

#SherrardRoars

Vol. 2 Issue 3

Tigers Today Transforming Tomorrow

July - September 2019

Sherrard High School shares the wealth of Deere & Co. engine donation

SHERRARD — What does a rural Midwest high school do with 40-plus donated John Deere engines? Share the wealth, of course.

Sherrard HS Ag Instructor John Rasty said the district recently received a gift of an estimated \$23,000 of engines, ranging in size up to 900 pounds.

"Some are two-cylinder, diesel, tractor or combine engines. ... They weren't using them anymore and knew we could use them to help train kids how to work on this kind of stuff," he said.

"There's more of them than what we needed. ... Other schools could get some use out of them, too," Rasty said. So the district



Sherrard High School Ag Instructor John Rasty teaches students the functions of each piece on an engine donated by John Deere. *Cala Smoldt/Sherrard Dist. Journalist*

shared the excess with neighboring school districts, including Rock-

ridge, Bureau Valley and Mercer County.

In Rasty's basic ag mechanics class, sophomore and freshman students work together to take apart an engine, document with photos how each piece fits together, plug those pictures into a slideshow, and reverse the process to put it all back together.

Later in the semester, the students will form smaller groups and take turns going through the "take apart, put together" process as a team.

Rasty said a more advanced class will go into greater depth with engines next semester in ag machinery services.

Sherrard School Board President Rhys Fullerlove said Janson Bender, a Sherrard graduate, made the connection for the donation.

"We are fortunate to

have alumni like Janson Bender who continue to look for unique education opportunities for our students to benefit from," said Fullerlove.

"They bring us metal all the time, too, we can work on. It's scrap to them, but it's stuff we can use to practice welding. ... They've been awesome to us," Rasty said of the Moline manufacturing company.

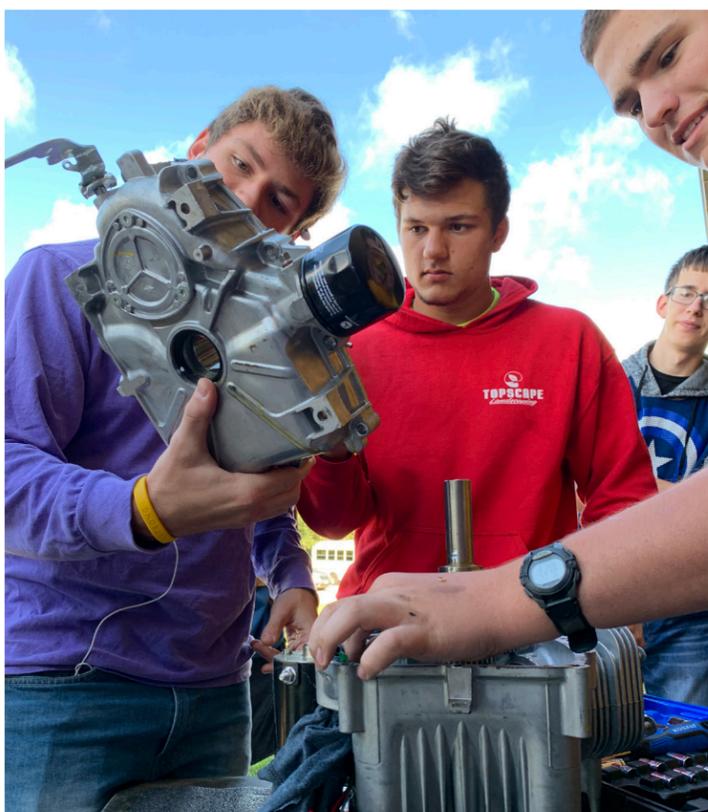
Early in the school year, Deere employees brought in a welding simulator and talked to Rasty's students about possible internships and job opportunities they could offer following graduation.

"They've been a great partner for us," Rasty



Upcoming Events

- Oct. 9** - Early Dismissal Parent/Teacher Conferences, 1 p.m. grades 7-12 and 2 p.m. grades K-6; FAFSA Workshop HS Library 4-6 p.m.; School board meeting 6 p.m. Unit Office
- Oct. 10** - Early Dismissal - Parent/Teacher Conferences, 1 p.m. grades 7-12 and 2 p.m. grades K-6
- Oct. 11** - No School
- Oct. 12** - Band Competition @ Metamora HS
- Oct. 14** - No School, Columbus Day
- Oct. 15 - 18** - No School, Fall Break
- Oct. 21** - HS Choir Concert 7:30 p.m. Auditorium; Sherrard Grade School PTO Mtg 6-7 p.m.
- Oct. 31** - SGS Halloween Party/Parade 2:15 - 3:30 p.m.; Winola Elementary Halloween parade/parties 2:30 - 3:30 p.m.
- Nov. 6** - Booster Club Meeting 6-7 p.m. HS Library
- Nov. 8** - Matherville Intermediate Fun Night 3:30 - 5 p.m.
- Nov. 9** - 4th Annual Junior Class Trivia Night 6 p.m. HS Commons
- Nov. 13** - Early Dismissal - Professional Development 1 p.m. grades 7-12 and 2 p.m. grades K-6
- Nov. 16** - Little Tigers Drama Camp (1st - 6th grade) 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. HS auditorium
- Nov. 20** - School board meeting 6 p.m. Unit Office
- Nov. 27 - 29** - No School
- Dec. 4** - Booster Club Meeting 6-7 p.m. HS Library
- Dec. 6** - Winter Play 7 p.m. HS Auditorium
- Dec. 7** - Winter Play 7 p.m. HS Auditorium
- Dec. 14** - Tiger Tip Off - 7/8 Grade Girls
- Dec. 15** - Holiday Jazz and HS Symphonic Band Concert 3 p.m. HS Auditorium; Choir Concert 7 p.m. HS Auditorium
- Dec. 18** - School board meeting 6 p.m. Unit Office
- Dec. 23 - Jan. 6** - No School
- Jan. 1** - Booster Club Meeting 6-7 p.m. HS Library
- Jan. 7** - Students return
- Jan. 15** - School board meeting 6 p.m. Unit Office
- Jan. 18** - Tiger Tip Off - 4/6 Grade Boys
- Jan. 20** - No School - Martin Luther King Jr. Day



Kaden Meguffy (left) holds up a piece of an engine while Josh Bynum (right) and other students observe. The Basic Ag Mechanics class at Sherrard high school is learning how an engine works thanks to a donation of over 40 engines from John Deere.

Cala Smoldt/Sherrard Dist. Journalist

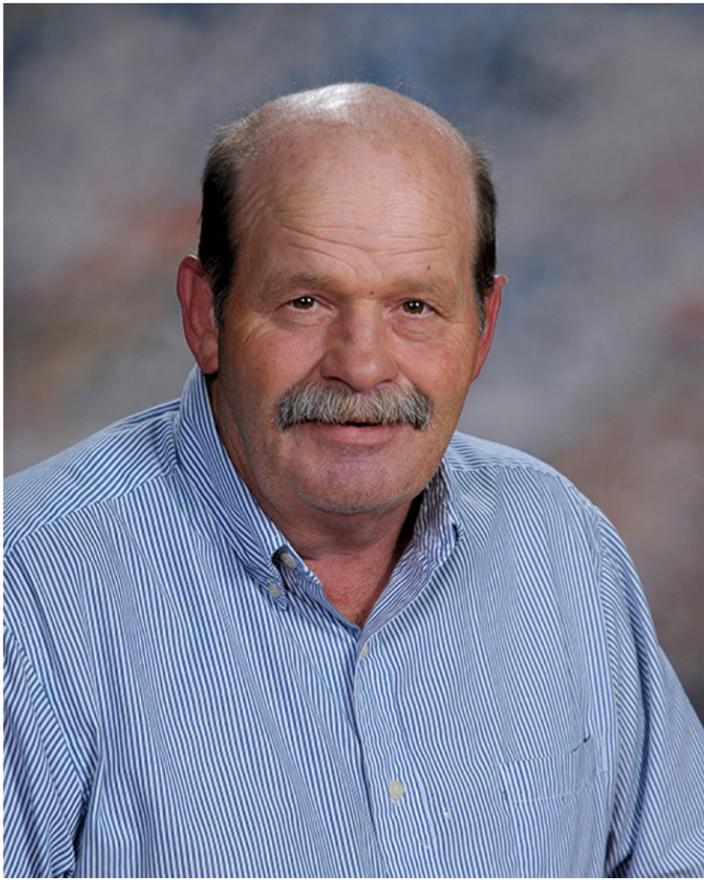
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Sherrard CUSD #200 | 507 3rd St. PO Box 369, Sherrard, IL 61281 | Phone: 309.593.4075



Sherrard High School teacher wins conservation award



Sherrard High School Ag Instructor Bill Hammes has been named Conservation Teacher of the Year by the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and the Illinois Audubon Society. *Photo submitted*

"It's an honor," said Bill Hammes, Sherrard High School agriculture instructor, about being named the Conservation Teacher of the Year by the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts (AISWCD), Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and the Illinois Audubon Society.

The award comes on the heels of an award he won in June. Hammes was chosen as Illinois Section 3 winner of the Excellence in Teaching Award for Ag Education from the National Association of Agricultural Educators. He was nomi-

nated by Sherrard School District Superintendent Alan Boucher. There are 25 sections in the state of Illinois.

Hammes said his awards were made possible by the district's support of the agriculture program.

"I couldn't be more pleased to work with this group of people.

... The administration, teachers, and the students that come through the program — they're all fantastic," Hammes said.

This isn't the first time he's won a conservation award. When he was teaching at Central City High School north of

Cedar Rapids, Iowa, his class received the Environmental Youth Group Award in the 1980s. In the early 2000s, he was the state winner of an Iowater Award (Iowa Water) for water quality testing.

"The basic concepts that I think everyone needs to know about — preserving the land, keeping the water in good quality — those are the things the award recognizes," Hammes said.

In a recommendation letter, Rich Stewart, Rock Island County resource conservationist, praised Hammes' work. "Through Bill's efforts, Sherrard High School has developed an outdoor learning campus that includes a half-acre garden and greenhouse and 50 acres of cropland for corn and soybean variety plot trails.

"Cereal rye has been recently used on the corn-bean plot so students and area farmers can view how cover crops work on an average farm."

The skills Hammes has taught students include how to measure the flow rate of a stream and how to collect water samples to test for dissolved oxygen and levels of nitrates in the water.

Hammes has integrated the use of GPS and GIS technology to teach students how to make decisions for their FFA chapter's crop ground. They analyzed a plot of land and determined

which soil management techniques would be best for that area.

Students in the Ag Science class even used Google Maps to view the chapter's crop ground. They identified areas of potential erosion and discussed potential solutions.

"After walking through the fields, the students determined that the soil loss was minimal on the steepest area, so we should continue the existing no-till approach to the row crop ground. They also wanted to give the cover-crop test plot another year before expanding it to the remainder of the fields," Hammes said.

In August 2017, Hammes and his students helped coordinate a Cover Crop Tour through a three-county area in western Illinois for 40 farmers and others.

"I hosted the meeting location for the group, coordinated a bus for the group, served as one of the pit sites on the FFA crop ground, and coordinated the use of our school for the wrap-up meeting and meal," Hammes said.

Hammes is impressed by his students' accomplishments.

"Students from the Sherrard FFA Chapter have given presentations to several area organizations, including a Farm Bureau group and the school board. We are planning an in-depth

presentation when we get more data gathered from our efforts with both the stream water quality assessments and our work with our erosion control practices," he said.

Student involvement doesn't end with the last day of school. Over the summer, FFA members have cultivated crops to serve local food pantries for the third year. They are on track to donate over 3,000 pounds of produce this fall, including tomatoes, squash, peppers, potatoes and more.

"Most probably there are a number of students at Sherrard School District that benefit from this," Hammes said.

His students said he's had a positive impact on their lives. "He's there to be able to support me and tell me it's going to be OK. Having somebody like that makes me more confident," said incoming senior Remi Cook, FFA chapter president.

Hammes said FFA members are always brainstorming new ideas about how they can support the community. "The community supports us so well, we try to think of ways to give back," he said.

Hammes was formally recognized as Conservation Teacher of the Year during the Illinois State Fair in August in Springfield.

Advanced Placement Results



Last year, Sherrard High School offered 9 Advanced Placement classes. These classes are extremely challenging and consist of college-level concepts. Each spring, students across the country take an exam for each AP class. If they score a 3, 4, or 5, most colleges will excuse them from taking the class when they enroll.

This year, 100 exams were completed by Sherrard students. They scored a 3 or higher on

79 of the AP exams. Thirteen students scored a 5 and one student scored a 5 on all three of the exams she took!

AP classes Sherrard High School offers: Statistics, Calculus, Literature and Comp, U.S. History, Language and Comp, Chemistry, Biology, Studio Art U.S. Government and Politics

Ambitious students who seek high-end careers in areas such as medicine, law, science

or engineering need to be well-prepared for the rigors of college. Sherrard High School provides an excellent education for these students as evidenced by its graduates. #SherrardRoars



Let the school year begin!

Live stream Tigers games

Sherrard fans are now able to view many home athletic events online! The NFHS Network was created to provide fans with the ability to stream high school sports on any device, from wherever they are.

Robotic camera devices have been installed in gym 1 at the high school and on the press box of the athletic field. The cameras automatically follow the action and zoom in and out as needed. The fee for this online service is \$5 a month or \$70 a year. You can sign-up by going to: <https://www.nfhsnetwork.com/schools/sherrard-high-school-sherrard-il>



Sherrard Grade School Backpack night



First day at Matherville Intermediate



First day at Sherrard Grade



First day at Winola



First day at Junior High

Summer growing

Below: The FFA students spent many hours last summer growing vegetables that will be donated to area food pantries. This is the third year for the program. *Bill Hammes/Ag Instructor*



'Ray of Sunshine Day'



Sherrard Elementary celebrated custodian Ray Schwab, called 'Ray of Sunshine day'. They showed Ray how much he's appreciated.

"It takes a village to raise our children. Ray is a vital part of that," said Principal Konnie Fry.

Grants used to upgrade Sherrard tech



Sherrard Grade School fourth-grader Landon Clark shows school board members how to use the “Code and Go Robot Mouse” in the school’s innovation lab, which was completed last year with grant funding through Looser-Flake Charitable Foundation.

Cala Smoldt/Sherrard Distr. Journalist

Three rural Mercer County school districts will upgrade classroom technology with \$120,000 in grants from the Looser-Flake Charitable Foundation.

“As students head back to school, this is an exciting time for each of these districts as they can follow through on their dreams of innovation in the classroom,” said Kelly Thompson, vice president of grant-making and community initiatives at the Quad Cities Community Foundation. The Quad Cities Community Foundation administers the Looser-Flake Foundation.

The funding does much more than fill in the gap for the technology they are missing. “It truly changes the educational experience for students. You wouldn’t believe how much innovation is happening here, and we are proud to offer experiences for students as they prepare for ‘future-ready’ careers,” Sherrard Instruc-

tional Technology Coach Steve Miller said.

The district is focused on preparing students for the next chapters of their lives. “No matter what careers students choose to have, they will be problem-solving and using technology, whether it’s welding, agriculture, office work, accounting, manufacturing,” he said.

The Sherrard School District received \$62,000 from the foundation.

The funds allowed the school to provide 65 inch Clevertouch smartboards for every classroom in the Matherville Intermediate School, and a handful at the junior high and high schools.

Last year, through a similar grant from Looser-Flake, the school renovated the out-of-date computer labs at two elementary schools and created innovation labs equipped with technology that teaches robotics, coding and problem solving skills.

“It would have never happened if it wasn’t for them (Looser-Flake). We wouldn’t have been able to take this leap. I had the vision for it, but I didn’t have the funding,” said Sherrard’s Miller.

He said technology should be “seamless and invisible” and move away from the old projectors with wires and issues that constantly come up.

“The instructional flow for teachers is so much better now because now they can teach in front of the room and be in the room with their kids instead of having to run behind their desk all the time and change this or that.”

The grant will also fund an innovation lab for Matherville Intermediate with more advanced robotics and coding technology geared toward the older age group, fifth and sixth graders.

The high school auditorium will also receive two large monitors for presentations, theater and concerts.

“I have always planned to take our technology to the next level, but because of school budgets, it made it nearly impossible to do that because of the scale that’s needed to complete such projects,” Miller added.

“This funding has changed all of that. We can see this now become a reality, and very quickly. It’s truly a blessing, and we will make sure that it’s the students who benefit most. It’s all about them.”

Mercer County Schools and United North Elementary School also received a portion of the grant.

“Like” Sherrard School District on Facebook!

“...It’s truly a blessing, and we will make sure that it’s the students who benefit most. It’s all about them.”

- Sherrard Tech Coach Steve Miller

SGS Innovation Lab



Instructional Technology Coach Steve Miller and several fourth graders demonstrated how they use robotics and other tech in the innovation lab at Sherrard Grade School - in place of a traditional computer lab.

Cala Smoldt/Sherrard Dist. Journalist

Hoco Attendants 2019



Homecoming Attendants 2019

Freshman - Brodie Bernier, Sirinna Hufeld, Walker Anderson, McKenna Blackwell

Sophomores - Clayton Matovic, Sydney Adamson, Ryan Schomburg, Ashley Yudis,

Juniors - Jordan Bender, Joshua Bynum, Sydney Miller, Kaden Meguffy,

Seniors - Emma Hofmann, Grace Hoffpauir, Ellie DeSchepper, Lauren McMillin, Taylor Williams

Seniors - Logan Slattery, Jacob Hartman, Zack Foltz, Kyle Yeater, Bryce Davis

Connie Helm/Sherrard Dist. secretary to athletic director

The chief of staff, Army announced officer assignments
April 16, 2019

Maj. Gen. Steven W. Gilland

Sherrard Alumni Steve Gilland holds the rank of Major General in the U.S. Army. In April, the former commandant of cadets at West Point assumed the helm of the 2nd Infantry Division as senior officials insisted that changes to military exercises to facilitate nuclear talks with North Korea have not diminished the ability to “fight tonight.”

Maj. Gen. Steve Gilland, who took command from Maj. Gen. Scott McKean during a ceremony at the

Warrior Division’s new headquarters on Camp Humphreys, inherits the challenge of balancing the need to maintain readiness with diplomatic efforts to persuade the North to give up its nuclear weapons.

Read full story written by Kim Gamel, July 17, 2019 at: www.stripes.com/news/pacific/gilland-takes-helm-of-2nd-infantry-division-at-sensitive-time-in-s-korea-1.590618

Pictured at right, Maj. Gen. Steven W. Gilland. *Photo West Point U.S. Military Academy*



Athletic Calendar

To see team rosters, team photos, game schedules, event locations, and postponed games go to: <http://il.8to18.com/SherardHS>

Sign up for updates:

- Go to the athletic calendar
- E-Mail Alert - on the right side of the page and click the “Click to Join” link.
- Then, “Create New Account”
- Select the sports that you would like to receive email alerts and click - “Add Selected Sports” button.

Also search the Sherrard Boosters Facebook group to stay connected.

Community garden cultivates a spirit of giving



Julia Besold, Sherrard senior and FFA Sentinel hands Avery Litton, senior and FFA Secretary, a handful of tomatoes as they gather produce to delivery to local food pantries. *Cala Smoldt/Sherrard Dist. Journalist*

Agriculture students at Sherrard High School are learning more than the basics of planting and harvesting in their outdoor classroom. They are learning how to make an impact in the community with the crops they cultivate.

Each week, ag classes pick nearly 200 pounds of produce that they then deliver to local food pantries in Sherrard, Milan and Preemption.

Ag Instructor Bill Hammes said they hoped to donate more than 3,000 pounds over the course of the season from the modest quarter-acre garden plot. That would exceed last year’s donations by around 1,000 pounds. This is the third year for the commu-

nity garden.

“It’s really a collaborative effort,” Hammes said.

Students planted the garden last school year, FFA members took care of it during the summer, and now they get to see the fruit of their labor, in more ways than one.

Seniors Avery Litton, FFA secretary, and Julia Besold, FFA sentinel, delivered last week’s haul.

“The last time I went to the food pantry in Milan, over the summer, it was honestly really sad — seeing all the need in our community. It really broke my heart, seeing that it’s like that here. ... I wouldn’t think that it would be,” Litton said.

Last week’s haul includ-

ed hot and sweet peppers, sweet corn, cucumbers, potatoes, zucchini and tomatoes.

The garden is funded through various fundraisers, grants and corn harvested from the program’s test plots.

“The community supports us so well; we try to think of ways to give back,” Hammes said.

Last year the group did a clothing drive to benefit the school’s Tiger Closet — where students can find toiletries and gently-used items.

Currently, they are in the process of planning a fundraiser to benefit a suicide-prevention program in honor of Alyn Hall, a junior who fell victim to suicide last year. They held a bags tournament and other fall-related activities Sept. 27.

Each of Hammes’ agriculture classes picks once a week and will continue to do so until the first “killing frost” usually in October.

Sherrard FFA is also sponsoring the purchase of four grain safety tubes for fire departments in Sherrard, Coyne Center, Matherville and New Windsor (Viola’s fire department already purchased one) for a total cost between \$10,000 and \$12,500, including training.

“(It’s) a thing that goes

down around them, suction the corn, so they can get out safely,” Litton explained. “In our community there’s only one — all the fire departments share — that’s obviously not good because if someone falls in far away, then they can’t get to them in time.”

Local farmer Albert Cederstrom contributed \$2,500 through America’s Farmers Grow Communi-

ties, sponsored by the Bayer Fund.

Sherrard FFA students meet regularly to look for ways to contribute to the community.

“It’s really nice being able to help people and support our community,” Litton said.



Parker Hann, Sherrard highschool freshman, helps classmates dig up potatoes to donate to local food pantries.

Cala Smoldt/Sherrard Dist. Journalist

Sherrard family, students finding ways to heal one year after teen took his own life



Alyn Hall (left), an avid Cardinals fan, and mother Pamela Hall (Right), an equally avid Cubs fan, enjoyed an intense rivalry during baseball season. *Photo Submitted by Pamela Hall*

Alyn Fisher Hall celebrated his 16th birthday on May 16, 2018. Four months later, on Sept. 15, 2018, he took his own life.

A straight-A junior at Sherrard High School, he had a girlfriend; he played on the state-bound school golf team; he had just gotten his driver's license; and he had college plans in the works, said his mom, Pamela Hall.

Hall said there were no red flags or history of mental illness for Alyn, no signs of depression or anxiety.

"We had it all together, no problems ... one day everything changed," she said.

Since that tragic Saturday, she and husband, Richard, of Coyne Center, have asked everyone who knew Alyn if they saw any signs, "It took everybody by surprise. Everybody," she said.

His family was tight-knit. Paternal grandparents Garry Hall and Dee DeWinter taught him early to love the St. Louis Cardinals. Grandpa Garry took him to games. Grandma Dee had named her son, Richard Alyn, after a former Cardinals player, but she made up the spelling, changing Allen to Alyn. The name was then passed down to Alyn.

"It made the house interesting at rivalry time," said his mother, a devout Cubs fan, laughing as she shared memories of her son.

Alyn's Grandpa Russ DeWinter taught him to play golf. "He was good," his mom remembered.

Her message for others when she thinks of her son is simple: "Suicide doesn't hide from anybody. ... Alyn had tons of people there for him. I don't know how to explain it. He had so much," she said.

"The hardest thing (is) not knowing why, and what he was dealing with. If it was that dark and he felt he couldn't talk to anybody. ... I felt bad that I couldn't see anything," Hall said.

School district offers help

The tragedy rocked the Sherrard School District when students and teachers learned of Alyn's death.

Within the following month, Mike Mendoza, a Rock Island County sheriff's deputy who serves as Sherrard's school resource officer, implemented the P3 campus phone app, funded by Quad Cities Crime Stoppers. The app lets students and parents connect with



A year since his passing, the Hall family mourns the loss of their son, Alyn Fisher Hall, to suicide. Left to right, Alyn, Rich (father), Allison Jo Burkhead (sister), and Pamela (mother). *Photo Submitted by Pamela Hall*

authorities anonymously.

Mendoza said the app receives one to two reports each month.

"We've had tips from depression, drugs, alcohol, suicide threats, eating disorders, child abuse, bullying, anger issues," he said. Other categories include planned school attacks and other criminal activity.

"It's just that open line of communication we have with students," he said, adding that it's important the students know that school officials are there to look out for them.

Action is immediate when he's notified of a report. "I get the alerts — mine comes in as a text message," Mendoza said. He then can engage

in a texting conversation with the initiator and ask questions.

"You might have two students who are best friends, and the one student might say to the other, 'I have to tell you something, but you can't tell anybody.' In return, that student will come to us and say, 'My best friend is having some issues right now.' ... I'll ask how should I approach this person."

He said in that case, he would talk to parents and ask for permission to allow the friend to be part of a conversation with the troubled student.

Students heal *continued on page 6*



(Left) Sherrard students were live on WQAD Friday, Aug. 30 for The Score Pre-Game Pep Rally in anticipation for the nights game vs Rockridge Rockets. *Alan Boucher/ Sherrard Dist. Superintendent*

(Right) WQAD Jonathan Ketz and the Good Morning Quad Cities Crew were live from 5-7 am that morning. *Cala Smoldt/ Sherrard Dist. Journalist*



Stay up-to-date on our school district website at: www.sherrard.us



Students heal

continued from page 5

"It's not easy for teenagers who are dealing with a lot of stress and issues in life to open up to a principal or police officer," Mendoza said.

Another way the district is using technology to help students is through Go Guardian software that sends alerts to both Mendoza and Sherrard instructional technology coach Steve Miller if keywords are found in emails and searches.

Miller said they plan to add more software specifically designed for suicide prevention. He said it's a proactive approach that looks across multiple platforms and allows students to reach out.

"Anything you can do more of as a school district, I think you have to. You can never do enough," he said.

Stacey Blackwell, school counselor for Sherrard seventh through ninth grades, coordinates a mental health action team made up of district staff. It formed in January.

The group meets to discuss ways to educate students and families on mental health resources available to the community. It also meets regularly with the Mercer County Mental Health Action Program (MHAP) through the Mercer

County Health Department in Aledo.

"It's been exciting to work with them and learn about what they're doing for Mercer County and the community and all the different resources they can provide our students with," she said, "Most of the time we're referring kids that have multiple challenges, multiple traumas."

Jennifer Hamerlinck, director of the Mercer County Emergency Management Agency, said the program is funded through a grant from the Health Services and Resources Administration, a federal agency.

"When we start to work with them, we also end up working with

"To teens who may be considering suicide, please know that you are needed here."

- Gabrielle Sharer, friend of Alyn Hall

the entire family to help them all be successful. We believe here in a very hands-on approach and a holistic approach," she said.

That means Sherrard school counselors can refer students and families who need their services.

Hamerlinck was instrumental in bringing the SOS, or Signs of Suicide, Prevention Program to Sherrard, after successfully implementing it with the Mercer County School District last spring.

Teachers and staff



Above - A group of Alyn's family and friends walked on the anniversary of his death, Sept. 15, in the Out of the Darkness community walk, through the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention at Beacon Harbor Park in East Moline that just so happened to fall on the exact date of the anniversary of his passing. *Photo Submitted by Pamela Hall*

were trained recently for a student screening that will take place in November. Presenters cited a sobering statistic:

Prevention Awareness month, and a walk happened to be scheduled on the exact date of Alyn's death. The Hall

event, The Mom Friend Project, to raise funds for suicide prevention and awareness. Sponsored by Sherrard FFA, it took place Friday, Sept. 27, at Sherrard High School.

The event bears Alyn's nickname, which was given to him by friends who saw him as cautious and protective, or "the mother of the group."

"We're hoping this fundraiser will allow our entire community to educate themselves on this epidemic," said Sharer. "The whole point is to raise awareness for this awful depression disease. ... I know it's very stigmatized in the community."

Another aim of the event is for students to get to know FFA members, who are willing to be friends to peers who need someone.

"I just want them to know that you are not alone. More people care about you than you think. Over 800 people went to Alyn's visitation. ... He was not alone, and neither are you," Sharer said.

"It's an empty space; it's a void," said Alyn's mother of life without her son. "Waking up and expecting that person to be there. Every morning before I left for work, I said, 'Have a good day.' He said, 'You, too, Mom.' ... I don't even say, 'Good morning' anymore; I just say, 'Morning.' You have to adjust, and it's terrible."

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2017, suicide was the second leading cause of death among individuals between the ages of 10 and 34.

The program, set to begin with the sophomore class and junior high students in November, includes a pre-test to evaluate mental health, a video "screener" that talks to teens about how to identify signs of suicide in themselves and others, and follow-up evaluations.

Honoring Alyn's memory

Hall said the sporting community has shown great support for her late son. The baseball team wore his number, 8, on their jerseys during one game, and the golf team has done numerous memorials honoring his memory.

The Halls put a big memorial rock at the Matherville baseball field with his picture on it because he loved baseball. "It helped us get through that baseball season last year without him," his mother said.

September is Suicide

family and friends participated in the Out of the Darkness community walk, organized through the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention at Beacon Harbor Park in East Moline.

"We had to do something. I wasn't going to just sit at home. I would want to, but I needed to get out there," Hall said.

Sherrard students are finding ways to heal after the loss of their friend and classmate.

"The heartbreak I felt at that moment was indescribable. Sept. 15, 2018, was the hardest day of my life," said Gabrielle Sharer, Alyn's girlfriend at the time of his death.

"To teens who may be considering suicide, please know that you are needed here," she said.

"Whether you believe in God or fate or whatever, you have a purpose. You are someone's entire world; please stay here for them. If you cannot continue living for yourself, live for someone else, because at least one person in this world needs you."

Sharer and another of Alyn's friends, Elyse Thurman, organized an



Alyn Hall

Photo Submitted by Pamela Hall

Sherrard students shine

Backwater Gamblers Water Ski Show Team



Sherrard School District student Kennedy Shillinger (6th grade) and the Backwaters Gamblers Water Ski Show Team had success recently at the 45th Indmar Marine Engines Division 1 Show Ski National Championships in Warsaw, Indiana. This year, the team finished fifth in the competition. Kennedy placed 9th in the Strap Doubles competition. Congrat-

ulations, Kennedy and Backwater Gamblers!

The following is a list of current and former Sherrard students who are presently on the ski team. The high school graduation year is noted after the names.

Hunter Foster '32
Audrey Foster '30
Kiera Shillinger '29
Kennedy Shillinger '26
Brady Varner '21

Tyler Varner '20
Elisabeth Cross '14
James Stratton '10
Carrie (Ricketts) Braet '04
Tagen (Menzer) Dressman '02
Nick Foster '02
Trista (Menzer) Foster '00
Angi (Amundsen) Varner '92



SHS Marching Tigers

Congrats to our SHS Marching Tigers on 1st Place at the Geneseo Marching Competition today! We also took 1st in Best Winds, Best Color Guard, and Best Percussion! Back to back wins with #PurpleFloyd this season! The Marching Tigers are rocking the house. *David Grayson/Sherrard Band Director*



From the desk of the Superintendent

Celebrate National Principals Month

America needs principals. Without them, our schools could not succeed. The Wallace Foundation identified instruction as the most important factor that affects student achievement with leadership being the second most important factor.

The principalship is a high-stress position with many challenges and complexities. As superintendent, I interact with the principals daily, so I see firsthand their tireless dedication and perseverance. They face adversity with courage and poise. The district tasks them with improving instruction, taking care of student discipline, solving unforeseen problems, evaluating teachers, building relationships with parents, managing the building finances and overseeing



Sherrard Superintendent Alan Boucher

building maintenance. They are responsible for setting high expectations for learning, character and a positive school culture.

October is National Principals Month. We honor and celebrate our principals for their impact on the success and well-being of our students. We thank them for their accomplishments and recognize them for setting high standards for learning and creating positive school cultures. #ThankAPrincipal

Annual Sherrard band car wash



Next-up: Future careers



Corey Fineran visited with students last week at Sherrard High. He is the co-founder of Next-up. He shared tips with Seniors regarding finding part time jobs and future careers. These are the life skills that we want our students to be able to understand as they think about their future. Here is the link to Corey's website and lessons he offers for students.

<http://www.transitioncurriculum.com/free-nextup-lesson/>