

The Times Weekly

January 24-30, 2013 VOL. 25 Issue 4

One candidate out



By Wayne Horne

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A couple of weeks ago “The one last thing” item, which is a frequent part of this column, related some facts regarding gun violence in America. The number of homicides and suicides committed with firearms each year in our country is astronomical compared to most other countries in the world. That includes countries that are at war. The item seemed relevant given the national debate occurring regarding gun control. No mention was made in the column concerning a stand pro or con regarding guns. The numbers were presented as evidence of gun violence in our country. The purpose of this column has been stated several times over the years. Connect the dots. See where they go. Draw your own conclusions. Sometimes a preference will come out but by and large the idea is for the reader to draw their own conclusions. The fact is this column was born from an event that saw a young father of two children die as a result of random gun violence that occurred on Joliet’s near east side. The question that was asked at the time was “Where’s the outrage?”

One response received to the January 10th column was from an obviously outraged reader who believed his 2nd Amendment rights were being challenged. He emailed that the “anti-gun diatribe” prompted

>> SEE CANDIDATE, PG. 4



The brutal cold on Tuesday was the reason Joliet Junior College (JJC) celebrated the groundbreaking ceremony of their new expansion at the old White Store site indoors. Trustees along with the developers and JJC’s president, Debra Daniels shovel up chocolate cake dirt.

Joliet Junior College expansion in downtown Joliet

By Debra Hunter
Thetimesweekly.com

Joliet Junior College held a groundbreaking ceremony for its new City Center Campus building on Tuesday at the its Renaissance Center facility in downtown Joliet.

The college will start construction on the core and shell of the building this spring, which will be built just east of the Renaissance Center at the intersection of Webster and Chicago streets.

The six-story, 96,000 square-foot building will include space for the following programs: workforce

development, GED/ESL training, adult education and culinary arts, all programs that have a direct impact on improving employment opportunities for JJC students and community members.

“We could not do this without the support of our partners at the city, county and state levels—so we thank them for their belief in us and their investment in education,” said Board of Trustees Vice Chair Jeff May. “This is a project that we believe will not only increase access to education for many citizens in our district, but will also transform the landscape of downtown Joliet.”

May also expressed gratitude to

the citizens within the district who supported the 2008 referendum. “Funds from that referendum will go toward this project,” he said.

Dr. Debra Daniels, president of JJC, opened the ceremony recognizing several special guests and elected officials who were in attendance, including Tom Giarrante, Mayor of Joliet and Larry Walsh, Sr., Will County Executive to name a few of the officials in attendance.

Several members of the JJC Board of Trustees were also present, including Jeff May, Andrew Mihelich, Susan Marie Klen, Daniel O’Connell, Robert J. Wunderlich and Student Trustee

Keith Bryant.

In addition to Dr. Daniels, Trustee Jeff May, Joliet Mayor Tom Giarrante and Greg Werner of Mortenson Construction— which is contracted to build the building’s exterior— spoke at the event.

Mayor Giarrante said that the college’s plans for improving the downtown campus and a new intermodal transportation facility that will be built in Joliet at the same time both are significant milestones in the revitalization of downtown Joliet.

Demonica Kemper Architects

>> SEE JUNIOR COLLEGE, PG. 10

TOP NEWS

Easing age restriction

>> Page 2

New Gun Legislation

>> Page 4



A Bold Return

>> Page 5



Latino music

>> Page 13



Spartans Even Score

SPORTS Page 15

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Qualifiers for the VVSD Spelling Bee from A. Vito Martinez Middle School include (from left) Mia Alegado (7th grade), Meto Ajagu (6th grade) and Rory Richards (8th grade).

Three Martinez students make it to VVSD spelling bee

Rory Richards, Mia Alegado and Meto Ajagu will represent A. Vito Martinez Middle School at the Feb. 5 Valley View School District 365U Spelling Bee at Humphrey Middle School.

Richards won the 8th grade

division by spelling "implicit" correctly in the 12th round after runnerup Trey Harbert had misspelled "flirtatious."

Alegado took the 7th grade slot with an 8th round correct spelling of "intricate." Second place finisher

Tyler Lee missed on "ferocious."

Ajagu is the 6th grade representative thanks to a 7th round spelling of "explanation" following a misspelling by runnerup Derrick Perkins on the word "covetous."

St. Joseph Academy to Celebrate Catholic Schools Week

St. Joseph Academy is inviting the community to attend an Open House on Sunday, January 27, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 51 W. Jackson St. in downtown Joliet. The event will kick off Catholic Schools Week, celebrating the tradition of faith-based education.

St. Joseph Academy opened in the fall of 2010 and educates children from preschool through eighth grade. Elementary students attend Mass every morning at nearby St. Joseph Church and study religion through traditional religion classes. The preschool-kindergarten students are introduced to their faith through the Montessori-based Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. Although

St. Joseph Academy is a private independent school in the Catholic tradition, students of all faiths are welcome.

The preschool-kindergarten program is under the direction of a Montessori-trained teacher. Children from three to six are educated at their own pace, working through practical life and sensorial materials to introductory studies of math, reading, geography and science. Emphasis is on understanding and following directions and learning to respect ourselves, our friends, adults, and the environment.

The elementary program utilizes a blend of traditional and innovative methods, following the Montessori

practice of multi-age groupings and personalized instruction. Their studies are based on the Common Core State Standards and include opportunities to pursue studies in the fine arts. St. Joseph Academy also takes advantage of proximity to the Joliet Public Library, the Joliet-Area Historical Museum, the Rialto Theatre, Billie Limacher Bicentennial Park, and other nearby venues to enhance the students' education.

Anyone unable to attend the Open House is welcome to call the school and schedule a private tour or have information mailed. Call Jan Novotny, Head of School, or Cheryl Wilson, Director of Admissions, at 815-723-4567.

State program to help VVSD collect delinquent student fees

The Valley View School District 365U Board of Education has approved an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Illinois Office of the Comptroller to access and participate in the state's Local Debt Recovery Program.

The Local Debt Recovery Program allows units of local government to collect outstanding debt less than seven years old and greater than \$10 in coordination with the Illinois Comptroller's Office. Debtor records are stored on the state database until a payment,

such as a state income tax refund, state employee wages or lottery winnings, is made to that debtor, at which time the state takes an offset of the payout to pay outstanding debt recovery requests. Currently roughly 3,700 former VVSD students owe the district over \$399,000.

The program begins with VVSD sending its delinquent payment records to the state. They will be matched against the state's database to see if the debtors are scheduled to receive any cash back

from the state. Once identified, debtors will be notified in writing that money is being withheld by the state to pay their outstanding debt to a local governmental agency. Debtors have 60 days to contest the claim after which time the state will determine whether to send the money to VVSD.

The program won't cost the school district anything. Parents or guardians responsible for the debt will be charged a \$15 fee by the state.

CAMPUS CORNER

By Debra Hunter

Lewis University honors Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with Diversity Week

ROMEORVILLE— Lewis University will host Diversity Week from Jan. 28- Feb. 1 to honor and acknowledge the legacy and beliefs of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The various events will take place throughout the week, all of which are free of charge and open to the public. Events will take place at different locations on the university's main campus in Romeoville.

Diversity Week will kick off with the keynote address given by Dr. Jerome Blakemore, associate professor of justice, law & public safety studies and social work, from 2-2:50 p.m. in the Sancta Alberta Chapel. Blakemore will be applying the writings of King to today's university "How our Academic Community Can Make a Difference."

From 6-8 p.m. Jan. 28 in the Student Union Commons, Lewis University's "Celebration of Music and Art Coffee House" event will showcase Lewis students performing the music, poetry and fine arts from the Civil Rights Movement.

At 11 a.m. Jan. 29 in the Sancta Alberta Chapel, Professor Timuel Black will speak about the link between Martin Luther King Jr. and President Barack Obama. At 1 p.m. in the Student Union Commons, History Professor Dr. Mark Schultz and Sociology Assistant Professor Tennille Allen will facilitate the film "The Witness." The film is based on the last few days of the life of King. At 3:30 p.m. in the Student Union Commons, a documentary called, "License to Thrive: Title IX at 35" will be facilitated by Associate Vice President for Human Resources Graciela Dufour; Chair of Sports and Exercise Science Dr. Karen Lockyer; Professor of English Dr. Nancy Workman and Associate Director/Director of Compliance Melanie DeBoer-



Brunsdon. The last event will be "Tunnel of Oppression" at 5 p.m. in the Student Union Commons and will be an interactive event that highlights contemporary issues of oppression.

At 2 p.m. on Jan. 30 in DL-251 in De La Salle Hall, a panel of Lewis University faculty will discuss the book they are currently reading, "At The Dark End of the Street," which reveals the crucial role played in the founding of the Civil Rights Movement by African-American women who fought against politically-motivated rape in the Jim Crow South.

On the final day of Diversity Week, at 11 a.m. Jan. 31 in De La Salle Hall, DL-232, Associate Professor of Philosophy Dr. Elizabeth Hoppe will focus on Descartes' though of the human subject and its downside. At 3:30 p.m. in the Morton Boston Room of the Student Union, Carlos Serrato, director of Multicultural Student Services will facilitate a California federal court case, Mendez v. Westminster. This case challenged the segregation of Mexican and Mexican-American students into separate Mexican schools.

For additional information on Diversity Week events, please contact Lewis University's Director of Multicultural Student Services Carlos Serrato at (815) 836-5538.

CAMPUS BRIEFS

JTHS Foundation Trivia 2013

The Joliet Township High School Foundation is having its 8th Annual Trivia Challenge afternoon to be held on Sunday, March 10, 2013, at 176 West, Joliet, starting at 3:00 p.m. Tables for the event are \$120.00 and seat up to 8-10. Answers are decided by the table as a whole vs. individually, so it's a group project. Cash awards are given. A Chinese auction raffle and Split-the-Pot events will also be held. Light snacks that match your table theme are permitted. For a low cost enjoyable afternoon of fun and trivia, call Dr. Don Barnes at 815-254-4578.

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