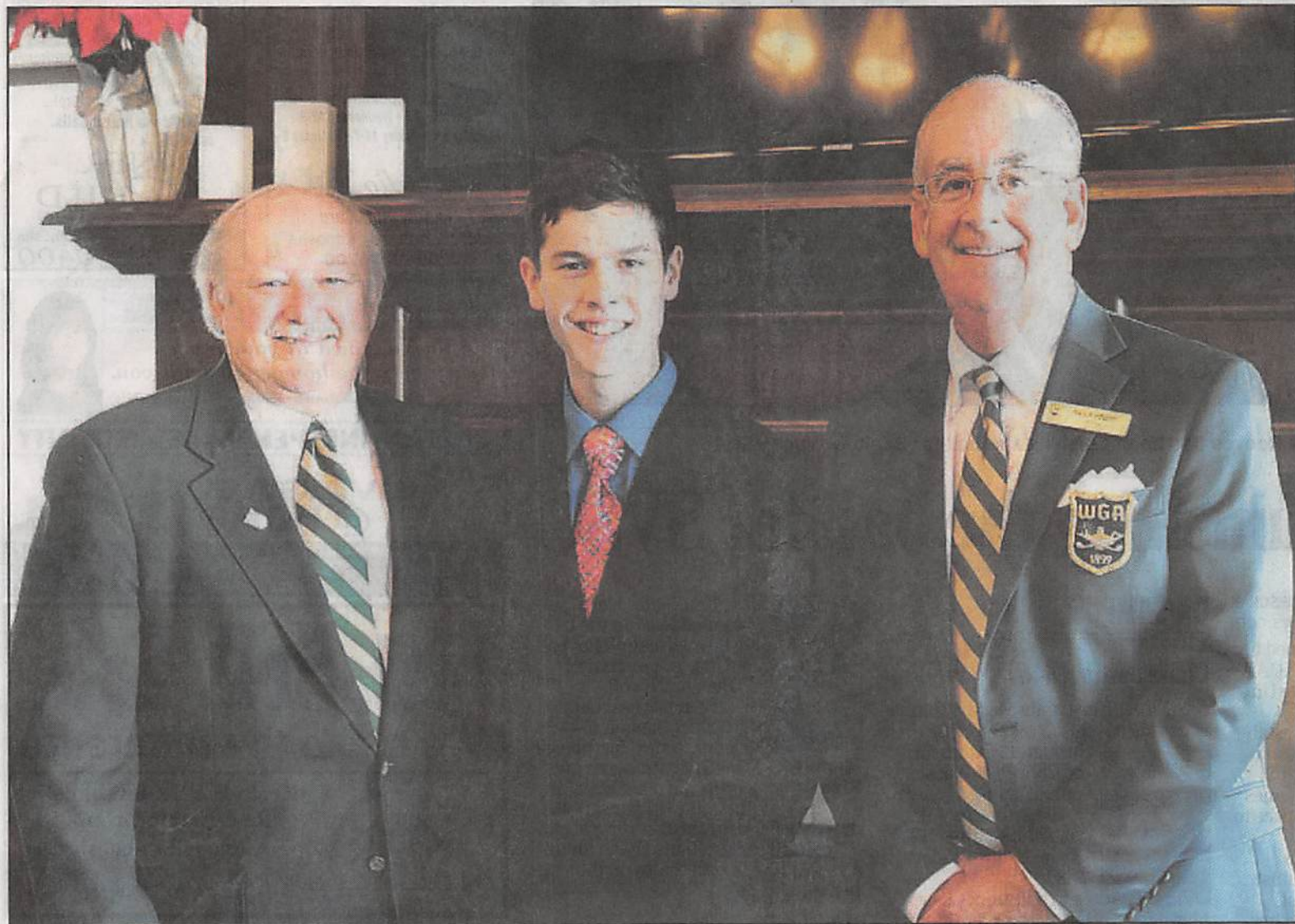


Sports

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Ideas or comments? Contact Andrew Horschak | 262-656-6290 after 4 p.m. | sports@kenoshanews.com



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Shoreland Lutheran senior Elias Patterson, center, stands between Western Golf Association Directors John Knuteson, left, and Phil Poletti, right, at the Chick Evans Caddie Scholarship selection meeting in December in Sheboygan. Patterson was awarded the full tuition and housing scholarship about a week later and will attend the University of Wisconsin. Knuteson is also a board member of the Caddie & Leadership Academy of Southeast Wisconsin, and Poletti is its executive director.

From caddie to college

Shoreland senior Patterson earns Evans Scholarship

BY JEREMY REEVES

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This past December, Shoreland Lutheran High School senior Elias Patterson opened one of the best presents a college-bound teenager could ever hope to receive.

A day or two before Christmas, the Mount Pleasant resident read a letter in front of family members informing him that he was among 22 Wisconsin residents being awarded the Chick Evans Caddie Scholarship from the Western Golf Association and Evans Scholars Foundation.

The scholarship is among the most prestigious in the country, especially in the golf world. In order to be considered for it, kids must have displayed good character, possess excellent caddie and academic records and come from families with financial need. The full tuition and housing scholarship is renewable for up to four years.

The scholarship began in 1930 and is named in honor of Chick Evans, the first golfer to win the U.S. Open

and U.S. Amateur in the same year (1916). A lifelong amateur from the Chicago area, Evans directed the money he made in golf to establish the scholarship foundation. More than 10,000 caddies have received Evans Scholarships since its inception.

Patterson is the first Evans Scholar who came up through the Kenosha-based Caddie & Leadership Academy of Southeast Wisconsin, which fully began in 2015 and teaches kids the skills to caddie at area public and private golf courses. In his three summers as a caddie, Patterson has worked at Petrifying Springs Golf Course, Racine Country Club and Kenosha Country Club.

Patterson will attend the University of Wisconsin beginning next fall, where he plans to major in mechanical engineering. There are 14 Evans Scholarship Houses throughout the country, including two in this state (UW and Marquette).

By the time Patterson graduates later this spring,

he will have earned five varsity letters at Shoreland (two each in golf and cross country and one in soccer). He recently took a "Timeout" with the Kenosha News. Here is an edited version of that conversation.

Q: What have you learned the most about yourself by caddying the last three years? How has it helped you grow as a person?

A: "I think the biggest thing that I've learned over the years was basically how to improve my communication skills with the golfer — when not to talk, when to talk and how to communicate with your golfer so he appreciates your presence. Over the years, starting in 2015 and going into my sophomore year, I was just a puny sophomore and I probably didn't know what I was talking about half the time, but then as I went through the Caddie & Leadership program I grew into those assets of communication skills — basically just people skills. That's really what they were trying to do to reach out with the



program."

Q: Were you a golfer before you became a caddie, or was the game totally new to you?

A: "It was pretty new to me. I wasn't really involved in the game at all until that year (2015), and after that summer I joined golf my sophomore year."

Q: Do you have any memorable caddying stories?

A: "A really funny foursome that I was with, and there were these two friends that were playing tricks on each other. They flipped me dollar bills and told me to tell the other golfer something bad about their shot or something like that. And then the other one did the same thing. It was really funny going back and forth. When the golfers really get involved with talking to you, I think the round seems much quicker

and it's barely even work when you're having fun talking to your golfer and when they're involved with asking you about things."

Q: Did you know anything about the Evans Scholarship when you started caddying?

A: "When I went to the summer introduction meeting, they had a presentation about what caddying was and then they told us about the Evans Scholarship opportunity, and my dad was really excited, and I didn't really understand how much it meant at the time because I was a lot younger. But then through the years, golfers talked about it and told me to apply for it, and I thought it was an amazing opportunity. I am so grateful for those who support me in the donation of the Evans Scholarship money."

(Note: Patterson attended the annual selection meeting in December at Pine Hills Country Club in Sheboygan, where Evans Scholars candidates are asked questions in front of a full room of WGA/ESF directors. ... He received notice of his selection as an Evans Scholar about a week later.)

Q: What stands out to you about the selection meeting?

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

Shoreland Lutheran senior Elias Patterson is a two-year member of the school's varsity golf team.

PATTERSON: A caddie and a Scholar

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A: "I had a ton of nerves. ... They were talking about the essay that I wrote, and they said, 'It says here in your essay that you like to tinker with things and take them apart and then put them back together. Have you ever not been able to perfectly put them back together?' I told them a story about how I was taking apart an old computer, and I put it back together and I had a few parts left over but it still worked."

Q: What was your reaction to receiving the Evans Scholarship?

A: "I sat down with my

grandparents and the rest of my family and read the letter out loud, and I just couldn't believe it. I was so awestruck and had a huge smile painted across my face."

Q: How proud are you to get this scholarship and not only benefit yourself and your family, but to also be the first Evans Scholar from the Caddie & Leadership Academy of Southeast Wisconsin?

A: "It definitely means a lot to me, and I'm very glad that I could be one of the first ones. I'm very glad that (executive director Phil Poletti and program

director Marcus Gallo) helped me out in getting this, and I'm without words. It's such an amazing opportunity, and this puts less pressure on my parents (Paul and Lara) having to help me out with college. ... I grew up around Madison, so I know the area pretty well and I'm really happy to be going back to the area that I've been away from for about six years."

Timeout is a feature in the Kenosha News that focuses on a member of the sports community. Email ahorschak@kenoshanews.com with suggestions.