

# **Marquette Catholic Class Of 2020 Honors Principal Mike Slaughter With Surprise Car Parade Past His Home**

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer  
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ALTON - In the age of social distancing rules and guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic, it's becoming more common to honor people with impromptu car parades past the home of the honorees. For example, the recent parades of teachers in various



school districts to let their students know they were thinking of them, or to wish people happy birthday, the best example being a parade to honor St. Louis Blues super fan Laila Anderson on her 12th birthday recently.

On Friday evening, some 80-plus seniors at Marquette Catholic High School and their families organized a surprise parade to honor principal Mike Slaughter. The students and their families gathered at the parking lot of the school to decorate cars 30 minutes before the parade stepped off, and proceeded down the block past Slaughter's home, with horns honking and blaring, with various students and parents carrying signs saluting the popular principal.

"A group of senior parents wanted to do this together, some of the students wanted to do something to say thank you to Mr. Slaughter," said Mark Ellebracht, whose daughter is a graduating senior at Marquette, "and so, they got the message out to everybody we're going to meet and try to do a parade past his house. He lives about six or seven blocks away, he doesn't know we're coming, so it's going to be a nice surprise." Ellebracht assisted the main parade organizer Nancy Cahailn.

It certainly was indeed, as the parade passed down the block past Slaughter's house, where a very appreciative principal and his wife enthusiastically greeted his seniors and their families, traded greetings, quips and laughs. One of the families even tossed the Slaughters a package of toilet paper as a gift, which was accepted gratefully and with laughs.

Slaughter was clearly touched by the gesture, which was recorded by various parents and supporters for posterity, and he expressed both his surprise by and appreciation of the parade.

"I didn't know what to think," Slaughter said. "I went outside, and I hear these horns honking, and I'm looking for my wife, because she called me, she said 'Mike, would you come outside?' So I came outside, and all of a sudden, I hear all this honking. And then I look up, and it actually took me a minute or so to figure out what the heck is going on. And then I see all these kids waving and yelling, and signs and stuff, and I was shocked. I was blown away. I'm not oftentimes surprised; I usually anticipate what's going to happen, what's going on. This blew me away, this completely shocked me."

Slaughter expressed his love for the Class of 2020, and expressed his sympathy to them about the current situation both locally and nationwide.

"The seniors know I love them," Slaughter said. "We, in the area, we, in the state, we, in the nation, who are educators, and we all have senior classes, we all feel for these kids, whether they are in public schools, private schools. And I'm sure it's the same way,

whether they're in middle school, eighth grade, whatever, any graduating class that's not being given their opportunity. Now is their time to shine, you know, even on the collegiate level. You know, there's some parents that have been waiting for four years, five years, six years for their kids to graduate, and now, they don't even get to have a graduation. So on all levels of education, we feel for these kids, we really do."



[Charles Thomas also contributed to this story.](#)