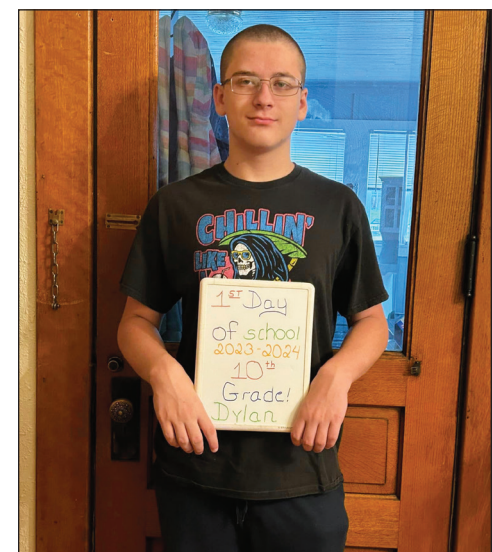
Fifth graders, from left to right, Alysia, Olivia, Tess, Hunter and Kyndall.

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Layla C., preschool.

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Dylan F.

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Landen T., left, and Kyndall T., right.

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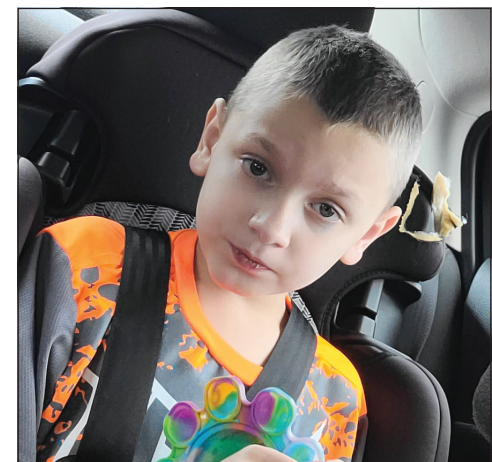
Ellison W.

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Levi P.

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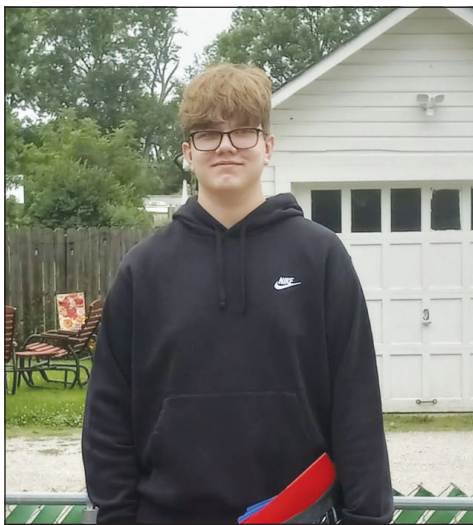
Elijah P.

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Keara B.

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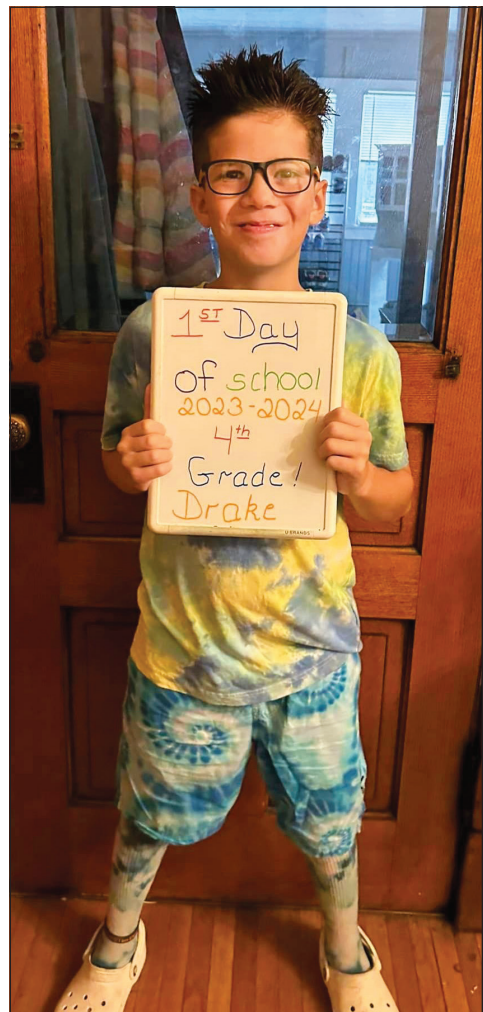
Gage W.

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Elijah-Scott W., Pre-K, Shiloh.

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Drake F.

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Karl L., sophomore.

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Leah S.

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Randi R.

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Taylyn B.

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Skylar P.

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Alex P.

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