

# Welding equipment expanded at KHS

Welding jobs continue to be in high demand.

According to American Welding Society (AWS) estimates, by 2023 there will be a shortage of more than 375,000 welders nationwide. While this is an industry challenge, the shortage also presents an opportunity.

As a result, Kiel High School (KHS), Lakeshore Technical College (LTC), Miller Electric and Amerequip have joined together to develop a program rarely if ever seen in a rural school district. It includes state-of-the-art welders, a high-tech lab environment, a variety of classes, technical college credits, and paid apprenticeship opportunities.

"The lack of welders is a big challenge for local manufacturers," said Amerequip President/CEO Mike VanderZanden. "We need welders to expand and grow our business, and we know high school is when many young people are thinking about jobs and careers. If they aren't exposed to welding at that point, they might not think about it at all. This private-public collaboration changes the dynamic."

Kiel Public Schools Superintendent Brad Ebert added, "While Kiel High School traditionally offers a welding program, it has been small in size with only five welding stations, which limited our ability to teach this in-demand skill. Now, thanks to this collaboration, we are expanding the program to better serve students and our community employers."

Highlights of the program include:

- 13 additional, new, state-of-the-art welding bays and equipment from Miller Electric, bringing the total number of welders to 18;

- expanded class offerings at KHS, with dual credits earned at the high school and LTC. Participating students will be on an accelerated path to a technical college welding certification.

- paid apprenticeship offerings through Amerequip to program students, providing real-life manufacturing experience while they learn the trade. Amerequip will then fund 100 percent of all costs to continue their education, while paying full-time wages and benefits to students who elect to continue their education after high school.

"Miller Electric has always seen the value in partnering with educators to help build and educate the next generation of skilled workers," said Dave Lambert, vice president of North American Sales, Miller Electric. "We are happy to be a partner in this unique relationship as this program goes beyond offering a single class on welding. By expanding the class offerings, it introduces more students to the career opportunities in the field and teaches them the skills they need to be successful. The dual credits with Lakeshore Tech, and the apprenticeship opportunities at Amerequip, make this incredibly comprehensive."

LTC welding instructor Dave Saunders said, "The students who enroll in this program will be earning LTC credits while in high school and will have a tremendous opportunity to jumpstart their careers. This 10-credit program will give the high school student an opportunity to either attend LTC post-graduation and complete the remaining 17 credits



Kiel High School and Miller Electric personnel unload, unpack, and set up welding equipment Monday morning at the school. Below, Lakeshore Technical College CEO Paul Carlsen addresses the media on the college's part in the partnership which brought the new equipment to the school.

Mark Sherry photos





# Board

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pertaining to each school's procedures, please contact the School District. Again, this is a fluid plan based on the situation regarding COVID-19 at any time during the school year, administrators said.

Heidi Aprill, counselor for KASD, spoke during a presentation on the impact to students' mental health when not being in school during the lockdown. Aprill said, "Relationships that are built in the four walls of school is everything to those kids." She reported that stress for the students was magnified while school was canceled during the Safer at Home mandate.

Megan Kautzer, Middle School counselor, said, "During the first two weeks that school was on lockdown, the students were OK. When schools closed down indefinitely, there was an increase in virtual meetings with the students. Students were reporting anxiety, stress, suicidal ideas, etc." The counselors agreed that students perform better in a classroom when they have that in-school contact with their teachers. Aprill cited a UW Health Report that reported 68 percent of 3,243 students that were surveyed reported anxiety and depres-

sion that typically required medical intervention during the lockdown. The report states that ties between students, schools, and extra-curricular activities are very important to students' mental health. Members of the School Board remarked that the counselor's presentation was very eye-opening.

In other business, it was noted that several school districts are interested in partnering with the Between the Lakes Virtual Academy and the Kiel eSchool. Currently, there are 19 Kiel area students enrolled in the Between the Lakes Virtual Academy and six new students in the Kiel eSchool. There is the potential for a possible enrollment of 20 to 30 students from each of the two school districts that are interested in partnering with the Kiel virtual schools. There are 23 students returning to the Kiel eSchool full-time this year.

Kiel High School Athletics-Football was presented with a donation of \$4,254 for the purchase of new headsets for the coaching staff from the Kiel Football Alumni Association. The board and district officials said they are thankful for this gift.



Actors stage a scene from the upcoming Plymouth Arts Center Theatre Company's comedy-drama "If It's Monday, This Must Be Murder."

## Comedy-drama scheduled

Plymouth Arts Center Theatre Company will be presenting "If It's Monday, This Must Be Murder," a comedy-drama written by Pat Cook and directed by Kerrylynn Kraemer.

Show dates are Friday and Saturday, Sept. 25 and 26 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, Sept. 27 at 2:30 p.m. Advance tickets are \$10 per person. Tickets for this production will not be sold at the door. For tickets please visit the Plymouth Arts Center, 520 E. Mill St. in downtown Plymouth, Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; call 920-892-8409; or email: info@plymoutharts.org. Tickets also may be conveniently ordered online at www.plymoutharts.org. Visa and Mastercard are accepted.

Cast members for the play include Nicholas LaPoint, Kristopher Kraemer, Toddianna Kraemer, Bob Deyo, Dawn Molly Dewane, Randy Stache, Sue Kaiser, Tom Clegg, Bonnie Jaeger, Tegan Gonzalez, Deb Stache, and Tom Armstrong.

About the play: Harry Monday, a private investigator, is called out to Shady

Meadows Country Club to help solve three murders that recently took place. Bille Jean Hodecker, the manager of the club, is afraid that if these murders do not get solved that she is going to lose her job for sure. Sergeant Brogan, the local authority, is also called in; however, he and Harry Monday really do not see eye to eye with each other. This causes a lot of conflict as Brogan ends up arresting Monday for those murders. With some quick thinking and understanding human nature, Monday seems to make head way in solving the case; however, more deaths occur. Will Harry Monday solve the case before all the club members die?

Special note about ticket sales: Tickets for this show are sold in advance only as seating will be very limited because of social distancing. Groups ordering tickets will be seated together and guests are required to wear a mask. If the play cannot be presented in person in September, a private access link will be sent to each ticket holder allowing them to view a virtual production at their leisure.

# Welding

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for their Welding-Industrial technical degree in under a year or directly enter the welding and fabrication manufacturing fields."

The expanded welding program starts in September at Kiel High School. Classes will be held in the new tech hall. "We're already hearing from students who can't wait to take the classes," said Kiel High School technical education teacher Ted Bonde. "We look forward to getting things under way."

Ron Schneider, welding instructor at KHS, said the school already had a mix of welding equipment but that Monday's delivery will allow students to work at all skill levels. "This is bringing us up to date," Schneider said, adding that he would like to see a one-to-one ratio of welding equipment to students.

Schneider said there are five companies in Kiel alone which do a lot of welding and more than a half dozen others throughout the area, so this program stands to benefit multiple companies. He added that he is looking forward to seeing the reaction of students when they return to school in a few weeks. "We've always had a big interest, but it's kind of leveled off," Schneider said. "It's always

good to see them excited."

VanderZanden added that one of the reasons Amerequip wanted to be part of this program is that the youths of the community are important to the company. He also said Amerequip employs over 75 welders, and that the profession has often been a bottleneck to the company's work flow and growth. He said just 18 months ago the company was using 28 welders employed by other companies throughout the Midwest because Amerequip could not find enough of its own welders. He said they would like to do all their own welding and have hired eight welders in just the past two weeks.

"It's truly exciting and rewarding," VanderZanden said of the program. "This is the same equipment we use in our shop." He also said plans are to update the equipment at KHS every three years.

Paul Carlsen, CEO of Lakeshore Technical College, said LTC wants to make sure high school students are being introduced to technical education as soon as possible as they will be 20 percent more likely to enroll at a technical college if they have had that experience in high school.

## Small fire reported at MCSO

A small fire was extinguished early Saturday, Aug. 8 at the Manitowoc County Sheriff's Office.

Sheriff Dan Hartwig reported that at approximately 6 a.m. fire alarms began sounding off inside the Manitowoc County Sheriff's Office located at 1025 S. 9th St. in Manitowoc.

Employees began investigating and discovered a small fire in a heating, ventilating, and air conditioning control panel in the second-floor mechanical room on

the administrative side of the building.

Two portable fire extinguishers were used, and the fire was quickly put out.

"I want to assure the public that there was no risk to our jail or inmate population," Sheriff Hartwig said. "We want to thank our employees for their quick response in extinguishing the fire, the Manitowoc Fire Department for their response and assistance, and the Manitowoc County Department of Public Works."

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